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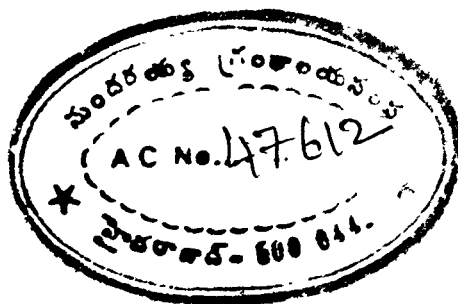
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Introductory Note

The documents contained in this Volume (Volume No. XIV) relate to significant political developments in India in the year 1970.

During this year the Right Communist Party and the Bangla Congress, who were carrying on a conspiracy to topple the Second United Front Government in West Bengal, took open position and it was clear that in this game they were serving the interests of the Indian National Congress. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) took effective steps to demonstrate its mass support in order to dissuade the conspirators determined to topple the United Front Government of West Bengal and damage the consolidation of the Left forces. The Plenum of West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was held in February, 1970 to take stock of the whole situation and to demonstrate before the conspirators that the Communist Party of India (Marxist) were fully aware of the danger confronted by the United Front Government. During the Second United Front Government Police was not allowed to interfere in Trade Union and Democratic Movement of West Bengal and this created a tremendous impact. In the Labour Front and Agricultural Front rapid progress was made all over West Bengal—in realising legitimate demands and also in imparting political consciousness. In this background a call was given to the people of West Bengal from the Plenum of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) to retain and defend their earned

rights and this call received tremendous response. At the call of CPI(M) a massive rally was also held at the Brigade Parade Ground, Calcutta, on 15th March, 1970 with the participation of millions of people. But despite this demonstration of public support the conspirators under the leadership of Ajoy Mukherjee, the Chief Minister of the United Front Government betrayed the people of West Bengal and tendered resignation on March 16, 1970 bringing an abrupt end to the Second United Front Government in West Bengal.

Many documents are included in this Volume which will reveal how the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) assessed the implications of the sinister game of the Right Communist Party and the Bangla Congress backed by the Indian National Congress. It is pertinent to mention here that during this period the Communist Party of India (Marxist) being the biggest partner of the United Front Government of West Bengal was tremendously increasing its mass base and political influence over the people of the State and to deter this development the Indian National Congress executed their conspiratorial move with the help of the Right Communist Party and the Bangla Congress and brought an end to the Second United Front Government of West Bengal. It is also relevant to note here that Indira Gandhi who split the Indian National Congress in 1969 on the issue of presidential election giving the impression that she was fighting against the reactionary Syndicate Congress, did not change the class outlook of the erstwhile Indian National Congress and continued the most reactionary and anti-people policy.

Another major development of this year is the split in AITUC and formation of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). S. A. Dange was pursuing the policy of class collaboration in AITUC and was opposing all militant struggles of the working class and refused to run the organization along democratic lines. As a result, AITUC ceased to become a platform of 'United Struggle' against the employees

and the monopolists. In fact Dange and his associates became a pawn in the hands of the ruling Congress Party to disrupt the militant trade union movement in India. In this situation the historic necessity arose for formation of a separate trade union centre to carry on militant struggles of the working class in India and to fulfil this historic need the Centre of Indian Trade Unions was formed in May, 1970 in a conference in Calcutta. All relevant documents of this development are included in this Volume.

Documents are also included in this Volume to highlight the anti-people policies of the Achutha Menon Government in Kerala, saddled in power with the support from the Indian National Congress, which formulated all its anti-people policies to serve the interests of the Indian National Congress. A Fact Finding Mission was sent to Kerala by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which submitted a revealing report on the anti-people activities of the Achutha Menon Government and this report also forms a part of this Volume. Documents are also given in this Volume covering analysis on the election held in Kerala in 1970.

Mobilisation of the masses was organized by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in protest against attacks on the people in Kerala by the Achutha Menon Government and on the people of West Bengal under President's rule and these protest movements took massive shape.

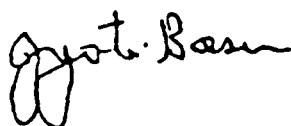
The statements and the resolutions of the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) included in this Volume will reveal as to how various national and international developments of 1970 were viewed and assessed by our Party and the steps taken by our Party to educate the people and organize them in various movements.

The semi-fascist terror created in West Bengal by the Congress Government at the Centre had its beginning in 1970 and the Naxalites were also utilised for this purpose. Comrade Jiban Maity, a Secretariat Member of Howrah District Committee of CPI(M) was murdered by the Naxalites when

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he was seventy years old. This Volume contains documents on these developments also.

I am confident that the readers will find the documents of this Volume interesting and useful for their assessment of the political realities in India in 1970.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jyoti Basu'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'J' being particularly large and stylized.

(JYOTI BASU)
Chief Editor

January 8, 1998

Foreword

No other party, except ours, had a concrete and correct estimation of the split in the Congress party. The CPI(M) had constantly been warning against any illusion on that score. Fact of life and experience, in a span of a few months, had demonstrated this infallible assessment. As for the Congress, the thin line of political demarcation between its Syndicate and Indicate wings was facing complete erosion in the developments on the heels of the split. Basically, the difference between the two, was of tactics, how to meet the challenge that had emerged after the formation of the United Front ministries in Kerala and West Bengal, and of the rising movement of the people across the country. The faceless CPI on the spur of the moment jumped into it using the split by sedulously putting out the thesis that Indira Gandhi's wing of the Congress i.e. the Indicate representing the progressive national bourgeoisie in opposition to monopoly capitalism and imperialist forces. All that they were doing was to trail behind the Congress in the name of fighting rightist forces, thus harming the democratic movement, the line advocated by them since early fifties. Conveniently, they were oblivious of the fact that while the Syndicate and their accomplices like Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh posed a great danger to democracy, secularism and integrity of the country, the ruling Congress wing and its government at the Centre were, in no uncertain terms, found compromising with all kinds of divisive forces, attacking the democratic forces as before and pursuing anti-people policies atoning with the deteriorating economic situation.

This Volume contains a number of documents that exposed the deceitful character of the Indicate Congress, the serious danger by the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine as well as the disrupting role of the CPI.

This was the period when the United Front Government of West Bengal was passing through acute crisis because of the betraying role of the Bangla Congress, a breakaway faction of the Congress which joined the U.F. in 1967, and that its members colluded with the Congress to topple the first U.F. Government was known to all. The CPI who, right from the beginning, visibly confined themselves to act solely against the CPI(M), provided active support to and often engineered disruptive activities with an eye to forming a mini-front in West Bengal in the line of Kerala. The other major partners Forward Bloc, SUC and PSP fell in line with the treacherous game of the CPI, forgetting the grave consequences that such a course would entail to the democratic movement.

Remarkable in this period was the massive and spontaneous strike-struggles against this conspiracy instigated by the Central government led by Indira Gandhi in the teeth of which all attempts at forming mini-front got frustrated. President's rule was imposed after the resignation of Ajoy Mukherjee as the Chief Minister, the leader of the Bangla Congress. Even though the rest of the parties in the United Front had comfortable majority to continue in government, it was of no avail because of the resistance of the other partners of the U.F. The fall of the U.F. Government, thus, was followed by a further spate of reign of semi-fascist terror directed mainly against the CPI(M). The tremendous advance of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) among the people of both West Bengal and Kerala during the last couple of years was, in fact, the source of panic in the enemy camp and became an eye-sore for different petty-bourgeois parties which were fast losing their influence on the masses for their opportunistic role in the midst of the ongoing political crisis.

The success and onward march of the CPI(M) against all odds lies in their adherence to flexibility in tactics and

uncompromising in theory that was tested on all occasions. While holding far more strength than others in the United Front, CPI(M) had agreed to give up Chief Ministership to Bangla Congress for the sake of preserving unity of the United Front and serving the interests of the common people.

In sixties and seventies the struggles of the working class had widened enormously and many gains were achieved. The working class had been facing a severe attack because of the perpetuating crisis and recession. The trade union movement was yet to seize hold of the objective that they should go out of the boundary of the economic struggle and engage the entire working class to assert against the rule of the capitalists and landlords, against imperialism and in the final count they had to replace the present system by a state of people's democracy. All this depended on the firm unity of the working class, the mass of the agricultural workers, poor peasants and the working masses in general. The reformist and revisionist leadership of various central trade union organisations always seek to confine the working class struggle to the narrow orbit of economic demands, and even here, divested of all class consciousness. More often than not, the powerful workers' struggles were seen to be betrayed. It was under the difficult circumstances of constant attack of capitalists and their government at the Centre, fratricidal conflicts, perpetual betrayal of the reformist and revisionist leaders that the working class had to carry on their struggle for their immediate demands and assert themselves in the democratic movement. The working class in West Bengal and Kerala played a very big role in defending the United Front Governments there and also facing atrocious attacks from the Congress, police and vested interests. In this background the formation of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions was of historical importance. When all efforts to maintain the unity of the working class on the path of class struggle and democratic functioning of the trade unions failed, in the interests of militant trade union struggle the formation of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) on all India level was inescapable. Subsequent developments went to vindicate

the steps taken and with the slogan of unity and struggle CITU emerged as a symbol of unifying the working class.

As far as Kisan movement is concerned, it is to be noted that, India is the biggest under-developed country in the world, the importance of the agricultural labour and peasant movement as a firm ally of the working class cannot be underestimated. In fact, the question of agrarian social structure is central to any discussion on economic and social development today. The study of changes in the agrarian relations is of fundamental importance whether one is analysing the political situation or economic and social structure. Thus the agrarian question remains the foremost national question for the time. The questions of self-sufficiency in foodgrains and valuable raw materials for industry, lifting millions of rural poor out of their present life of misery and starvation, expansion of the internal market—to serve the growing national industry, to get out of the age-old backwardness—all depend on the solution of this problem. The reason for the backwardness lies in the land relation and the government policy of building capitalism in alliance with landlordism. During this time the agricultural labourers, poor peasants and the rural population in general were able to win many gains by powerful movements not only in Kerala and West Bengal but also in different parts of the country. The land reforms in West Bengal and Kerala contrary to the rest of India had had a big impact on the peasant movement in general.

This is the period when subversion of democracy in West Bengal and large-scale atrocities in Kerala was going on. Results of mid-term elections in Kerala, contrary to the false and mischievous propaganda of the ruling Congress party and its mini-front allies, conclusively proved that CPI(M), far from being isolated from the people, has emerged as the biggest political force in the state, enjoying the confidence of the ever-increasing sections of the workers, peasants and other democratic classes. The thirty per cent of the votes polled and 32 seats won by the CPI(M) and its independents, in the teeth of combined opposition of the ruling classes and their servitors

go to demonstrate how the political line of the CPI(M) had scored tremendous success. Mention must be made of the fact that in 1967 there was a comprehensive united front of the Left and other parties but in 1970 this anti-Congress direction veered into an anti-CPI(M) position. And in this anti-Marxist alliance, were ganged up the Congress, Muslim League, CPI, the RSP, the Catholic church, the big landlords and the Nair Service Society. The anti-Communist press and political leaders were so vociferous that the CPI(M) and its democratic allies had been routed and buried consequent to the result of the Kerala polls. The single aim of this propaganda was to divide and frustrate the fighting people everywhere but the facts spoke the contrary.

Notwithstanding the repressive President's rule in West Bengal, a powerful movement was launched all over the state of West Bengal demanding immediate poll. Nobody can fail to see the diabolical game of the Congress Government of engineering murderous attacks by the so-called naxalites on the leaders and cadres of the CPI(M), and then porting them as "armed clashes" between the naxalites and the CPI(M) to draw support for the imposition of the Preventive Detention Act and other draconian laws. The government on the one hand was organising planned infiltration of thousands of notorious anti-social elements into the naxalites and on the other was shooting down some of them while in custody or when they over-stepped the imposed limits. It was the CPI(M) which was the target of unprecedented attack both from the revisionist and naxalite extremists, other Left parties and also from the other ruling class because of its persistent role of defending democracy and the people's movement. This Volume contains documents relating to our stand at this critical juncture.

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

(Harkishan Singh Surjeet)

General Secretary

January 17, 1998

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

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List of Abbreviations Used

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

The Current Political Developments

**Statement dated January 5, 1970 issued
by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in Calcutta**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which met in Calcutta from January 1 to 4, 1970, issued the following statement on the current political developments :

The two rival Congress meets at Ahmedabad and Bombay during the last week of December 1969 have finally put their seal on the split of the ruling Congress party. This development, coming as it does in the wake of a deepening economic-political crisis and taking place in the premier political party of the bourgeois-landlord classes, is having a far-reaching impact on the political life of the country. The process of polarization of political forces that was on between the Congress and its bankrupt path of capitalism on the one hand and the anti-Congress democratic forces with their alternative people's democratic path on the other, is now sought to be replaced by a new disruptive process of polarization around the two rival Congress parties and their political platforms. Thus the eruption of the economic-political crisis and the consequent undermining of the ruling Congress party's unity has not only opened up new big opportunities for the revolutionary working class and its democratic allies for a rapid advance but it has also posed new threats of disruption of democratic unity gained so far in the course of prolonged struggles carried against the regime and its anti-people policies. Along with the open feud among the ruling class parties and particularly between the two rival wings of

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, January 11, 1970

the Congress party, a new anti-Communist offensive is launched by the reaction and its servitors, directing the main fire against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the United Fronts in which it plays a vital role.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has been consistently upholding the view that the two opposing lines of the Syndicate Congress and the anti-Syndicate Congress do not represent two fundamentally different class interests but represent only two variations of the same bourgeois-landlord class line which they have come to consider as respective ways out of the present economic-political crisis. It also has been making it absolutely clear that the Syndicate and its projected political alliance with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra is of an avowedly reactionary character, with the aim of launching a frontal offensive against the rising struggles of people and the growing democratic movement in unashamed defence of Big Business, landlords and the foreign monopolists.

A careful reading of resolutions adopted, speeches made and the political alliances projected by the Syndicate leaders at their Ahmedabad meet makes it absolutely clear that they represent the line of extreme reactionary forces in the country and they are out for forging a front of reaction and counter-revolution together with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra. Their professions about the so-called socialist objectives of the Congress, their reiteration of the shop-soiled "Ten-Point Programme" of the Congress, and their demagogic slogan of agrarian reforms cannot deceive anybody, since their aggressive anti-Communism, open alliance with avowedly reactionary parties such as the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, their pronounced anti-Sovietism, their attack on what remains of the foreign policy of non-alignment and peace, etc., expose the utter hollowness of all their democratic and socialist professions.

If any lingering doubts are left in the minds of some about the Syndicate and the reactionary character of its projected political line, they are being mercilessly dispelled by the

proclamations and declarations made by the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, the former at its Patna jamboree and the latter in its all-India Council meeting held during the same period. An open call for an out and out reactionary alliance is given in order to launch a frontal offensive against the rising popular democratic forces and the growing mass struggles.

In this connection, no decent and democratic-minded person can afford to miss noting the dangerous slogans raised by the Jana Sangh, the slogans of Indianisation of the Muslims and the banning of the Communist Party. It is quite evident that the slogan of Indianisation of Muslims is nothing short of declaring a war of hatred against the Muslim minority in the country, opening the floodgates to undiluted Hindu chauvinism and communal frenzy against the religious and communal minorities. Its leader, Vajpayee, not ashamed of the role of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and in spearheading scores of anti-Muslim riots in the country during the last several years, has proudly declared his intimate association with this fascist-orientated organisation. These slogans of Indianisation of Muslims and ban on the Communist Party are no doubt intended to reinforce their nakedly anti-Pakistan, anti-China, anti-Soviet and anti-Communist policies, policies that pave the way for fascism and the destruction of everything that is democratic.

The Syndicate Congress and the Swatantra Party, notwithstanding their secular pretences and advocacy of Indo-Pakistan amity, are simply winking at this medieval Hindu fanaticism of the Jana Sangh, and are out for an alliance with it. The slogan of ban on the Communist Party, of course, is nothing new either to the Jana Sangh and Swatantra or to the leaders of the Syndicate like Nijalingappa. Their pronounced anti-China, anti-Soviet stances are well known to be repeated. These renewed and reinforced anti-Communist attacks, as history amply demonstrates, are only a prelude to attack on democracy all along the line, and they cannot be dismissed as the usual ravings of these parties since they are

coming in the midst of a grave economic-political crisis in the country.

It is also no secret that the anti-Communism of the Syndicate alliance is, first and foremost, directed against the Communist Party of India (Marxist), singling it out for systematic slander and concentrated attack. The momentary success of the anti-CPI(M) conspiracy in Kerala has whetted the appetite of these dark anti-Communist forces and the entire monopolist-controlled Press is jubilantly campaigning for it, hoping to re-enact a similar drama in West Bengal. Of all the anti-Communist parties it is the Syndicate Congress that is extremely happy with the disunity and disruption of the United Fronts in Kerala and West Bengal since these two fronts had played a crucial role in inflicting the defeat on the Syndicate's Presidential candidate as well as foiling the threat of the no-confidence motion against the Indira Gandhi Government at the Centre over the Rabat Conference issue. If some democratic parties and groups, blinded by their anti-CPI(M) prejudices, are unable to see this truth and are unwittingly drawing chestnuts out of the fire for the Syndicate alliance, they cannot escape paying heavy penalty for the same in the days ahead.

It is obvious that the projected alliance of the Syndicate Congress, Jana Sangh and Swatantra and the extreme reactionary line it advocates, pose a serious threat to the democratic and revolutionary forces and their future advance. It would be a grave error either to underestimate or minimise this threat on the ground that the anti-Syndicate wing of the Congress has managed to secure a majority in the Congress Parliamentary Party as well as among the elected AICC delegates. The magnitude of this impending menace can be correctly seen only in the context of the formidable vested interests that are behind this political line, including the imperialist forces and their machinations against our revolutionary movement.

Then coming to the Bombay session of the Congress, viewed in the background of several radical declarations made

by its leaders, rousing great expectations among the people, its decisions, to put it mildly, have come as utterly disappointing. It is true that this wing led by Indira Gandhi has opposed the proposed reactionary alliance with the Jana Sangh and Sawtantra by the Syndicate, and over this question risked the split in the Congress party. It is also true that it has expressed its opposition to the proposal of the Syndicate for a shift of the internal and external policies of the Government to further Right. Similarly, the resolutions of the Bombay Congress aim at alleviating the apprehensions of the middle and small industrialists in the urban areas as well as the capitalist farmers in the rural side by promising them certain concessions, of course, without seriously prejudicing the interests of Big Business. But the economic policies enunciated in the final resolutions go to clearly show that they offer nothing fundamentally new and radical than what the Congress Government was pursuing so far. Nothing concrete is spelled out as to how it proposes to tackle the stupendous problems of poverty, hunger and unemployment and what its measures are to extricate the country from the deepening economic crisis.

Not a word is mentioned about the role played by the foreign monopoly capital which is increasingly corroding our economy through the collaboration agreements with the Indian monopolies. As for the latter, whose "sinister" role was denounced by many speakers, including the mover of the Economic Policy resolution in the Subjects Committee, Y. B. Chavan, no concrete measures to curb its aggressive activities have been proposed in the resolution itself. The proposal made by the AICC panel on economic policy to have a capital levy, which if adopted with necessary modifications, would have helped the extension of the public sector, was quietly dropped. Nor was there any proposal to bring under the public sector those industries which, in terms of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, were reserved for the public sector, not to speak of extending it further to earn what some "Young Turk" leaders call the "lucrative

heights". The decision to nationalize the sugar mills in U.P., though welcome, does not form part of a well-thought-out plan of extending the sphere of the public sector. Even though a few measures of nationalisation have been proposed, such as general insurance, "bulk import" by 1970, export by 1974, etc., as well as the proposed abolition of privy purses to be carried out on payment of "equitable compensation" to be adjudged by the judiciary, yet the proposal to take property out of the "Fundamental Rights" has not been accepted. As regards the proposed implementation of the land reforms, there is nothing concrete in the direction of ending of land concentration in the hands of four to five per cent of the landlord families, nor any tangible measures which guarantee the removal of the admitted defects in the implementation machinery. The very same bureaucracy, landlords and landlord-dominated State Governments who had been resisting the radical land reforms and sabotaging the implementation of the few enacted measures are relied upon to implement the promised measures.

It is shocking to see that on the morrow of the Bombay Congress decisions and the bombastic anti-monopolist speeches made by the leaders at the session, the Birlas are given the green signal to go ahead with the fertiliser factory and steel prices are raised steeply to the detriment of several small and medium industrialist interests.

In view of all this it would be utterly naive and totally self-deceptive on the part of any democratic party or group in the country to be led into the belief that the policy announced at the Bombay Congress is either an alternative class policy to that of the Syndicate or that it enables the country to extricate itself from the economic-political rut it has got into.

To add to all this, one cannot be blind to the subtle anti-Communist manoeuvres of the Congress led by Smt. Indira Gandhi, chiefly directed against the CPI(M) and the United Fronts it was functioning in Kerala and West Bengal. With a view to rallying as many political parties and break-away

groups of the Congress behind it in opposition to the Syndicate and its allies, and in pursuance of the political strategy of the new polarization of forces around the two Congress-centred alliances, it is abetting and actively encouraging the division and disruption of these United Fronts of Kerala and West Bengal. This plot of undermining these Fronts which played no small role in inflicting the defeat on the Presidential candidate of the Syndicate and its allies and in vitally influencing the course of radical developments since the Fourth General Elections, goes in the final analysis to strengthen the diabolical anti-Communist strategy of the Syndicate combine. It is quite obvious that once this anti-Communist offensive gains momentum, it is the Syndicate's policies that will profit most. It is precisely the reason why the monopolist-controlled Press is jubilantly campaigning in full support of the police terror regime of Achutha Menon and Mohammed Koya in Kerala and the scandalous gimmicks of the Bangla Congress leaders against the U.F. and its Government in West Bengal. The role that Indira Gandhi's wing of the Congress is playing in Kerala and West Bengal and the complicity of the Indira Gandhi Government in deploying the Central Reserve Police for brutal suppression of the popular mass struggles in Kerala by the Right Communist-led Ministry are causing pleasure to the Syndicate forces and inviting the indignation of the democratic classes and masses who alone count in the real anti-Syndicate struggle. This dangerous course of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government will have to be fought by the people and defeated, and the CPI(M) invites the cooperation of all the healthy democratic forces to discharge this task.

It is in this situation when the ruling classes are gripped by a deepening economic-political crisis and when new big opportunities are opened up before the working class and other democratic forces to effectively intervene in the situation, to defeat and reverse the bankrupt class policies of the Congress Party and Government, and to make rapid advance, a sad spectacle of division and disruption among

them is witnessed, much to the joy of the reactionary forces in the country. Instead of carrying forward the unity of the democratic forces thus far achieved in the course of long and bitter struggles against the Congress regime and its bourgeois-landlord policies, a craze to rally round either the Syndicate Congress or the Indira Gandhi Congress as their camp-followers has set in. If the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, true to the class interests they represent, have been actively campaigning for the Syndicate alliance, the Right Communist leadership has chosen the treacherous course of undermining the United Fronts in Kerala and West Bengal, while spearheading the campaign of building the front centred around the Indira Gandhi Congress. If the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra are out to exploit the bogey of 'Communist menace' in order to pursue their line, the Right Communists and their accomplices have been raising the bogey of 'bossism' of the CPI(M) and the danger to 'law and order' at its hands. They advocate unashamed rallying behind the Indira Gandhi Congress and her Government under the high-sounding slogans and false pretext of effectively fighting against the Syndicate menace, directing their main fire against the CPI(M) and the Fronts it is working in, since the CPI(M) is determinedly opposed to the slogan of coalition with Indira Congress and its Government.

Parties like the PSP and SSP with their opportunist political lines are found caught in the crisis, some top leaders among them either indulging in pseudo leftism, saying that there is nothing to choose between the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate wings of the Congress, or advocating an opportunist alliance with one or the other as it suits them on the occasion.

It is no wonder, then, some breakaway groups from the Congress, such as the Bharatiya Kranti Dal of Sri Charan Singh, the Bangla Congress under Sri Ajoy Mukherjee's leadership, the Forward Bloc, etc., once again relapse into their old anti-Communist prejudices while anxious to get into the embrace of the Congress fold of Indira Gandhi,

utterly oblivious of the devastating consequences that such a course entails to the democratic movement.

Faced with this complex and critical political situation, i.e., the growing threat of the Syndicate and its reactionary allies on the one hand and the threat to the unity of the democratic united fronts under the dangerous slogan of polarization of political forces around the two Congress-centred alliances on the other, the revolutionary working class and other democratic forces will have to rise to the occasion to meet the challenge. The CPI(M) is quite confident that the crisis and the consequent rapid mass awakening of our people will not allow either the success of the Syndicate's drive towards reaction and fascist dictatorship or the nice and neat plans of the bourgeois-landlord classes to rally the democratic forces behind their two alliances led by the Syndicate's and Indira Gandhi's Congresses. The Polit Bureau appeals to the workers, peasants and all other healthy democratic forces to cooperate with it in its efforts to meet the impending menace from the reactionary Syndicate alliance as well as the threat of disruption of democratic united fronts at the hands of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its other accomplices.

The CPI(M) while reiterating its uncompromising hostility and opposition to the Syndicate alliance and its avowedly reactionary political line and extending its support to the Indira Gandhi Government for every measure directed against the menace of the Syndicate, appeals to all the democratic parties to awaken to this menace and fight it back. While entertaining no undue illusions about the present Government and party led by Indira Gandhi, as they are constituted now, it calls upon all the democratic parties and groups to rally the masses around the minimum proposals put forward below, and demand their implementation by the Indira Gandhi Government, if its professions are not to be proved empty and its struggle against the Syndicate is not devoid of any meaning to the common people. The delightfully vague "Ten-Point Programme" to which both the Bombay and Ahmedabad

Congresses are repledged, will have to be replaced by the following immediate steps :

1. Nationalize foreign banks and foreign trade. Ban on repatriation of profits by foreign concerns for a stipulated period. Steps to end India's dependence on foreign loans which are jeopardising the country's independence.

2. Extend the public sector by securing control over monopolists' concerns, both foreign and Indian, utilising the economic strength of nationalised banks; cut the profits and aggrandisement of monopolies.

3. An entirely reoriented Fourth Plan for the speedy expansion of industries and improvement of agriculture with a specific view to absorbing the millions of educated and uneducated unemployed. Adequate allotment of bank credits to the non-big industrialists and credit-starved peasantry from the centralised resources.

4. Abolition of princely privy purses and privileges.

5. Drastic reduction in defence expenditure and heavy tax burdens on the people.

6. Introduction of genuine land reforms reducing ceilings and plugging all loopholes to ensure land to agricultural labourers and poor peasants and necessary facilities to them for cultivating the same. Distribution of all cultivable wastelands, cultivable forest lands and land in illegal possession of landlords by benami and mala fide transfers. Adequate wages to agricultural labourers and debt relief to the agricultural labourers and to the toiling peasantry.

7. Graded land-tax and agricultural income-tax on the landlords, and capital levy. Ceiling on urban properties and on corporate profits and on personal incomes.

8. End the policy of victimisation and terrorisation of Central employees; withdrawal of all repressive and anti-democratic and anti-strike laws, and ensure democratic and trade union rights to the working class and all working people including Government employees. Full guarantee of democratic rights of the national and religious minorities, harijans

and tribal people. Full employment and need-based wages, and unemployment relief.

9. Steps to secure and guarantee full autonomy to States giving them financial, legislative and executive powers and meanwhile delegating necessary powers to the State Government to carry out the above programme.

10. Steps to secure a progressive shift in foreign policy which will lend support to all anti-imperialist struggles and decisively line up against imperialism and develop enduring ties with all Governments of the socialist camp. Establish friendly relations with socialist China and Pakistan, recognition of the GDR and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and full ambassadorial recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Either these measures are pursued and a turn to the right path is made or procrastination and failure in this will lead to succumbing before the onslaught of the reactionary interests, spearheaded by the Syndicate alliance. There is no third alternative in the situation the country is confronted with.

Polit Bureau Resolution on Kerala*

Resolution Adopted by the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in its session in Calcutta from January 1 to 4, 1970.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) warmly greets the peasants, agricultural labourers and hutment dwellers of Kerala who have taken the initiative to implement the recently-enacted land reforms legislation in a really popular way. This initiative is the only guarantee against those efforts at sabotage which are usually made by the vested interests whenever land reform legislation are enacted.

The PB recalls the conclusion arrived at by the Central Government itself that, though several progressive legislations were enacted during the 22 years, they have not really benefited the mass of rural poor because, apart from various loopholes in the concrete provisions in the legislations themselves, the machinery set up so far for implementing the legislations have been defective. The Prime Minister therefore, suggested to the Chief Ministers and Revenue Ministers assembled in Delhi on November 28 and 29 last, that it was necessary to have a more effective implementation machinery.

Those who are familiar with actual conditions in our villages, however, will realise that whatever new machinery is set up now, as proposed by the Prime Minister, will lead to the same sabotage in the implementation of land reform legislations unless the initiative of the rural poor is unleashed. It was because the Communist Party of India (Marxist) realized this that United Front Governments, in which the Party

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plays an effective role, combined administrative action from the top with mass mobilization from below.

Some constituents of the United Front, however, opposed this popular initiative. Like the Bangla Congress in West Bengal, the Muslim League in Kerala denounces the mass organisations of the rural poor as well as those democratic parties who help this popular initiative for what they call "taking the law in their own hands".

The Right Communist Party faithfully follows in the footsteps of such opponents of popular initiative. Several months ago when the CPI(M)-led United Front Government in Kerala was in existence and when the organizations of the rural poor in Kerala gave the call for such popular initiative to enforce the Act which was then expected to come into force in a few months, that call for popular initiative was denounced by the present Chief Minister of Kerala—Achutha Menon—as a "call for hooliganism". His Government today is following it up with unleashing an unprecedented regime of police terror in order to "punish" those who allegedly "resort to violence" and create "anarchic conditions" in the State.

What is claimed to be a "Communist-led" Government has thus become the zealous protector of the same old vested interests in the rural area who are sabotaging the implementation of the progressive social legislations; the 'Communist' Chief Minister is thus presiding over the same regime of police repression against the peasants as any Congress Chief Minister has been.

The heavy hands of the Achutha Menon Government's police terror, however, do not fall on peasants alone. They fall equally on other sections of the democratic movement in Kerala. Students who were fighting for the cancellation of examination fees were brutally beaten up by the police all over the State. So were the coir workers of Alleppey district. Tyre Factory and other industrial workers of Kalamasseri and several other sections of workers and employees, fighting for their demand, were brutally beaten up.

Gone are the days when any section of the working people could freely carry on their agitations and struggles without being beaten up and jailed.

Above all, lock-up beatings which have never been heard of since 1957—a practice which could not be restored even under the notorious Congress regime in which the late P.T. Chacko was the Home Minister, has now been revived.

The most shameful part of the situation today is that, unlike the former CPI(M)-led United Front Government which refused to use the Central Reserve Police though it had been put at the disposal of the State Government by the Union Home Ministry, it is now being freely used. It was the CRP which resorted to the brutal lathi-charges and firings in several places on December 1. It was again the CRP that was used in several places against the fighting students and workers. Chief Minister Achutha Menon whose leader Bhupesh Gupta had vehemently denounced the use of the CRP in the Rajya Sabha, is today declaring without hesitation that in the present situation in Kerala the police force is so inadequate that the CRP has to be used.

Some of the parties that constitute the present Government of Kerala have, in the past, called for the resignation of Governments which had resorted to police repression which, in fact, bears no comparison to the present brutal terror. Yet they continue to remain in the Government and claim that the Government is so concerned with popular welfare that they are busy distributing *pattas* to peasants, issuing ordinances to confer benefits on the working people, and so on. As against their claim that they have done in two months more good to the people of Kerala than the former CPI(M)-led Government did in over two and a half years is the reality that in the number and severity of lathi-charges as well as in the heinousness of lock-up beatings the last two months have by far exceeded what Kerala has witnessed at any time either under the British or princely regime before independence, or under the Congress during the last 22 Years.

All this is taking place in a condition in which the Government does not enjoy that majority in the legislature which is the essential prerequisite for the formation and functioning of an elected Ministry. On the Chief Minister's own admission, he had no majority at the time when he formed the Ministry; even today he cannot have a majority unless he is able to get a few defectors from the Opposition and, together with it, he gets support of the Indira group of Congressmen. He is, therefore, busy trying to get defectors by promising them expansion of the Ministry and various other inducements. It is thus clear beyond doubt that he cannot remain on the Ministry through fair and decent means.

For all these reasons, as well as for the reason that four parties of the former CPI(M)-led non-Congress United Front have shamelessly gone back on their electoral pledge to form a non-Congress Ministry, every decent democrat in the country would consider that this Government has no right to continue to administer the State. The PB therefore calls on the democratic people all over the country to support their brethren in Kerala in demanding that the Ministry immediately resign thus facilitating seeking of a fresh mandate from the electorate. The two months of police terror supplemented by the shameless horse-trading with which the Ministry tries to perpetuate itself in office have proved beyond doubt that it has lost whatever right it might have claimed in the beginning to form the Government in order to avoid President's rule. A fresh and immediate appeal to the electorate is the only way in which the issues that have been raised by the break-up of the former CPI(M)-led United Front can be resolved.

Polit Bureau Resolution on West Bengal*

**Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau
of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in
its Calcutta session from January 1 to 4, 1970**

On West Bengal

The Polit Bureau congratulates the toiling peasantry of West Bengal, who with the backing of the U.F. Ministry have successfully retained their occupation of nearly six lakh acres (including those during the first U.F. Ministry of 1967) of vested and *benami* land regained and in which they won the battle of the harvest. This great initiative and determined and victorious struggle of the toiling peasants of West Bengal to regain land from the illegal possession of the jotdars is all the more remarkable, in that it was won in the face of determined efforts of jotdars backed by Bangla Congress leaders and their hungerstrike and in the face of the persistent calumny and slanders widely propagated through the Big Business Press for the last three months.

The inspiring march of the awakened agricultural labourers, share croppers and the toiling peasantry, in their struggle for land and for a new life, their disciplined conscious behaviour to overcome all the conflicts and fissiparous tendencies, sought to be fanned by jotdars and their supporters, their organization of a hundred thousand strong corps of volunteers to defend themselves, their crops and homes against the raids of jotdars stand as a proud and glorious record of the West Bengal peasantry. The building of their million membered mass organization

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of the Kisan Sabha had inspired the toiling peasantry and the democratic forces throughout the country to follow in the footsteps of their West Bengal kisan brethren.

This great victory of the toiling peasants has been preceded by the valiant and victorious struggles of the working class—the jute, the tea garden, the textile and the coal mine workers, the engineering workers and others more than a million in number, who through their demonstrations, gheraos and strikes, frustrated the employers' plans of disruption, lockouts and closures and won annual increment of nearly Rs. 50 crores in emoluments, with the active support and assistance of the U.F. Ministry.

The Polit Bureau congratulates the workers, the students, youth and women who in hundreds of thousands demonstrated their support to the toiling peasant masses in their struggle to win the battle for harvest.

The Polit Bureau is proud of its West Bengal Party unit and of the Party ranks who are in the forefront of this great struggle, leading it, defending it and constantly trying to rally more and more support and participation of other masses and ranks under the influence of other parties, and those who are not yet politically awakened.

The Polit Bureau pays homage to those comrades and fighters who laid down their lives in the struggle of kisans and workers against the jotdars and employers' goonda attacks and conveys its condolences to their families.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all people and especially those who are following the parties that constitute the U.F. to realize that all these great people's victories had been possible only because of the existence of the U.F. government, which had been brought on the basis of innumerable struggles of the people of West Bengal. But scared by the great inroads the toiling peasants and the workers are making into the profits and plunder of the vested interests, the Bangla Congress backed by the Right C.P. has raised a hue and cry against the U.F. Ministry itself as "uncivilized and barbarous" that "law and order" had broken down in West Bengal, that the

CPI(M) is a party of “pickpockets and dacoits”, and is trying to create a public opinion in order to form a minifront ministry excluding the CPI(M), as in Kerala. The fighting people of West Bengal, and the democratic forces in all the constituents of U.F. have so far frustrated their plans. The Bangla Congress was forced to suspend their hunger strike.

Yet the danger to the existence of U.F. Ministry still persists. The Bangla Congress leaders threaten to resume their hunger strike, refuse to give up their slanderous campaign against the U.F. Ministry as uncivilized and barbarous, and refuse to see the great achievements of the West Bengal people backed by the U.F. Ministry and the necessity of carrying forward people’s unity and struggles, to wrench more rights from the vested interests and from the Central Government. They are hoping to continue this present uncertainty till they consider that appropriate time has come to join hands with the Indira Congress and form a mini front ministry. The Polit Bureau appeals to all the constituents of the U.F. and their mass following to force the Bangla Congress and the Right C.P. leaders to reverse their course of undermining the U.F. Ministry and return back to the path of strengthening the U.F. and its Ministry.

Polit Bureau Resolution on AITUC Session*

**Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau of
the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in
its session in Calcutta from January 1 to 4, 1970**

The Polit Bureau after hearing the report from Comrade P. Ramamurti about what happened at the AITUC Working Committee meeting recently held in Delhi on December 20 decided to write to the Right Communist Party, that the AITUC session should be postponed and talks be held to forge unity among various unions that owe allegiance to the AITUC before the AITUC session is held on the basis of the December 1966 General Council resolution of the AITUC which called for joint committee to hold democratic elections on proportional representation. The Right Communist leaders in the AITUC Working Committee refused to agree to allow all unions to get affiliated and represented at AITUC till such unity is achieved on the above basis. They have been affiliating their own rival unions, while refusing affiliation to genuine mass unions. They have been refusing to function trade unions democratically and have been concluding agreements with the employers detrimental to the workers and betraying the fundamental rights of the workers. Our Party has been always working to make the AITUC a united working class centre for resisting the employers and for carrying the working class movement forward. The Right Communists in pursuance of their class collaborationist policy are determined to split the AITUC.

If the Right Communist leaders go ahead with their conference at Guntur, no useful purpose will be served by our

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Party members working in the different trade unions attending the Guntur meeting. It will only help to cover up their class collaborationist policies in the trade union movement. The Polit Bureau directs all the Party members to actively explain in all trade unions, to all workers about the splitting activities of the Dangeites and the circumstances that make it absolutely futile to attend the Guntur Conference.

If the Right Communists carry out their splitting activity and hold their own gathering at Guntur, the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in its meeting from February 2, 1970 will discuss and decide on the steps to be taken to defend the unity of the working class movement and its organized trade union movement.

Undo The Damage Done To U.F. And Its Government*

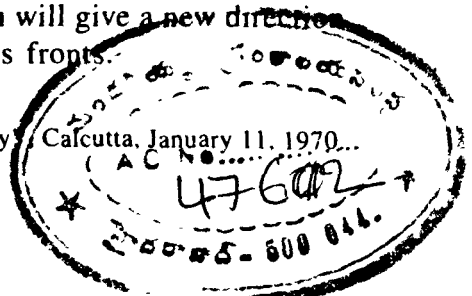
West Bengal State Committee Exhorts U.F. Constituents

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following Press Communique at the end of the State Committee meeting held from December 29 to 31, 1969, under the chairmanship of Comrade Kamal Sarkar.

State Plenum in February

Reports from the districts and fronts on the fulfilment of organizational targets were placed by the members and the Committee decided on the further tasks of the Party units in the organizational drive. The Committee discussed the preparatory programme for the ensuing West Bengal State Plenum of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and took certain decisions. It decided that there would be no district or local Plenums, and the District Committees would select delegates to the State Plenum. The Committee fixed the quota of delegates to be sent from each district and Statewide fronts. The total number of delegates would be 325. It would be held at Ichapur (24-Parganas) from February 9 to 15, 1970. The main purpose of the State Plenum will be the assessment of the present political situation, and the actual organizational position of the Party and its consolidation, and on the basis of this, the Plenum will give a new direction to the Party organization and mass fronts.

*Published in the "People's Democracy" Calcutta, January 11, 1970...



Support to Kerala Fighters

The other two items on the agenda were :

1. Harvesting by the peasants and fasting by the Chief Minister and the members of his party, the Bangla Congress;

2. A report on Kerala by Comrade, P Sundarayya, General Secretary, of the Party, and the tasks of the democratic people of West Bengal in relation to the situation obtaining in Kerala.

On Kerala the West Bengal State Committee decided to mobilize the democratic masses of West Bengal in support of the struggling kisans, agricultural workers and other democratic forces, against whom unprecedented repression has been let loose by the Achutha Menon Ministry of the Congress-supported minifront of Kerala. It has been clearly noted that by fighting against the conspiracy to topple down the West Bengal United Front Government and by foiling the nefarious game within and outside the U.F. to break it, the people of West Bengal can best help brother fighters in Kerala and defeat the game of the Kerala minifront.

In another resolution, the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI (M) has directed its Ministers and members of the Assembly to see that the decision of the U.F. for introduction of free education upto Class VIII from 1970 is implemented and that legislations on unemployment benefit, measures on closed mills and factories and other labour legislations, on land reforms, etc., are brought and passed in the ensuing Assembly session. This resolution further directs the Ministers to see that the U.F. Government can help the hill people of Darjeeling in their fight for regional autonomy within the State of West Bengal against the Centre by constituting an Advisory Committee for the district of Darjeeling. The Committee has decided to start mass campaign on all the above issues.

Organizational Drive Successful

The reports from the districts and fronts revealed that the organizational drive of the Party had been generally successful

in all the districts and fronts, and thus all the annual targets fixed by the State Committee meeting earlier this year have almost been fulfilled. The target of collection for the Special Party Fund for the year has been fulfilled and the State Committee has already paid to the Central Committee its full quota of Rs. 50,000. The total Party membership renewed and newly enrolled comes upto 20,824. The total number of Auxiliary Group members has come upto 38,900 (reports from a number of L.C.s are yet to come) and that of volunteers 93,888.

The quota for membership of trade unions, kisan sabhas, students, youth and mahila organizations have been generally fulfilled. Sales of Party organs and literature have exceeded expectations.

The Committee has decided to run a provincial training camp for Party volunteers from January 6 to 13, at Panihati (24-Parganas), where political education will be imparted to the volunteers.

The State Committee has discussed and adopted a programme for celebrating Lenin Centenary.

Peaceful Harvesting

The State Committee heard reports about progress of harvesting in different districts. Except West Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri, harvesting in other districts are going to be completed soon. It is gratifying to note that responding to the call of our Party and faithfully implementing the policy of the U.F. Government, millions of toiling peasants all over the State have successfully completed harvesting of crops on practically all those vested and *benami* lands that they occupied and cultivated. Frustrating all the attempts of reactionary jotdars and giving a fitting reply to all those who slandered the peasants about endangering law and order, the peasants have ensured practically a peaceful harvest. Considering the fact that about several lakh acres passed from the hands of big jotdars to those of toiling peasants, the number of clashes is insignificant. Compared to the past several years, clashes have been few this time. The State

Committee has congratulated the peasants for this consciousness and organizing ability.

The Committee notes with pride that our Party units and comrades played a notable role in ensuring peaceful harvest. It is they who took the initiative not only in organizing peasants and in support of them, other democratic classes, but also in organizing mutual discussions and common decisions among different political parties with a view to minimizing the danger of clashes. We are glad that in spite of some hindrances from some parties in some cases our initiative proved successful. The apprehension of clashes was the greatest in 24-Parganas. In every area of this district our Party took the lead in settling disputes. In some cases in spite of other parties going back from agreed decisions, we were not provoked and we ultimately succeeded in avoiding clashes.

The State Committee also noted that at the initiative of our comrades, some minor mistakes that took place at the time of cultivation were corrected. But it was also noted that though the harvesting was done generally on correct lines, some mistakes here and there were committed. The State Committee was glad to note that compared to excesses committed by others, the mistakes of peasants who are amenable to our influence were the least. In the upsurge, some crops cultivated by ordinary peasants were also harvested. Though such mistakes are very few, still the State Committee has drawn the attention of all our comrades to them and urged upon them to take initiative in correcting them.

The Committee urged upon all Party units to further organize and consolidate the fighting forces of the toiling peasants, to build village unity of peasants, agricultural labourers, artisans, shopkeepers and other sections of democratic masses and to isolate the jotdars, mahajans and other reactionaries, and run a campaign for land reform legislations and prepare the peasants for further advance in the coming days.

Miserable failure of Bangla Congress

The harvest period experience has proved that the Bangla Congress campaign against the U.F. Government and particularly against our Party was nothing but an undiluted slander aimed at weakening the U.F., breaking the U.F. Government and helping the jotdars. The State Committee heard reports from all districts about the reaction of the people to the Bangla Congress fasts and the result of our political campaign. It was revealed that the Bangla Congress leaders had miserably failed to mislead the people. The response of the people was very poor, despite their tall claims. The vast masses of the people saw through the game. They saw hated jotdars among the hunger-strikers. The huge gatherings in our meetings surpassed all calculations.

The huge support of the workers, employees, teachers, students, youth and other sections of the people proves that their slander campaign has been thoroughly rejected by the masses as it was meant to boost the morale of the jotdars and other vested interests. It was amply demonstrated on December 26 through the historic rally before the Writers Buildings under the banner of the Rashtriya Sangram Samiti and the 12th July Committee, despite the disruptive game of certain parties of the Front, in support of the struggling peasants and against the conspiracy to disrupt the United Front. The Committee notes with confidence that a new type of people's unity is developing in West Bengal through these struggles. Before the anger of the people the jotdars' attempts to resist collapsed. The slander campaign launched by the Bangla Congress exposed the conspiracy to form a "mini-front" excluding our Party. It had its inevitable impact within the Bangla Congress also. The protest of Sri Sukumar Roy and others is a redeeming feature and this in its turn has exposed the conspiracy and the real aim behind the slanders by these groups.

The State Committee is glad to note that the conspiracy to break the U.F. Government has suffered a set-back because

the people could not be confused. But the danger remains and the State Committee has called upon all people and all its units to be on guard and to be prepared for any eventuality.

Safeguard Unity

The State Committee is eager to maintain the unity of the U.F. without sacrificing the interests of the common people and without deviating from the 32 point programme. The CPI(M) will do all in its power to maintain and strengthen the unity of the U.F. But the harm done by the Bangla Congress and their colleagues cannot be repaired by taking an attitude of forget and forgive. The CPI(M) cannot digest the slander that the U.F. Government which is very dear to the people and which is a weapon of their struggle is an uncivilized, barbarous Government, that the CPI(M) is a party of dacoits, etc. Only those who want to weaken the U.F. can tolerate such slanders. The State Committee appeals to all parties including the Bangla Congress and all members and supporters of these parties to do their part in undoing the damage and restoring the struggling unity of the U.F. The CPI(M) will guard the unity as the apple of the eye.

Polit Bureau's Call for Celebration of Lenin Centenary*

**P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M),
Writes to All Party Members**

Dear Comrades,

The Centenary of the Birthday of Comrade Lenin who led the first victorious proletarian socialist revolution in Russia and laid the foundation for building socialism as the first stage for a world communist society, falls on April 22, 1970.

In the words of Comrade Stalin : "Burdensome and intolerable has been the lot of the working class. Painful and grievous have been the sufferings of the labouring people. Slaves and slave-holders, serfs and sires, peasants and land lords, workers and capitalists, oppressed and oppressors—so the world has been built from time immemorial, and so it remains to this day in the vast majority of countries. Scores nay, hundreds of times, in the course of centuries have the labouring people striven to throw off the oppressors from their backs and to become masters of their own destiny. But each time, defeated and disgraced, they have been forced to retreat, harbouring in their breasts resentment and humiliations, anger and despair, and lifting their eyes to an inscrutable heaven where they hoped to find deliverance. The chains of slavery remained intact, or the old chains were replaced by new ones, equally burdensome and degrading. Ours is the only country where the crushed and oppressed labouring masses have succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and replacing it by the rule of workers and peasants. You know, comrades, and the whole world admit

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, January 25, 1970.

it, that this gigantic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party. The greatness of Lenin lies before all in this, that by creating the Republic of Soviets he gave a practical demonstration to the oppressed masses of the world that hope of deliverance is not lost, that the rule of landlords and capitalists is short-lived, that the kingdom of labour can be created by the efforts of the labouring people themselves, and that the kingdom of labour must be created not in heaven but on earth. He thus filled the hearts of the workers and peasants of the whole world with the hope of liberation. This explains why Lenin's name has become the name most beloved of the labouring and exploited masses."

"Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. To him it is always a link needed to strengthen the chain of revolutionary movements in the countries of the West and the East, a link needed to facilitate the victory of working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Soviet Republic itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the working people of the world to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, this most brilliant of all leaders of the proletariat laid the foundation of the workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of working people of the whole world—the Communist International."

Following the precepts of Comrade Lenin, the world communist movement has waged many a glorious battle for national liberation and social emancipation, during the last five decades and more. The victory over the Hitlerite fascist hordes during the Second World War, followed by the victory of the Chinese Revolution and establishment of the Chinese People's Republic under the leadership of the Communist Party led to the emergence of the world socialist camp. The shackles of capitalism over one-third of humanity

have been shattered, and mighty struggles are being waged against imperialism in the rest of the world.

In this mighty struggle, the death-defying heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people for over two decades against French and then against American imperialism, inspires all oppressed humanity to follow in Lenin's footsteps.

Our Polit Bureau has decided to celebrate Lenin's Centenary befittingly and to take to our people, on the widest scale possible, the knowledge of Lenin's teachings and his great revolutionary achievements and lessons everyone of us has to learn, to implement his behests.

Our Central Committee in its forthcoming session will lay down detailed directives. But, meanwhile all our State Committees must make necessary arrangements :

1. To bring out the basic reading from Lenin's classics already suggested by the Polit Bureau and sell them on a mass scale.

2. To bring special supplements of our Party organs or special pamphlets well before the Centenary Day. Meanwhile, continuously publish extracts of Lenin's teaching in our journals.

3. Prepare to hold mass rallies in taluk or district headquarters towns or at industrial and educational establishments, as widely as possible.

Immediately send to the Central Committee Office reports about the plans you have chalked out and steps you have taken to celebrate the Great Lenin Centenary.

With greetings,
P. Sundarayya

Dange & Co. Split AITUC*

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Refutes Slanders

The following is the text of the statement issued by the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Calcutta on January 15, 1970 :

Shri Dange's statement charging our Party with attempts to disrupt the AITUC is a laboured attempt to screen his party's policy of making the AITUC into its pocket-borough. It is an instance of thief calling thief.

Dange evades all issues germane to the question. The fact is that utilizing their existing majority, the right Communist leaders have been packing the AITUC with their unions with inflated membership. Dange conceals the fact that in the name of keeping out rival unions his group has systematically refused to affiliate fighting unions with large following, just because some of the leaders of these unions are members of our Party.

Our Party has always held to the line of trade union unity and continued to work in the AITUC despite all kinds of provocations, and total lack of democratic functioning on the part of the Dange group. We wanted and still would like the AITUC to be a centre of resistance, organizing and uniting the workers in the common struggle. It is absolutely essential that all the fighting unions which have led struggles, which show large following of the workers should be affiliated, so

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, January 25, 1970. This Document be connected with Documents covered under Appendix(II) of this volume.

that the AITUC becomes a real centre of resistance to the attacks of the capitalists.

This is precisely what the Dange group does not want in pursuance of its class-collaborationist line. In good faith we also proposed that if there are any rival organizations they can be united later on by taking the ballot of the workers. We know that the Dangeites have started rival organizations where unions have been functioning under our leadership. Most of these organizations have hardly any following. But they got them affiliated to the AITUC using their majority. That is why when we ask them to take the ballot, they dare not accept it. An appeal to the workers will show that the Dangeites' claims to represent so many workers are only paper claims.

Dange & Co. are bent upon a split because splitting the democratic forces is their accepted line. They split the Kisan Sabha claiming inflated membership. They split the Kerala United Front; and they are splitting the United Front in West Bengal.

Apart from the political reasons, there are other reasons why Dange & Co. want to split the AITUC. Their line of secret deals with the Government and the capitalists is being opposed by us and they find it inconvenient to continue it with ourselves in the AITUC. Dange is an old hand at the game, the latest instance being his attempt to strike a deal with the steel employers at the cost of the workers. Without consulting the steel unions and the workers Dange demanded an interim increase of Rs. 30—with the aim of actually striking a deal at a much lower figure. But the Durgapur workers frustrated this shady deal and actually secured an increase of Rs.33. Dange has been pursuing this policy for years and disrupting the movement. The same line has resulted in handing over a section of the workers to the Shiva Sena in Bombay. In the period of the recession while Calcutta saw a huge strike wave, Bombay, where Dange boasts of a huge membership, saw hardly any working class resistance in the textile industry. In pursuance of his line, Dange's party men

had been agreeing in the National Labour Commission to all kinds of curbs on the working class including prohibition of strikes in certain industries. It is to perpetuate this record that Dange & Co. seek to split the AITUC; otherwise they would not have rejected the request to postpone the date of the AITUC session and hold consultations for keeping the unity of the AITUC.

The Dange group, besides, is opening a new offensive on the union members by amending the constitution to give the right to the majority to expel other unions for allegedly anti-TUC activities. To be able to pass these amendments they require a three-fourths majority, hence the inflated claims. The entire aim of this manoeuvre is to make the AITUC an appendage of the Right C.P.

Our Party once more reiterates that it stands for unity. The unity of the trade union movement is what the Party fights for and will continue to fight for despite the disruptive activities of Dange & Co. But that does not mean that it will allow the AITUC to be packed with fake unions and transformed into a satellite organization of the Right C.P. Unity of the AITUC can be pursued if the Dange group agrees to give up its inflated claims and admit all the unions which have earned the confidence of the workers ; if the Dange group agrees that the AITUC and the unions should function democratically; that rival unions if any be amalgamated after taking the ballot of workers and uniting on the basis of proportional strength of each union and that the new amendments to the constitution are withdrawn and the Dange group agrees to give up the class-collaborationist line as seen in its practice.

To reach an amicable agreement on these matters it is necessary that the Guntur Session of the AITUC be postponed to a mutually agreed date.

Our Party appeals to the workers and the democratic forces to fight against the splitting tactics of the revisionist group. The line of unity pursued by our Party has already benefited the working class in Bengal where the jute, tea, textile and

engineering workers have secured big gains. Continuing to fight for this unity, they should frustrate all attempts of the Dange clique to utilize the prestige of the trade union movement for their policy of the treacherous deals with the employers.

P. Sundarayya's Letter to Prime Minister : Desist from Present Course*

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary, on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) wrote the following letter to the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on January 26, 1970.

We are addressing this letter with a view to placing our Party's views on the recent disturbing trends in the political developments of our country, so that your Government and the new Congress party as whose representative you are acting as the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, might give them their serious consideration.

It is now an admitted fact that several democratic parties and groups in the country which had been, since long, playing the role of opposition to the Government of the united Congress party, have decided to lend support to your Government and party in the course of the struggle against the so-called Syndicate wing of the Congress and the reactionary political line projected by it. Our Party, as a party of the revolutionary working class, does not hide the truth and makes it abundantly clear that it functions as a party of revolutionary opposition and is duty bound to continue that role, true to its ideological-political convictions.

And yet, in the changed political situation when the threat from the Syndicate wing of the Congress and its alliance with extreme Right-reactionary parties such as the Jana Sangh and Swatantra had become imminent, and when there were hectic attempts by them to take over the reins of the

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 1, 1970.

Government with the avowed objective of shifting the internal and external policies of the Government in a further Right and reactionary direction, our Party openly announced its support to your government in so far as it is fighting the Syndicate and its allies, foiling their bid to take over the Government.

This assistance given and the support lent to your Government by several non-Congress democratic parties and groups, including our party, in inflicting a defeat on the Syndicate-sponsored Presidential nominee, and in weathering several storms in Parliament created by the Syndicate alliance, on number of occasions and over a series of issues, had played no small role in warding off the threat of the Rightist take-over, and in the scoring of victories in the struggle against the Syndicate and its allies. These victories, it should be admitted, had not only unleashed great enthusiasm among the people and roused big expectations in them, but it also stands out that but for these victories, the shape of things in the country's political arena today would have been totally different. Even today, it is our party's considered opinion that the threat from the Syndicate's projected alliance and political line is far from defeated, and it would be a grave error to underestimate these extreme Rightist forces who are firmly entrenched in society, at different levels. The truth is that the fight has just begun against this menace, and only initial victories have been scored against it.

But to our extreme regret we observe that some of the major decisions taken by your Government over certain key issues of serious public controversy, and certain policies that are being pursued by the leadership of your party and Government in the recent weeks and months, are not only belying the hopes of the people but also are undermining the struggle against the avowedly reactionary political line of the Syndicate-alliance, opened some six months back with gusto. To mention a few, the clearing of the licence for Birlas to set up the fertilizer factory with U.S. collaboration, the final decision to go in for the unprofitable deal of purchasing the

Boeing-737, the sanctioning of steep rise in steel prices, and the undue exuberance displayed for wooing foreign capital, investments from West German and Japanese monopolists, are rightly evoking deep resentment among the wider sections of the democratic masses. An irresistible impression is gaining ground that the leadership of the ruling party and the Central Government, contrary to all their professed aims and proclaimed policies, are yielding to the pressure of Big Business at home and succumbing to the blackmail of the foreign monopolists from abroad.

We may also add here, some of the activities of the State Governments, headed by the new Congress party you now represent, in the last few months are inviting mass indignation and protest, as demonstrated in the case of the Rajasthan Government which unleashed a reign of repression and terror on the legitimate peasant struggle for the allotment of Government lands to the landless and the poor.

Similarly, the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, under the pretext of suppressing the terroristic activities of the Naxalites, in the district of Srikakulam and other places, is resorting to the most heinous and barbarous method of liquidating scores of Naxalite activists, without charge-sheeting and trying them in a court of law for any crimes they are alleged to have committed. By now, nearly a hundred tribal people and the activists among the Naxalites have been shot dead, simply announcing that they were shot during the cooked-up 'armed encounters'. Such brutal repression on the tribals and the poor is only gladdening the hearts of the oppressive landlords and rapacious moneylenders while causing indignation among the common people.

You can well imagine that all these activities, in the absence of anything positive and tangible done so far to better the lot of our common people, cannot but dampen the mass enthusiasm and immensely harm the cause of the fight sponsored against the Syndicate's menacing political line.

Then coming to some of the political policies the Central Government and the party in power are pursuing, they compel

us to conclude that they are persisting in the same old discredited political line of toppling and scuttling the non-Congress State Governments, particularly the Left-oriented U.F. Governments such as Kerala and West Bengal, though the modus operandi is somewhat subtle and craftier than the one pursued in the years 1967 and 1968 by the then Central Government.

If earlier the method of organising defections in some parties of the U.F. and utilising the office of the Governors to topple non-Congress U.F. State Governments was in vogue, now it seems the method of encouraging defection of some parties and groups from the U.F.s betraying their electoral pledges to the people, is being resorted to. Such methods of giving dividends for political defections and betrayal of electoral pledges, surely, are not democratic methods, but only go to strengthen political immorality in public life and destroy democratic values among the people. The case of Kerala is a fitting example where some parties and groups flouting the electoral pledges and breaking open commitments made to the electorate have been installed in office, freely encouraged to organise defections, promising benefits by utilising the authority of office. Instead of straightaway asking for a fresh mandate of the people, these methods would destroy all democratic values among the public.

It is interesting as well as intriguing to find that the ruling Congress party on the one hand is seeking the support and co-operation of all the democratic parties and groups in the country in the struggle against the threat of the Syndicate alliance and on the other, simultaneously, does everything in its power to undermine the U.F. Governments in Kerala and West Bengal, directing its main edge of attack against the CPI(M) and its close allies who constitute the major components of these State Governments.

The manner in which your party assisted the no-confidence motion against the EMS Ministry in Kerala and is proceeding on similar lines in West Bengal, and the way the CRP is put at the disposal of the so-called minifront Government in

Kerala to unleash a reign of police repression and terror on the toiling agricultural labourers, poor peasants and all those who stand by them in their struggle, make it abundantly clear what these policies amount to and where they would finally lead to. To put it bluntly, it is a policy of attempting to fight the Syndicate's politics with the cooperation of all the democratic and progressive forces and simultaneously allying with the Syndicate and all other extreme Rightist parties to fight and liquidate the Left-oriented U.F. State Governments which played a big part in warding off the Syndicates threats.

Such a line, however tempting it may look to the ruling Congress party and its Government and whatever momentary successes it might achieve, is in fact, the line that is consistently advocated and upheld by the Syndicate and its Jana Sangh and Swatantra allies. Any measure of success scored in such a line, obviously, is a success to the political line of the Syndicate Congress, seriously undermining the struggle, just unleashed against these extreme Right-reactionary forces.

The question involved here is not the partisan interest of our Party and how to defend itself against the attacks of all its opponents. That depends on the correct class policies we pursue and the selfless service we render to the oppressed classes and masses of our country. This we have been doing since long and it is that which made our Party what it is today, a sizable political force in the country. We have undying faith in our cause and will pursue it in future, no matter what trials and tribulations await us. There is no questions of looking to any other political party for any assistance in this regard. The issue that immediately interests us is the struggle against the impending menace from the political line of the Syndicate Congress and its allies, a struggle in which your party and Government, for their own valid reasons, are also vitally interested.

The policy your party and Government seem to have embarked upon, as vividly seen in the case of Kerala and West Bengal, is objectively unleashing not the anti-Syndicate

forces, but nakedly anti-Communist forces, no matter under what slogans, such as 'law and order in danger', etc., it is sought to be covered up. This familiar cry of the monopolist controlled Press about the breakdown of 'law and order' and the perpetration of 'violence' by our Party, carries as much truth as its sly campaign that the leadership of the ruling Congress party has turned 'Communist'. It does not require much common sense to realize that if even one-hundredth of this alleged 'lawlessness' and 'violence' slanderously attributed to our Party is true, then our Party would have been wiped out by the people, instead of becoming increasingly endearing to them, to the envy and jealousy of many.

The support your party and Government are seeking in their struggle to fight the threat of the conservative alliance, from the democratic and advanced sections of the people, will surely be vitiated, if these forces, in practice, are to experience what is being experienced in Kerala by the widespread deployment of the CRP to repress the people. The apparently innocent looking argument that all this is the outcome of the bickerings and quarrels among the U.F. parties, the ruling Congress party and the Central Government has no hand whatsoever, etc., is neither going to convince the people nor would it, in any way, arrest the adverse process and its harmful impact on the struggle that is on against the menace of the Syndicate's political line and its projected reactionary alliance.

In this connection, our Party once again wishes to reiterate its opinion that the capital city of Chandigarh should be incorporated in the State of Punjab while providing all the required assistance to the State of Haryana to build its capital, at a place of its choice in the State. In fact, this is the opinion that most of the political parties in the country, may be some for different reasons of their own, have come to publicly express. Though we do not subscribe to the methods of leaders' self-immolations for achieving the legitimate objectives and do treat the vow of Sant Fateh Singh

more as exasperation than a threat, we urge upon your Government to boldly announce your decision to include Chandigarh in the Punjab. Any vacillations or any other unprincipled formulas on this question, we are sure, would lead to endless trouble. We hope you would appreciate our anxiety over the matter, and announce your decision before it is too late.

Our party while striving to do its utmost in the nationwide political struggle, against the threatening menace of the Syndicate Congress and its alliance, undeterred by all the pin-pricks and diversionary attacks on it, deems it its political duty to place before you and your Government the dangerous potentialities inherent in the course you have embarked upon, the course as it is unfolding in Kerala and West Bengal. We hope that serious consideration would be given by your party's leadership and Government to the crucial political issues raised in this letter and that you will desist from following such a course that ultimately undermines the entire political struggle against the pernicious political line of the Syndicate Congress and its Jana Sangh and Swtantra allies, a struggle in which our Party is vitally interested, and which your party and Government claim to be now leading.

Kerala's Ruling Parties Face Difficult Alternatives*

E. M. S. Namboodiripad

The short-sightedness and petty-mindedness of Right Communist leader M.N. Govindan Nair was clear on January 16 in the Kerala Assembly when, immediately after the vote on the CPI (Marxist) amendment to the Governor's address, he gave expression to his glee at the majority of 18 with which the amendment was defeated.

More amendments were on the order paper and the CPI (M) had made it clear that all these amendments would be pressed. Govindan Nair said that, since it was clear that all of them would be defeated, they might be spared the trouble of taking a poll on these amendments. This was naturally resented by the Opposition. The Speaker himself pulled up Govindan Nair, saying that such remarks were uncalled for during voting, since it was left to the members concerned whether or not to call for division.

Seeds Of Utter Defeat

This however, concerns only the constitutional impropriety of a legislator belonging to the ruling party making disparaging remarks on the legitimate right of the Opposition to call for division. The Right Communist leader was, in fact, gloating over a "victory" which, it can be seen, contains the seeds of an utter defeat, as the Secretariat of the Kerala State Committee of the CPI(M) explained after the voting.

* Published in "People's Democracy". Calcutta, February 8, 1970

Let us, for a moment, examine the figures of voting. The CPI(M) amendment was supported by 55, including the CPI(M) (49), SSP (4), KTP (1) and a former ISP member now independent (1). Against this were 73, including the five Syndicate and four Indira-group Congressmen. Simple arithmetic would show that deducting the nine Congress members, the Government got only 64 votes out of 128 votes recorded. In other words, even after 2½ months of high-powered propaganda, they could not get sufficient number of defectors from the CPI(M) and the SSP to make a clear majority without Congress support.

As if this was not enough, the leaders of the Syndicate as well as the Indira Congress made it clear in their speeches that the Right Communist Chief Minister should not take the support of their respective parties for granted.

Syndicate leader Dr. George Thomas was forthright in explaining why his party is extending its support to the Ministry. "We find," he said, "that Congress Chief Ministers from Pattom Thanu Pillai to R. Shankar were carrying out the same (Congress) programme as Achutha Menon is doing now." To which he significantly added that the political changes that had taken place in the State had made it necessary for a fresh appeal to the electorate.

The leader of the Indira Congress, Karunakaran, also said that his party was supporting this Government only because this Government was reversing the policies pursued by the former Marxist-led Government, and carrying out programmes which were acceptable to the Congress.

The speeches of these two Congress leaders were clear indications that their parties would support the Government only so long as and to the extent to which the Government acts as a tool in the hands of the Congress in its struggle against the radical political forces headed by the CPI(M). If at all the Right Communist Chief Minister and the colleagues have some rethinking and start trying to reforge the links with the CPI(M) and revive the old Marxist-led United Front, the nine Congress votes now

recorded in favour of the Government would turn against it.

Choice Before RSP

On the other hand, one of the constituents of the 'mini-front', the RSP, made its own political stand clear in the course of the debate preceding the voting. Its leaders, Baby John and T.K. Diwakaran, used the opportunity of this debate once again to appeal to the CPI(M) to facilitate the revival of the U.F.

Diwakaran, who is the Leader of the House, and therefore should be considered to be speaking for the Government, took a step which is unusual for a Leader of the House. He "appealed both to the Opposition and the Government" to take a "constructive" attitude and develop relations of cooperation between the Opposition and the Government, justifying this with the plea that, as Leader of the House, it was his duty to reflect the feelings of the whole House, including the Opposition.

It was clear that, whether it was because of their own personal feeling of embarrassment at Congress support or because of pressure from their ranks, the RSP leaders were trying to dissociate themselves from the other constituents of the ruling front who were happy at the Syndicate-Indira (and possibly Kerala) Congress support.

This does not of course mean that the RSP for its part is having any rethinking on its role in the toppling of the former Marxist-led United Front Government. The RSP leaders repeated the time-worn slander against the the CPI(M) whose "big party bossism" was allegedly responsible for the disruption of the United Front. Even after the forthright statements of the leaders of the two Congress groups, Dr. George Thomas and Karunakaran, explaining why they cooperated with the 'mini-front' in toppling the previous Government, and why they were supporting the present Government, the RSP leaders do not regret their role in the toppling of the former Government. They also joined the Right Communist leaders, as well as their new allies of the three (Syndicate, Indira and Kerala) Congress groups, in

repeating the slander that the CPI(M) was unscrupulously throwing its cadres into the arena of an adventurist struggle.

There are, however, clear indications that the RSP would like to preserve what is left of its revolutionary image. Its leaders are not as happy as their Right Communist, Muslim League, and ISP colleagues that the Government which they have to support has necessarily to depend also on the support of the Syndicate and the Indira group. But they are on the horns of a dilemma: if they take the forthright stand that they cannot have anything to do with a Government which depends on Congress support, they would have to part company with their Right Communist and other allies of the 'mini-front' and join the CPI(M) and other radical forces in a determined struggle against the landlord-bourgeois vested interests entrenched in the Kerala Congress, Syndicate and Indira Congress. On the other hand, if they join the Right Communist and other friends in their unconcealed hostility to the CPI(M) and fully justify the present regime of police terror, they will lose their revolutionary image and a good section of their cadres. It is extremely difficult for them to choose one out of these two different alternatives.

Muslim League's Difficulties

It is, however, not only the RSP that is facing a dilemma now. Every constituent of the 'mini-front' as well as all the Congress groups, are today so situated that they have to choose between difficult alternatives.

Let us take the Muslim League whose leaders thought that the anti-Marxist unity which culminated in the joint voting of October 3 and October 24 would be followed by the formation of an all-inclusive non-Marxist ministry. They never bargained for the split that has occurred within the Congress. Their hope, on the other hand, was to get a second version of the notorious anti-communist United Front of 1959-60. That hope lies shattered today. They have to choose between the Syndicate and the Indira Congress. If they choose the Syndicate, they have to part company with

the Right Communists, not to speak of the RSP. If, on the other hand, they choose the Indira group, they are choosing that Congress group which at least in Kerala is weaker. In any future election, therefore, they have to contend against a strong Syndicate (perhaps with the support of a part if not the whole of the Kerala Congress), as well as against a strong combination of radical forces headed by the CPI(M).

No less difficult is the choice facing the Kerala Congress. Left to themselves, its leaders would like to join hands with, if not completely merge into, the Syndicate Congress with whom they are ideologically at one. That would mean parting company with the Right Communists and the RSP and therefore, leaving the Ministry. Which will they choose?

Pitiable Plight of Revisionists

The Right Communists are in the most pitiable condition. For, despite their loud denunciation of the Syndicate as the most reactionary political force in the country, they cannot survive the situation that will arise if the Syndicate in Kerala starts playing the role of a genuine opposition. The five member Syndicate group in the Kerala Legislature cannot be dismissed as an insignificant political force. For, it is well known that the Syndicate has its sympathizers outside its own five-member group of legislators. The moment the sympathizers of the Syndicate as well as the Syndicate group itself decide that the time has come to strike, they can well bring this Government down and challenge the Indira Congress-Right Communist alliance for a trial of strength in a fresh appeal to the electorate. A call for this has, in general, been given by the Syndicate. If this is made an irresistible demand and a fresh election is held, the Indira group-Muslim League-supported Right Communists face a fiasco as serious as, if not more than, what they suffered in 1965. Such an eventuality can be avoided only by the timely re-tracing of the step taken when they took the initiative in the forming of the 'mini-front' and joining hands with the Kerala Congress and Congress.

The Two Congress Groups

No less pitiable is the condition of the Indira group Congress in Kerala. For, no amount of support which they render to the 'mini-front' Ministry would save it if and when the Syndicate and its sympathizers in other parties start moving along the path of toppling this Government. The fall of this Government would, in its turn, be a very big blow to the Indira group Congress, not only in Kerala but in the whole country. Its leaders are, therefore, fondly hoping that the boastful Right Communists, who have been promising an increasing number of defectors from the CPI(M) and SSP, would prove correct and the Government (in which they themselves would get a share in return for the share given to the Right Communists in the Bihar and U.P. Ministries formed by them) would have a comfortable majority without the support of the Syndicate or its sympathizers in other parties.

The Syndicate, too, has its worries. For, although its leaders show a brave face and challenge the 'mini-front' and Indira group for a trial of strength, they know that they cannot have any spectacular victory in a triangular contest. There is, on the other hand, a possibility that their most hated enemy, the CPI(M), would come out creditably. But what can they do? Join hands with the Indira group and the Right Communists? Can they tolerate the Indira Group and the Right Communists who happen to be their main enemy now?

ISP—Unhappy Partner

There remains the ISP, a constituent of the 'mini-front'. They would certainly like to continue in the 'mini-front'—Kerala Congress coalition. They are, however, unhappy that within this coalition, they have to play second fiddle to the Right Communists who are today dominating the coalition. Voices have, in fact, been raised within the 'mini-front'-Kerala Congress coalition that they have been made to fall from the frying pan of Marxist domination to the fire of Right Communist domination. "There is at least some justification."

say some ISP leaders, “for the Marxists to try to dominate, since they, after all, are a big party. But what about the Right Communists? They have nothing and yet they want to dominate the coalition.” There are persistent reports that the two ministers (who are comparatively junior in the party hierarchy to the two former ministers, Kunhu and Kurup) are acting at the behest of the dominating Right Communists. This party, too, is thus facing a difficult choice.

One can only sympathize with the right Communist leader who does not see these aspects of the political reality inside the legislature and gloss over what the leader of the Syndicate Congress called the “technical majority” behind the Government headed by his party.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on G.O.I. Decision on Chandigarh*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), after having considered the decision of the Government of India on Chandigarh, and appreciating the decision of Sant Fateh Singh to give up his fast and threat of self-immolation is pleased to note that the threatened communal flare-up in the State of Punjab is averted. It is happy that the situation has not been allowed to worsen further, which would have only helped the reactionaries and communal elements to mislead the masses of both the States into fratricidal conflict. Whatever disagreements they may have to certain aspects of the decision of the Government of India, the C.C urges upon the people and on all parties of both the States to continue to preserve at any cost the harmony between the people of both the States.

In this connection, the C. C. cannot but draw attention to the fact that the Chandigarh issue or Punjab-Haryana boundary adjustment issue had been made a point of dispute and discord, by inordinately delaying the formation of the linguistic State of Punjab and when it was ultimately conceded, the boundary was sought to be fixed on the basis of 1961 Census, whose figures were unreliable as far as the language question was concerned, because of Hindu-Sikh communal differences.

Even now the Government of India's decision to hand over a greater part of Fazilka tehsil to Haryana and providing a

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 8, 1970.

corridor one furlong wide is an unprincipled decision. Firstly, a large number of these villages are not Hindi-speaking but Punjabi-speaking, though Hindus are in majority. Thus, the decision of handing over these villages to Haryana, sets a dangerous principle of adjusting boundaries of the State on communal consideration, sows seeds of further scope for communal incitement by the interested reactionary groups.

Secondly, it is unprincipled to provide a corridor to link up access to pockets of different linguistic groups to one or another State, and a fantastic way of solving the problem of promoting harmony between two States or two sections of people. The only principle in such cases should be taking the group of villages of different language (here Hindi-speaking group of villages in Fazilka tehsil) and the intermediate villages which are interposed (here Punjabi-speaking villages), that are breaking the contiguity (contiguity between Fazilka tehsil in Punjab and Hissar district in Haryana), this whole *compact* group should be so demarcated and allotted to one linguistic State or another as to leave the least number of linguistic minority people in the other State.

The C.C. hopes that the leaders and the people of Punjab and Haryana would arrive at common friendly agreement as to the just and correct principles of their border adjustment. The C.C. is of firm opinion that all border issues between States should be solved on the basis of village and contiguity expeditiously before the interested parties make it a main issue and mislead the people into wrong and disruptive movement. The Central Government should clearly define the terms of reference of the proposed Commission on this basis. The democratic forces and especially the communists should never allow these minor issues to become the focal points and allow the attention of toiling masses to be diverted from the urgent tasks of fighting the vested interests for their economic and political demands and rights.

The C.C. notes that the Jana Sangh and Syndicate have created large-scale disturbances in Haryana exploiting the feelings of discontent among certain sections of the people.

The people and toilers should be beware of this game which only helps the reactionary vested interests. The C.C appeals to the people of Haryana and Punjab, especially toilers, not to be misled by the mischievous propaganda of reactionary forces who intend to create strife between the people of both the States with a view to divert their attention from the issues facing the people.

Fight This Betrayal*

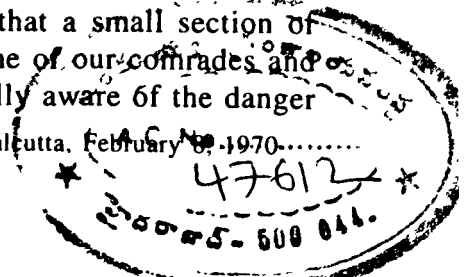
Statement dated January 30, 1970 issued by the Secretariat of West Bengal State Committee of C.P.I.(M) on the Conspiracy to break the United Front Government of West Bengal

The West Bengal Secretariat of the CPI (M) has issued the following statement in Calcutta on January 30, 1970 :

The existence of U.F. Government in which the people of West Bengal reposed their trust is in serious danger. This danger has come at a time when the workers, peasants and other toiling people have scored important victories with the help of the U.F. Government in their struggle against the reactionary vested interests and when the situation demands further strengthening of the U.F. The conspiracy to break the U.F. and to impose a puppet Government on the people with the help of the Congress has reached a crucial stage. It is spearheaded by the leaders of the Bangla Congress supported by some others. It is being engineered on the plea of "law and order" and fighting against the so-called "high-handed attitude of the CPI(M)".

Mischievous slanders are being invented and grave provocations are being organized in order to create incidents or clashes to justify this design to break up the U.F. Government. The people are becoming increasingly conscious about this conspiracy and are expressing their strong opposition to such moves. The people, and particularly our comrades and sympathizers, are showing great restraint in face of provocations. But it is unfortunate that a small section of people in some places and even some of our comrades and sympathizers are found to be not fully aware of the danger

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 6, 1970.....



and are allowing themselves to fall a prey to provocations. They are to understand that it directly helps the game of disruptors. We should not allow such things to happen.

The CPI(M) urges upon the people in general and our comrades in particular to prepare themselves to face any eventuality and fight against any betrayal. At the same time, it urges upon them to be on guard against any provocations, however grave they may be. The Secretariat directs all district units of our Party to take serious note of the danger and take urgent measures against falling a prey to provocations.

CPI(M)'s Urgent Letter to All Constituents of West Bengal United Front*

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau and Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has addressed the following urgent letter to all constituents of the West Bengal United Front on January 30, 1970:

1. The U.F. in which the people of West Bengal have placed great hopes and the U.F Government which has been brought into existence by the people as the only alternative, are in deep crisis. The attitude and activities of some of the constituents have intensified this crisis. The CPI (M) urges upon all parties to stop before the precipice and not to do anything to break the U.F.

The people of West Bengal decidedly rejected the Congress and voted for the U.F. to run the Government in way different from the Congress way and that the Government machinery is not used against the people, but is used to help the people in their struggle against the vested interests. We are glad that in spite of some possible mistakes and shortcomings the U.F. Government has creditably discharged this duty. While taking necessary measures to correct mistakes every party should feel proud of the achievements. Any slander against the Government undermines the basis of the U.F.

Agreed Decisions Unimplemented

2. With the advance of the cause of the people, certain stresses and strains began to develop within the U.F. adversely

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 8, 1970.

affecting inter-party relations. The U.F. after serious deliberations took important decisions at different stages to solve the inter-party problems—the nine-point decisions of September 17, 1969, and the seven-point decisions of October 26, 1969. But without giving any opportunity to put them into operation some parties took certain steps to aggravate the crisis which was objectively aimed at breaking the U.F. Government. Slanders were invented and attacks were concentrated against the CPI(M) without whose participation and proper role there can be no U.F. Certain other deplorable steps were taken with the same object in view. Now certain proposals like formation of all-party committees at each thana have been put forward by some parties which, if insisted upon, will not in any way help to solve the problem as claimed by the sponsors, but will mean the last step to paralyze the administrative machinery and to break the U.F. and thus create a dangerous situation.

3. Deterioration in inter-party relations and inter-party clashes are serious problems which the U.F. took note of in due time. The five bigger parties including the Bangla Congress thoroughly discussed this problem and placed their views before the U.F. for consideration. The 14 parties after prolonged discussions adopted unanimously a common document analyzing the causes of inter-party troubles and prescribing a nine-point programme solution. Concrete programmes for issuing handbills and holding joint meetings were taken. But unfortunately some parties have chosen to forget the causes analysed therein and started concentrating attack on the CPI(M). Without giving any chance to implement the programme the Bangla Congress leadership came out with a highly objectionable and disruptive resolution. The U.F. again discussed the problem on October 25 and 26 and decided on seven-point concrete programme. They included concrete steps like stopping slanders, distributing handbills containing the earlier nine-point decision of U.F., measures for ensuring peaceful harvest, measures to settle some serious disputes and holding joint meetings. The CPI(M) in its supreme anxiety

to maintain unity of U.F., did not rake up the past and agreed loyally to carry out the programme. To disabuse the minds of all the constituents and to correct any possible mistakes, the Home Minister belonging to our Party proposed that the activities of his department should be first reviewed and that concrete instance should be sent to him before such discussion can take place. But no party uptill now has given any concrete thing in writing except unilaterally making vague and slanderous assertions. To make matters worse, the Bangla Congress leadership again without giving any trial to the seven-point programme started statewide hunger-strikes, intensified slander campaign against the CPI(M) and went to the absurd length of deriding the U.F. Government as "uncivilized" and "barbarous". To slander and blacken the U.F. Government means to knock out the very basis of the U.F. The Bangla Congress leaders have not yet given any explanation with regard to this slander despite repeated demands by our Party.

Interference by Chief Minister

Recently the Bangla Congress leaders have gone a step further to break the U.F. The very basis of the U.F. is common discussion and agreed work. No party is subservient to any other party—not to speak of the biggest party being at the mercy of a smaller party. But the Bangla Congress leaders utilizing the position of Chief Ministership has misused the provisions of Section 29(3) of the Rules of Business to directly interfere in the day-to-day activities of the Home Department. Had there been any bonafide intention the Chief Minister could have easily had discussion with the Home Minister. It was objectively meant to pit officers against officers and disorganize the administration.

All these steps and activities can point to one direction only, i.e., to disrupt the U.F., to form a Government without the biggest party, the CPI(M), and with Congress cooperation. Statements to this effect have been appearing in the Press on behalf of the Bangla Congress leaders. This has

further deepened the crisis and has brought the U.F. on the verge of break-down.

In the context of these developments, it is impossible to make one believe that some of the recent proposals like formation of advisory committees at each thana or advisory committees for the Ministers are meant to solve inter-party problems. Rather they will objectively lead to the break-up of the U.F. Government. It should be noted that when such proposals are put forward, slanders and attacks against the CPI(M) are intensified.

4. Formation of so-called thana committees is an absurd proposal. The real problem lies in the relation among different parties. Without solving the problem, imposition of such committees will worsen the problem. Moreover, the whole day-to-day administration will completely collapse. This proposal is politically motivated to attack and slander the CPI(M) and to disorganize the administration. The CPI(M) cannot but resist any such proposal in the interest of the U.F. itself.

Similarly the formation of so-called committees at each Ministry cannot be of any use except making day-to-day work impossible.

While avoiding any concrete discussion regarding the work of the police which our Party suggested long ago, to bring forward such proposals like formation of thana committees cannot be a sincere desire to solve the inter-party problems. It can only mean an intensification of the slander campaign against the CPI(M). The CPI(M) can never accept such a position.

Proposals for Solution

5. The real solution lies elsewhere and we place them again before all parties for consideration:

a) The U.F. should regularly review the work of various departments. The Home Minister offered his department for review first on the basis of concrete reports placed by different parties. The Cabinet itself can discuss any department. Special

meetings of the U.F. and the Cabinet may be held on specific problems any time.

b) There are district U.F. Committees. They can discuss and review the work in their districts and should hold joint meetings to thrash out mutual differences.

c) On any dispute among different parties on any problem at any level the parties should hold bilateral and if necessary, multilateral discussions, they should discuss at a higher level whenever local parties fail to arrive at agreed solution. They can help the administration in this way at all levels. This was the method suggested in the nine-point programme. This method was followed at the time of harvest with better results.

d) Sincere efforts should be made to implement the nine-point and seven-point programmes. Without giving any trial to them it is futile to suggest any other scheme.

6. To carry out the mandate of the people and to save the U.F. it is absolutely necessary that every party should loyally follow the principle of U.F., i.e., common discussion and agreed decisions in order to carry out the 32-point programme of the U.F. Any attempt to interfere in any other department on any pretext should stop. Differences should be solved by mutual discussion. It should be impermissible for any party of the U.F. to slander the U.F. Government. Any defects, weaknesses or shortcomings of the U.F. Government and inter-party differences are to be solved by the only admissible method of mutual discussion. Any thinking to form any Government by excluding any party of the U.F. must be discarded. The attempt to attack the CPI(M) must stop. Only on this common understanding the seven-point and nine-point programmes can be successfully carried out. We are confident that with the backing of the people we can solve the inter-party problems, if all the constituents wish it.

7. We cannot be oblivious to the dangerous attempts to break the U.F. and form a Government behind the back of the people by excluding the CPI(M) and other parties and with the inevitable collaboration with the Congress. Such

attempts are not only against the people's interests, but will be a gross betrayal of their mandate as well as of the 32-point programme. No party has got any right to do that, without going to the people, and seeking their fresh mandate.

CPI(M) Central Committee's Report on Present Political Situation*

**Placed before and adopted by the
Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held
in Calcutta from February 2 to 7, 1970**

The issue of inner-party crisis in the ruling Congress party and its assessment in class terms has been a topic under discussion by the Polit Bureau and Central Committee of the CPI(M) as has been the case with all the other political parties since the first quarter of the year 1969. The fact that our Party, during the entire course of this developing crisis, was taking broadly a correct stand on every crucial question thrust before it, should not lead us to the complacent belief that everything is correct and comprehensive with our political assessment of the Congress split, that there is no need to further deepen and enrich our understanding of the entire situation.

Our Central Committee, immediately following the fourth general elections, had undertaken the task of a concrete detailed assessment of the then prevailing political situation, and on that basis had worked out a political-tactical line to be pursued by the Party. That resolution "was an attempt at a new political-tactical line for our Party to suit the newly opened current situation. As is well-known to all Marxist-Leninists, 'tactics are the determination of the line of conduct of the proletariat in the comparatively short period of the flow and ebb of the movement, the rise and decline of the revolution', and our Party is duty bound to work out such tactical lines from time to time, depending on the changing situation and

*Published in the compilation of CPI(M) documents from February 1969 to April 1971. This report was dated February 9, 1970.

see to it that it dovetails into the class strategy worked out for the entire stage of the revolution in our Programme.” (*New Situation and Party’s Tasks*, p. 82)

It was nearly three years ago that our Central Committee addressed itself to this task and worked out its political-tactical line. It is now necessary to find out whether there is any serious change in the present political situation and whether any corresponding new tactical orientation is required for the revolutionary movement. A cursory glance at the prevailing political scene in the country would convince every politically minded person that the situation has vastly changed from the one that obtained prior to the developments in the latter half of the year 1969. The split in the Congress party, the betrayal of the United Front in Kerala by certain parties headed by the Right Communists and the activities to undermine the U.F. Government in West Bengal on similar lines, and the banner of opposition to the national coalition government slogan of the Syndicate Congress, Jana Sangh and Swatantra alliance being taken up by the ruling Congress wing, too, at the Centre are some of the striking developments in the present situation.

These developments are not fortuitous. In the context of the deepening economic crisis despite all the assertions of the bourgeoisie, the democratic revolutionary struggles carried forward against the bourgeois-landlord rule and the policies of the Central Government to shift the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the working class and the common people had scored signal victories. These struggles had received tremendous impetus and encouragement by the policies of the two U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala, particularly after the mid-term elections in West Bengal. These two Governments and their policies were generating a radical influence throughout the country.

Precisely as a result of all these factors, class contradictions have further sharpened. The ruling classes are in disarray and the initial stages of the political crisis, noted in the April 1967 document, has reached another new phase,

symbolized by the open split in the Congress party and the scramble for new political alliances by the ruling class parties in order to meet the challenge of the rising democratic movement and to safeguard their class rule.

The intensification of the class struggles and the sharpening of class contradictions also find expression in the different political parties and groups that constitute the U.F.s in Kerala and West Bengal.

The phenomenon noted in the April 1967 resolution, viz., "the Left and democratic parties and groups, under the impact of the mass struggles and the mounting anti-Congress mood of the people are increasingly realizing the necessity and urgency of unity among themselves" is no longer present in that form. In the face of these mounting class struggles, their anti-Congressism is giving place to new illusions in the Congress party led by Indira Gandhi and several parties are succumbing to anti-Communism. Reactionary forces naturally seek to utilize this situation to whip up anti-Communist frenzy and isolate our Party. The Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress, too, gives encouragement to these parties of the U.F. in their conspiracy to form governments excluding our Party. The conspiracy has succeeded in toppling the U.F. Government in Kerala and a similar threat hangs over the U.F. and its Government in West Bengal.

The two wings of the split Congress are making feverish attempts to rally the opposition parties and groups behind their respective wings and several of these parties are tending to fall a prey to them.

The C.C. resolution of April 1967 noted :

"With the emergence of eight non-Congress Governments in states and the precarious majority for the Congress party in the Lok Sabha, the leaders of the Swatantra and Jana Sangh parties have been raising the slogan of a national coalition government at the Centre. It is also followed by intermittent threats of forcing a mid-term election on the Congress party, if it is not willing to accept the slogan and form a coalition with them. The monopolist press in the

country has taken the cue and has busied itself with selling the slogan. A debate is on in several political parties, particularly the Congress, Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the like, with arguments for and against it.

"The slogan, in substance, is a slogan aimed at nullifying the popular victories scored against the Congress in the fourth general elections. It is a slogan that, first and foremost, calls for a united front of the bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties to confront the democratic opposition parties, with the avowed aim of stabilizing and consolidating the tottering bourgeois-landlord Government and its rule and the disruption and suppression of the democratic forces. Shorn of all niceties it is an out-and-out reactionary and counter-revolutionary slogan and needs to be countered effectively and unhesitatingly.

"No democratic party or group in the country should fall into this trap, and no democrat or progressive belonging to any party, worth his grain, should allow himself to be lured into this snare." (*Ibid*, pp. 75-78)

As a result of the deepening economic-political crisis, this slogan which has been raised by the Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh following the fourth general elections to counter the challenge of the democratic forces, has gained a big momentum thanks to its open espousal by the Syndicate wing of the Congress, too. In the context of the combined and coordinated efforts for its fruition by the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra parties, this threat has assumed today menacing proportions. No democratic party, least of all a revolutionary working class party like ours, can ignore or be indifferent to this menace except at great peril to itself and the democratic movement.

It was noted in the April 1967 resolution of the Central Committee, "the crisis has forced to the forefront the battle of policies and programmes, which battle, of course, is sure to bring about a new alignment of class forces and new polarization of political forces". The year 1969, following the mid-term poll results, has witnessed the pronounced

features of this phenomenon, one cycle being completed with the split of the Congress party, emergence of two rival Congresses, with two bourgeois lines of solution to meet the crisis. In these circumstances, the battle against policies and programmes, against the capitalist path of development, assumes greater importance.

The big change brought about in the political situation of 1967-68 can be vividly seen when we compare the present political stand of our Party with the one we had in the previous period and under different political conditions. The April 1967 resolution, while sharply pointing out the need to fight and expose the extreme reactionary character of parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra observes:

“The big bourgeois-landlord classes and the Congress and other political parties representing them would not take the defeat lying down. They will embark on repeated attempts to unite all the reactionary parties and groups into a bloc or a single party to pit against the popular forces and the Communist Party. They will also try every trick to drive a wedge between the other democratic parties and the Communist Party. But the objective class realities and the contradictions inherent in them hinder these attempts at every stage, preventing their fructification. The proletariat and its Communist Party should and can foil all ruling class machinations provided it proceeds on correct class lines and the correct tactics that follow from it.

“So, we should neither allow ourselves to become victims of the naive and erroneous idea that the unity of all our class enemies against us is always easy, possible and round the corner, nor should we lose our self-confidence and conviction that by studying carefully and utilising skilfully every fissure, conflict and contradiction in the enemy camp the proletariat and its Communist Party can and should foil their attempt.

“The single biggest lesson that stands out is that by pursuing a determined struggle to win allies on a wider scale and concentrating the main fire and directing the main edge

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against the Congress party and its Government, since it continues to be the chief instrument of the class rule and exploitation of the big bourgeoisie and landlords, we have succeeded in contributing considerably to the people's victories at the polls.

"This we should pursue with vigour and also cover up the gaps, if any, found on more closer examination. The fact that the Congress party still is the strongest class party of the bourgeois-landlord classes should not be lost sight of and no room should be given now for the revisionist scare of non-Congress right reaction *at the present stage*, and consequent advocacy of a united democratic front with this or that section of the Congress; it will be disastrous to do so." (*Ibid*, pp. 59-60)

But under the changed political situation since the latter half of 1969, our Party, while in no way compromising the role of our Party as a party of revolutionary opposition, has been lending certain amount of support to the Central Government run by the anti-Syndicate wing of the Congress party, in order to defeat the determined efforts of the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine and thus ward off the grave danger of this combine taking over the Central Government. The efforts we made to ensure the victory of V.V. Giri and the defeat of the Syndicate candidate Sanjeeva Reddy in the Presidential contest, the opposition to the censure motion sponsored by the Syndicate allies over the Government's performance at the Rabat Conference, and the Central Committee's declaration "extending support to Indira Gandhi's Government for every measure directed against the menace of the Syndicate" were all taken to prevent this menace fructifying into actuality.

Our Party is called upon to boldly face the situation and conduct the struggle against the impending menace of the extreme right reaction and also against the threat posed to the unity of the democratic and revolutionary movement in the country. To discharge this difficult task, what is required is utmost clarity of thinking regarding the analysis and

assessment of the political situation, a correct estimate of the degree of maturity of the economic-political crisis, and a concrete analysis of the alignment of class forces. Then alone it is possible to work out corresponding slogans, tactics, forms of struggle and organization.

The Background to the Congress Split

The economic crisis, as noted by the C.C. Resolution of April 1967, was something deeper and more serious than what it was sought to be depicted by the bourgeois theoreticians. It is not simply in the nature of an ordinary periodic cycle of the capitalist order, nor merely the evil legacy left behind by the former British imperialist rulers. The capitalist path of development embarked upon by the Congress Governments, with the fond hope of liquidating the chronic crisis of a colonial economy, is itself involved in a serious crisis, superimposed on the old crisis-ridden colonial economy. The new big inequalities that the so-called planned development has engendered, making a handful of rich fabulously richer and the great mass of the people poorer and poorer, have further aggravated and sharpened the class and social contradictions to such a point where the much tom-tomed planned development has virtually come to a grinding halt. The simple fact that the Fourth Five-Year Plan had to be put in abeyance for full five years since 1965 speaks volumes about the fiasco of the so-called middle path, which is the path of capitalist development. The problem of resources for the plan is posed before the ruling class as a serious challenge.

Two sharp alternatives are open to the country. One is to mop up the internal resources by attacking the landlords, big business and foreign monopolists and build a democratic and prosperous economy. The other is to continue the path of capitalist development by launching further intensified attacks on the livelihood of the great mass of our people. The Congress party and its Government by their very class character cannot choose the former course. The latter course

has already led to the growth of resistance and the emergence of a democratic challenge.

Differences have arisen precisely over the question of how to meet this challenge. The wing headed by the Syndicate is determined to pursue the path of frontally attacking the people and overcoming their resistance by naked oppression and suppression of the democratic movement and, above all, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which is leading the struggles of the masses. It realises that this line can be carried out only in alliance with 'like-minded' parties such as the Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh. The line of the Syndicate means further shift of the internal and external policies to the extreme right, and abject surrender to the imperialists.

The Indira Gandhi wing is apprehensive that such a course would further shrink the mass base of the Congress, by alienating the Muslims and other minorities as well as the Harijans from the Congress and would tarnish its image. While it firmly sticks to the same old bankrupt path—the path of capitalist development by relying on collaboration with the foreign monopolists and in alliance with the landlords, which they call a 'middle path' the very path that is at the root of the present economic-political crisis—at the same time it seeks to expand its mass base by catering to the pressing needs of the discontented non-big bourgeoisie, besides promising certain concession to the oppressed petty-bourgeoisie and the people. It demagogically raises the slogan of socialism, and talks against monopolists and landlords, and seeks to sow illusions among the people. It hopes that thereby it can arrest the shift of the masses away from the policies of bourgeois-landlord parties and towards the alternative democratic policies as advocated by the CPI(M). It also seeks to wean away the parties that had formed the U.F.s with the CPI(M). It seeks to continue the present foreign policy to avoid total dependence on imperialism.

Reviewing the fourth general elections, the C.C. in April 1967 noted as one of the features of the political crisis that

in the face of the developing economic crisis and the rapid rise of mass anti-Congress discontent, the happy position when the Congress party was the sole party uniting the entire bourgeois-landlord classes was no longer there and the reverse process of several groups and sections breaking away from the Congress and forming several parties had begun. This process has taken a big support and resulted in the division of the Congress from top to bottom.

It is true that this split has taken place in the background of the deepening economic-political crisis and growing mass awakening in the country. It is equally true that the U.F.s and their state Governments in Kerala and West Bengal and the fillip they gave to the innumerable class and mass struggles in these states as well as the widespread movement all over the country, played a crucial role in vitally influencing the course of the present political developments. However, the situation is such that the revolutionary working class and its democratic allies are not yet sufficiently organised and strong enough to make a direct bid to overthrow bourgeois-landlord rule and fight here and now for its alternative People's Democratic path. The split has come about in a situation when the ideological-political influence of the bourgeois-landlord class over the masses is still considerable and when several bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties with their opportunist policies have not sufficiently discredited and exposed themselves in the eyes of the masses. The working class and its party can ignore this factor only at its peril.

The fight of the Congress wing led by Indira Gandhi against the Syndicate and its attempt to take over the Central Government in alliance with the Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh is of great political significance in this context.

Both the wings of the split Congress, it is true, have not yet reached the point of such despair about elections and the running of a parliamentary system of government as to contemplate asking the military to take over. For the first time in the post-independence era, the stability of the Central

Government is rudely shaken, and it has immense political significance for the parties of revolutionary opposition. This is a development for which the revolutionary forces have been fighting all along, namely, break up the Congress monopoly of power and thus pave the way for the ending of the bourgeois-landlord class rule headed by the big bourgeoisie. The process has begun in a big way, thanks to the political crisis that has set in and is rapidly unfolding with every passing day. Our Party which has been playing a significant political role in guiding and shaping the revolutionary movement, for which alone it is inviting the wrath of every reactionary force in the country, is called upon to actively intervene in the developing situation and fight for the advance of the political line it has been advocating. Here, we face mischief from both ends, Right revisionism and Left adventurism.

Different Assessments of the Congress Split and Their Implications

The imperialist circles, as is evident from the comments appearing in the leading monopolist newspapers of the USA and Britain, are, no doubt, worried over the developments in our country since the fourth general elections, particularly the emergence of the two Left-oriented state U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal in which our Party happened to occupy a central place. They look upon the Congress split in their own way and seem to be neither confident about the success of the Syndicate leadership and its projected line nor unduly alarmed about the line advocated by Indira Gandhi and her wing of the Congress. They feel assured that the victory of either wing in no way affects their basic interests, while throwing sly hints of military take-over in case they do not behave within the set limits. Theirs seems to be a wait-and-watch attitude instead of openly throwing their weight in support of one or the other Congress wing, as such a course might invite popular indignation in the country, besides possible international complications. At any rate, they are

not worried over the radical and socialist postures of the Indira Gandhi Government and do not hesitate to exploit the weakness of the divided and weakened Government to further their own ends, beating down the semblance of resistance it was so far putting up against the dictates of foreign monopoly capital. It is significant that not a word comes out from Indira Gandhi's Congress and its Government against the depredations of foreign monopoly capital and everything goes well with its deals in India, the latest being the clearance of licences to the fertiliser factory of the Birlas in collaboration with U.S. capital and the Government's decision to go in for the long-delayed purchases of the Boeing 737. The whole network of the USA, including the Central Intelligence Agency, entrenched at different levels and on different fronts in the country goes on merrily with all its mischief of whipping up anti-Communism and purchasing all those who can be purchased and recruited for this 'holy' task.

The Soviet press and radio express feelings of disturbance over the prospect of a Syndicate victory and are anxious to throw their full weight in favour of the Indira Gandhi Government. They still continue to put much store in the crisis-ridden and bankrupt "middle path of Nehru fame", fondly hoping that it can be salvaged by the party and Government headed by Indira Gandhi. Though they are hesitant to characterize the Indira Gandhi Government and its wing of the Congress as representing the class interests of the non-big bourgeoisie in opposition to the big bourgeoisie, they do confer on it the title that it is the 'progressive' wing of the 'national bourgeoisie', no matter what its attitude is towards foreign capital and feudal and semi-feudal landlordism at home. They not only throw their weight openly in support of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government, but also exhort the working class and other democratic forces in the country to unreservedly rally behind that Government in order to save the "great and glorious path" that "great and glorious son of India, Nehru" had chalked out.

The Indian revisionists go another step forward organising demonstrations with slogans of “Syndicate murdabad”, and “Indira Gandhi zindabad” and viciously attacking the CPI(M) for not falling in line with its treacherous tactics. It has already blown up one of the only two Left-oriented U.F.s and their state Governments in Kerala and West Bengal. The Congress split, according to them, is a split between the big and non-big bourgeoisie in the country, opening up wonderful prospects of a national coalition government at the Centre under the leadership of Indira Gandhi’s wing of the Congress, a government supposed to be under the “exclusive leadership” of neither the bourgeoisie nor the proletariat, but under the leadership of “all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal democratic classes”. They pad it with all sorts of deceitful phrases and add “ifs” and “buts”, opportunistically shifting their positions every alternate day as their bankrupt thesis comes under attack and exposure.

In the early period of this controversy during 1963-66, these revisionist pundits maintained that the Swatantra, Jana Sangh, Akali Dal, Muslim League and DMK were the parties representing the forces of extreme reaction and they must be fought in alliance with the Congress party and its Government. But beginning with the fourth general elections up to the middle of 1968, the same gentry were allying with several of these parties, such as the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, forming and functioning united fronts and state Governments with them, all under the high-sounding name of fighting the reactionary Congress! They thus did their bit to prove their anti-Congress bona fides.

Subsequently during the course of the Congress in-fight the revisionist leaders came out with the thesis that the split in the Congress party was between the reactionary forces on the one side and the progressive forces on the other, basically representing the monopolists and anti-monopolists respectively. They claimed that what they were saying for long had come true, and the possibility of building a ‘National Democratic Front’ together with the Congress wing

and Government headed by Indira Gandhi for achieving the 'National Democratic Revolution' had opened up, etc.

Then came a slight twisting and turning, and they began saying that "*clear-cut differentiation between the progressives and reactionaries*" had not yet taken place but "*this differentiation has already started and the process will proceed at a rapid pace*", etc. Their National Council Resolution sings the refrain that those "who have rallied under the leadership of Indira Gandhi do not all represent the same ideological and political stand" and "there are many vacillating and even reactionary sections in her camp". What a discovery!

Reviewing the Bombay session of the Congress and its deliberations, the revisionist weekly *New Age* wrote : "Thus, in the final analysis there is nothing spectacularly radical or revolutionary in the economic programme put forward in the Bombay Congress session", "Labour has got a shabby deal at Azadnagar", "On many items in the proposed programme like state trading in foodgrains, take-over of export-import trade, ceiling on urban income, bank loans for the landless, such reservations were evident. Almost all the Chief Ministers were opposed to take-over of the foodgrains trade and unrestricted loan facilities to landless labour. Brahmananda Reddy dragged his feet on setting a deadline for land reforms. D.P. Mishra was reluctant to accept ceilings on urban property. M. L. Sukhadia was doubtful about the benefits of nationalising sugar industry", and, "ultimately, a compromise was struck by which the resolution said that the Congress has to contain the right reaction in the form of communalism and conservatism, and also prevent violent and chaotic action by Left extremists."

After reporting all this story, the paper's editorial lamented : "The attitude of Indira Gandhi, Y. B. Chavan and other leaders is, however, not unexpected. This stems from their basic class positions. *After all, they are the political representatives of the national bourgeoisie.*" Then came a long list of thirtyeight demands, what they called their "short-term immediate programme of economic reforms". The progressive

and anti-monopolist wing of the Congress leaders thus are "after all political representatives of the national bourgeoisie"! In between, the revisionist leaders also make statements, for the record, that they are not advocating alliance or front with the Indira Gandhi Government, and that theirs is only conditional and critical support to her. While pouring venom against the CPI(M) for its refusal to characterise the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress as representing the progressive and anti-monopolist sections of the bourgeoisie and rejecting a united front with it, the revisionists *forge an anti-Communist front and Government in Kerala with the open support of the Indira Gandhi Congress, Syndicate Congress, Kerala Congress, Karnataka Samity and every defector from any party who falls for a loaf of office or for some other favour*. Such is the sorry story of the revisionist assessment of the Congress split and such are the despicable tactics they have embarked upon.

The Chinese press and radio see nothing in the crisis in our country and the Congress split beyond stating that the Syndicate wing is sold out to U.S. imperialism while the opposite wing is sold out to Soviet social-imperialism, and the entire dispute between the two Congress wings is reduced to a dog-fight between two sets of imperialist stooges. The political crisis, according to them, is a revolutionary crisis, and there is no other tactical line before the revolutionary working class in the situation than to resort to armed struggle, in the form of a people's war. Any other assessment of the political situation and any other political line by the Communists mean betrayal, renegacy, cowardice and treachery to Marxism-Leninism and the cause of revolution. It is on the basis of such infantile estimation of the correlation of class forces that a section of the Party, which has come to be called the Naxalite school of thought, and the believers in the so-called Thought of Mao Tse-tung, revolted against the Party. They had started their sad experiments, which, during the last three years, not only inflicted serious damages on the revolutionary movement of our country, but also

gave a handle to the Government to physically destroy scores of militant fighters. This section has now split into numerous groups fighting each other, though all of them concentrate their fire on the CPI(M) and its political line and disorganise the peasants' and workers' movement in several pockets. For them, fascism already exists in India and it is immaterial whether it's Syndicate's rule or anti-Syndicate rule. As such, they do not need to bother their heads to analyse and assess the crisis and the Congress split.

The leaders of the SSP have assessed the Congress split more or less on similar lines as the split in their own party some years ago into the two wings, PSP and SSP. The statements, discussions and activities of several leaders of this party, during the course of the recent Congress in-fight and split, reveal the utter confusion that prevails in the thinking of these leaders. This has now resulted in sharp differences among the leaders. Some see the danger represented by the Syndicate and are opposed to any alliance with it. They are prepared to support the Indira Gandhi Congress in the fight against the Syndicate. The dominant section of the leaders, however, verbally refuse to make any distinction between the two wings of the Congress, but in reality, support the Syndicate wing. They have all along been refusing to make any distinction between the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and most of the other opposition parties and were ready to unite with anyone in the name of fighting the Congress. The proposed political alliance of the Syndicate Congress with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra and the grave implications of the political line they project for the internal and external policies of the country do not provoke any horror in the minds of these leaders, as alliance with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra is nothing new or shocking to them as they have been advocating such alliances and practising such tactics for long. To hide their utterly right-opportunist politics, some top leaders of the SSP are indulging in pseudo-Leftist demagogy of uncompromising "anti-Congressism", equating both the Congress wings and the political alliances they have mooted.

They advocate a line of equidistance from both, but are ready to ally with either under the screen of a "time-bound minimum programme". Though this party dons an all-India character, practice shows that each state unit is free to follow its own policies and work out its own alliances. In Kerala, the state unit of the SSP has taken a correct stand and is in alliance with our Party, opposing the treacherous mini-front Government. In West Bengal, the party is ranged on the side of the disruptors against us.

The opportunist and unprincipled policies of the PSP need not be explained here at length. Its shameful alliance with the Shiva Sena in the recent past in Bombay is known to all. In fact, because of its opportunist policies, the PSP has lost much of its political prestige and has been facing disintegration. In its recently held National Convention at Baroda, the PSP has described the Jana Sangh and Swatantra as reactionary forces which are inimical to its objective. It has also tried to demarcate between the two wings of the Congress. But it persists in its vicious anti-Communist tirades, making the CPI(M) its principal target of hate and attack.

This grossly opportunist and unprincipled behaviour of the all-India leaderships of these two parties is not accidental but is the inevitable outcome of their deep-seated anti-Communist prejudices and chauvinistic politics. The rabid anti-Soviet, anti-China, anti-Pak and anti-Communist stances of these two parties, as amply demonstrated during the last two decades in both the periods when they were united in one party and divided into two parties, were at the root of their emotional affinity with parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra. It also springs from another source, namely, these two parties have some mass base in states like U.P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh where the Jana Sangh, too, has acquired a foothold. This tempts them to go in for all sorts of opportunist electoral alliances in the game of bourgeois parliamentary politics.

These and other similar political gimmicks of these two parties in the past neither enhanced their political prestige

nor enabled them to escape disintegration, as is markedly seen in the case of the PSP. The opportunist tactics the leaders of these parties are pursuing in the present phase of the deepening economic-political crisis are already causing severe inner-party crises and convulsions in them, and they will have a telling effect on their future if they persist in these tactics without correcting them in time. Their entire analysis of the Congress split and current political developments is clouded by their anti-Communism. Their radical slogans and demands do not and cannot deceive the toiling masses for too long when they see that these are the leaders who shout the loudest about the so-called collapse of "law and order" under the Marxist-led U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, where alone the lawless law of the landlord and capitalist exploiters was sought to be checkmated and the police prevented from going to the rescue of exploiting capitalists and landlords.

Then comes the attitude of several state-based parties and break-away groups from the Congress, such as the DMK, Akali Dal, Muslim League, Bangla Congress, BKD, Janata Congress, Forward Bloc, RSP and the like. Most of these parties who were compelled to seek adjustments and alliances with CPI(M) when the Congress was united and refused to accommodate them, are once again tempted to desert their former anti-Congress democratic alliances and flock around the Congress wing in power at the Centre. Thereby they think they can both save their democratic image by opposing the Syndicate wing and also secure their share of spoils of office which was denied earlier. Above all, many of these parties are alarmed at the sharpened class struggle and the new mass awakening and unleashing of initiative in Kerala and West Bengal, as all this in their opinion is shaking their class and mass base while considerably strengthening the base of the CPI(M). A hue and cry is raised that "law and order" is collapsing, that the CPI(M) is utilising the police portfolio in the partisan interests of the Party, that it is adopting a 'big brother' attitude and 'bossing' over other

allies, it is indulging in violence, etc. This is nothing but an exact replica of the worldwide and time-old anti-Communist slander. The entire monopolist-controlled press worked up this canard, considering it a god-sent opportunity since the slander emanated from the allied parties in the 'fronts' themselves. These parties, totally oblivious of the aim of the monopolist-controlled press to divert the mass attention from the rising tempo of anti-Syndicate struggle into anti-Communist channels, are elated at the support and publicity they are securing for their anti-CPI(M) slander campaign and manoeuvres. They are subordinating their pledged hostility to the Syndicate alliance to their struggle against the CPI(M) and the United Fronts in which it is a major partner. Thus, the anti-Congressism that prevailed among these parties during 1966-69 and which was acting as the motive force behind the forging of these United Fronts, is found to be on the wane, while their anti-Communist prejudices are once again gaining the upper hand, to the detriment of the unity among the democratic classes and masses. This undoubtedly is a negative feature in the situation with harmful consequences for the overall political struggle against the monopolists, landlords and the foreign imperialists, a struggle which began gathering momentum, thanks to the economic-political crisis, the Congress split and the popular mass struggles that were taking place during the last three years. It follows, that our Party is facing another trying phase of defending its independent political line, depending mainly on its independent strength, together with its closest allies. It also is becoming evident that the fronts forged and the front Governments formed and functioned up to now, which were expected to serve as the instruments of struggle to rally ever-increasing numbers of people against the bourgeois-landlord rule, are proving unequal to the task due to the present class composition and class links with the vested interests of some of these constituents. It is now clear that it is necessary for the Party unit in Kerala to once again so reorientate its work as to mainly concentrate on organising and conducting the

class and mass struggles, and in opposition to the mini-front Government, with the clear perspective of working for a new realignment of political forces and of forging the united front on a new basis and on a far higher political level than was the case so far. The developments in West Bengal, too, are indicating the same.

Cobwebs that Cloud Clear Vision

It is true that our Party did not allow itself to succumb before the right-revisionist thesis of the Congress being split into reactionary and progressive wings, advocating alliance with the latter for the formation of the so-called national democratic front and Government. Nor did the Party become a victim to the Left-adventurist thesis that India, since long, has become a U.S. neo-colony, that the Indian Government has become a U.S. stooge, that a revolutionary crisis is already on, demanding armed struggle and people's war, etc. It firmly stuck to its analysis made in the April 1967 resolution which pinpointed the deepening economic crisis and noted how it was projecting into the political sphere, ushering in the initial stage of a political crisis in the country.

That resolution, while noting the big opportunities thus opened up for the advance of the revolutionary movement, also pointed out sharply the serious weaknesses and shortcomings in the situation. It said.:

"However, the report takes serious account of the fact that considering the immense possibilities and opportunities that have been opened up before the working class, there exists a big lag between the requirements of the situation and the state of class and mass organizations of the people and the level of their political consciousness. Special note is taken of how the degree of consciousness and the organization of the working class is at a pitifully low level, how its Communist Party is very weak and even non-existent in the greater part of the country, how the Communist movement in India is further faced with the onslaughts of revisionism

organised in the shape of the Right Communist Party.” (*New Situation and Party’s Tasks*, p. 81)

We may add here that hardly within a couple of months after these observations were made, a big Left-adventurist onslaught was also made on the Party and its political line which we could not anticipate at the time of adopting the April 1967 resolution.

The thirtyfour months since then have been months of serious efforts on our Party’s part to liquidate the shortcomings and weaknesses, to defend the party line against the attacks of right-revisionism and Left-adventurism and to carry it forward, ensuring new victories for the Party. The achievements and shortcomings in this work, particularly in reference to the work of the two U.F.s and their state Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, were assessed up to the time of the Eighth Party Congress at the end of the year 1968. All that need not be recounted here, though further reassessment may become necessary in the light of swift turns and rapid developments in 1969, following the mid-term poll results and the events unfolding in that background.

The April 1967 resolution of the C.C., while discussing the nature of the political crisis that had set in following the fourth general elections and the formation of non-Congress State Governments in as many as eight states, observed that all this “denotes a big brake on the chariot wheel of the Congress monolith”, that the election results “have seriously undermined the monopoly of power of the Congress party” and that “what remains of the Congress party is acutely strife-ridden, with warring factions in a number of states and the Centre”.

The resolution enjoined on us :

“The economic and political crisis, as it unfolds itself, not only leads to the polarization of the forces for and against the big bourgeois-landlord alliance, but also leads to several frictions, struggles, factional squabbles, splits and formation of separate parties and groups among the bourgeois-landlord classes and their parties. Of course, the degree and

intensity of these conflicts and contradictions may vary from time to time and also from place to place depending on the stage and maturity of the crisis and on the sweep and tempo of the mass revolutionary movement.

“Any failure on our part to undertake painstaking and concrete study of these developments and to tend to treat them as of no consequence or consider all of them as a consolidated bloc of reaction will cost our cause seriously. While not for a moment slipping into the nauseating theme of the revisionists of discovering class differentiations among the bourgeoisie and attempting to fit into this pet theme every development and every turn of events, we should study this phenomenon with great care and work out our tactical line. Otherwise, a yawning gulf will grow between the class strategy we have laid down in the Party Programme and the tactics which we have to pursue from time to time and phase to phase of the developments in order to realise the strategic objective.” (*New Situation and Party's Tasks*, p. 46)

But while carrying on the determined political struggle on the lines laid down by the April 1967 resolution utilising the two U.F. state Governments of Kerala and West Bengal as the advanced outposts of the democratic revolutionary movement for unleashing big class and mass forces, our Party was not prompt enough to study its impact in all its aspects on the political crisis.

With all the correct political analysis and assessment and with the correct Programme and the political line to guide the Party, and notwithstanding the fact that our Party was, from time to time, taking broadly correct positions on all crucial issues that came to the forefront in this period, we should admit that we were, for the most part, emphasizing the intensification of the class and social contradictions and the consequent sharpening of the class struggle in the country and tended to underestimate the political impact of the differences and split on the ruling Congress party and Government; we remained content merely noting the growing disunity and disintegration in the Congress party. While

correctly rebutting the pet revisionist theme of fitting every difference, fissure and quarrel in the Congress party into the formula of political differentiation of the bourgeoisie into monopolist and anti-monopolist wings, we tended to underestimate the inner contradictions in the Congress combine, as they were not yet expressing in the sharp and acute form visualized in the Party Programme, i.e., the non-big bourgeoisie breaking away and coming under the hegemony of the working class. No other form of split in the bourgeois class was considered a possibility, nor was the meaning and significance of such a split sought to be properly assessed and understood. In short, though most of our cadres and leaders know by heart Lenin's well-known statement that a "powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful attention, skilful and obligatory use of any, even the smallest, rift between enemies, and conflict of interests among the bourgeoisie of various countries and among the various groups and types of bourgeoisie within the various countries", etc., when it became a question of practical application, a big split that was brewing in the Congress party before our eyes initially escaped adequate attention and appreciation.

The fact that the latest Polit Bureau statement of January 1970 which sums up and carries forward the correct orientation of our P.B. and C.C. since the July 1969 meeting of the C.C. and which also represents the comprehensive and correct tactical line demanded of our Party, should not make us forget that there was some serious lacuna in our political understanding of the situation. We should strive to clear the cobwebs, and attempt at a much deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the political situation and the new tactical stand that we have evolved.

To summarize, what is outlined in the earlier part of this report about the present political situation is :

The economic and political crisis has been more aggravated than what it was at the time of the April 1967 resolution or even the time of our Eighth Party Congress. The

class and social contradictions have been far more intensified and the class struggle has sharpened. The political crisis, which we described in April 1967 as in its initial stage, has reached another phase, symbolising the split in the ruling Congress party and also the ruling classes into two broad divisions. One wing, which is called the Syndicate, and its allies are pursuing a pronouncedly reactionary political line. This is the line of uniting all the reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces with a view to launching a frontal attack on the lives and liberties of the people, a line shifting the internal and external policies of the Government further to the right, and imposing a nakedly dictatorial rule over the country. The rival wing, led by Indira Gandhi, though pursuing the basic path of building capitalism in alliance with landlords and in collaboration with imperialist monopolists, is opposed to the political line of the Syndicate. It upholds Nehru's "middle path" with some modifications here and there, under the facade of democracy, secularism and socialism. Neither of these lines offers a solution to the developing economic-political crisis. Both the wings are busy mobilizing the political forces behind their respective lines. While the Syndicate wing is working up an anti-Communist frenzy and demands banning of the CPI(M), the other wing is assiduously working to isolate the CPI(M) from its allies in the U.F.s and encourage the formation of mini-front Governments excluding the CPI(M) and subservient to the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress.

Most of the non-Congress bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties are attempting to line up behind one or the other, whichever suits their convenience and promises immediate dividends. All these political parties, with an eye on the likelihood of a mid-term poll for the Lok Sabha and on the fifth general elections in 1972 in particular, are mapping out their strategies and attempting to present a popular image before the people. Most of these bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties are not only going about among the people with radical slogans of economic reforms, but also are engaged

in championing different kinds of regional, parochial and chauvinistic demands to divert the growing mass discontent into disruptive channels and capitalise on them.

The agitation for a separate Telangana state, the demand for statehood to the Vidarbha area of Maharashtra, the aggressive championing of the demand for the incorporation of Belgaum in Maharashtra by the Shiva Sena and its fanning of the flames of hatred against linguistic minorities on the one hand and the chauvinistic hue and cry raised by the state Congress and other bourgeois parties of Mysore against any principled settlement of the border dispute on the other, the river water disputes between different states, the movement organised in Assam on the issue of oil refinery, etc., are some of the instances that fall in this category. The potentialities of mischief that these diversionist movements carry with them cannot be underestimated and the menace to the democratic unity of the classes and masses from them is real and disturbing. The CPI(M) takes serious note of this.

The intensifying economic-political crisis is resulting in increasing mass discontent and growing mass struggles. Ever-increasing sections of masses are being drawn into political activity, and mass awakening and radicalization is on. Besides numerous working class and middle class employees' struggles for wages, employment and against lay-offs and closures of factories, and the growing unrest among tens and thousands of employed all over the country, *a new upsurge in the agrarian field is a phenomenon to be noted.* Congress agrarian reforms during the last two decades aimed at blunting the sharp class contradictions in the rural areas and disrupting peasant unity and the united agrarian revolutionary movement. In some measure this had succeeded but it has finally resulted in sharpening and pushing into the forefront the class contradictions in the rural areas between the landless and poor on the one hand and the landed rich on the other, posing the issue of radical agrarian reforms with the slogan of abolition of all landlordism and land to the landless as an immediate and urgent problem. A series

of militant agrarian struggles, organised all over the country under the leadership of different political parties and groups, for better wages to agricultural labour, for wasteland distribution to the landless, for tenants' rights, etc., underline this question. The powerful agrarian movements unleashed in West Bengal and Kerala with the active assistance of the U.F. Governments played a big role in focussing this problem in all its seriousness and giving it the revolutionary orientation required for the movement. This situation is compelling even several other political parties, who have strong links with the landlord classes, either to neutralise themselves or pay lipservice to radical agrarian reforms, since they realize that their electoral prospects are in danger if they alienate the sympathies of the vast peasant masses, particularly the poor and the landless in the rural areas.

But despite the intensifying economic-political crisis and the sharpening of class contradictions and the class struggle, moving the masses into action on an ever-increasing scale, the political crisis is far from maturing into a revolutionary crisis or ripening into a revolutionary situation. As Marxist-Leninists we cannot shut our eyes to the serious political weakness of the working class and peasant movements. The bulk of the working class is not yet rescued from the evil influence of the INTUC and other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties; the comparatively advanced section under the leadership of the AITUC is facing revisionist disruption. The vast peasant masses still remain under the alien ideological-political influence of the bourgeois and landlord classes, all of which need be taken into serious account when a Communist Party works out its tactics, slogans of action, forms of struggle and organization, etc.

We correctly noted these weaknesses and shortcomings as early as in April 1967 and decided on steps to liquidate and overcome them. But they are far from overcome, even though considerable headway has been made in the states of Kerala and West Bengal. It would be folly then on the part of any serious revolutionary leader to estimate the situation

as a revolutionary situation, on the eve of revolutionary upheavals breaking out. The Communist movement, confronted with the menace of organised revisionist forces on the one hand and Left-adventurist groups on the other, taking their inspiration from the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties' revisionist and Left-opportunist theories respectively, is yet to eliminate these threats, even in these two strongholds of our Party, let alone the situation outside these two states. The great part of the masses who are still under the political-ideological influence of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties, have not yet outlived their parliamentary illusions, and still continue to look upon the state legislatures and Parliament as institutions that might enact legislations beneficial for them.

It is precisely in this stage of the political crisis, when the working class and the revolutionary movement it is heading are still not powerful enough to aim at the immediate overthrow of the big bourgeois-landlord rule, and the premier bourgeois-landlord ruling party is split into two over the dispute on policies to overcome the economic-political crisis that the CPI(M) is called to work out its tactical slogans. The choice before it is neither to be indifferent to this split, on the ground that there is nothing *fundamentally different* between the two political lines, nor rally behind the wing led by Indira Gandhi under the illusion that it represents the non-big bourgeoisie and thus is progressive. Our line should be such that while it sharply and continuously attacks and exposes the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine and all its machination, frustrating its attempt to take over the Central Government, it at the same time, strengthens the position of the working class and the democratic movement as against the entire bourgeois-landlord rule led by the big bourgeoisie, no matter whether it is led by the Indira Gandhi wing or the Syndicate wing.

While the strategic slogan of replacing the present bourgeois-landlord Government by a Government of People's Democracy will continue to be popularized, we should be

vigilant enough to foil the attempts of the extreme reactionary Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh alliance to exploit the situation to replace the present Indira Gandhi Government with its own counter-revolutionary coalition Government.

The dislodging of the present Government at the Centre, in the context of the correlation of political parties in parliament, would objectively amount to assisting its replacement by a Syndicate-led Government. Such a course, instead of assisting the accumulation of strength of the democratic revolutionary forces in the country in the process of the struggle against the determined reactionary offensive of the Syndicate, singling it out for attack, in cooperation with as many forces as could be mobilized for it, no matter how temporary these different allies are, with what motives and objectives they join the struggle and how long they stay in the struggle, will prove suicidal for the working class. The attitude of our Party in Parliament on the various issues that will come up will be guided by this consideration, consistent with the defence of the democratic movement. Our Party will spare no efforts to maintain its strong and determined opposition to all the reactionary policies, methods and steps that the Indira Gandhi Government itself pursues.

Our line has nothing to do with and is totally opposed to the line proposed by the revisionists of a united front with the present ruling wing of the Congress, or the slogan of forming a so-called 'National Democratic Coalition Government' at the Centre and in the states under the leadership of this wing. This slogan is based on the totally erroneous and class-collaborationist thesis that the Congress wing led by Indira Gandhi basically represents the non-big bourgeoisie, in opposition and hostility to the collaborationist big bourgeoisie and their landlord allies. Our support to it is conditional and only in so far as it helps the struggle against the threat of the Syndicate in order to ward off, postpone and eliminate it.

We have to advance the democratic revolutionary movement in this extremely complex situation.

First, despite the political opposition of Indira Gandhi's

wing of the Congress to the Syndicate, many of the people gathered round it, and on whom this wing relies for support, and many of the state Governments led by this wing are indistinguishable in their outlook and policies from the leaders of the Syndicate. Taking into account the prevalent mood of the masses against the Syndicate, they have joined the wing led by Indira Gandhi with an eye to their future and out of opportunist factional considerations.

Second, the Indira Gandhi wing has not made a break with, but pursues the same bankrupt capitalist path of development. Inevitably, despite all declarations that it intends to fight the monopolists and landlords, this path in practice will strengthen the position of the landlords and the monopolists, and the foreign imperialists will take advantage of the crisis to wrest more concessions. The licence given to the Birlas for a giant fertiliser factory in collaboration with U.S. monopolists, the increase in steel prices, etc., are illustrative of this. The statements made by the Chief Ministers belonging to the Indira Gandhi wing immediately after the Bombay session of the Congress, opposing any radical land reforms and their repressive actions against peasant struggles go to confirm this. All this naturally will go to strengthen the forces of right reaction.

Third, precisely because of these, our Party as a working class party and the democratic movement will come into conflict with the Central Government and the State Governments headed by this wing, over a series of issues connected with the life of the people.

Fourth, the undeniable fact that Indira Gandhi's wing of the Congress and its Government are conscious class opponents of our Party, its political line, its alternative path as a real way out of the crisis, and the democratic class and political alliances it advocates and builds, cannot be forgotten. Its policy, as announced at the Bombay session, that "it has to contain communalism and conservatism and also prevent violent and chaotic action by the Left extremists", is the policy of a two-front war, one against the Syndicate

challenge and the other, simultaneously, against the CPI(M) and the revolutionary working class. Clever phrases and subtle manoeuvres cannot hide the ugly face of its anti-Communism. This was demonstrated by the planned disruption of the U.F. and its state Government in Kerala, which is sought to be repeated in West Bengal, utilising the services of the Right Communist servitors and their other accomplices. The open support and alliance of the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress to the anti-CPI(M) conspiracies and for the formation of so-called 'mini-fronts' tears off the mask, proclaiming to the whole world that in the matter of anti-Communism both the Syndicate and the anti-Syndicate wing are vying with each other, the former, of course, crudely and nakedly, the latter a little more subtly and under a democratic garb.

Needless to say that but for these United Fronts, the fight against the attempt of the Syndicate to topple the Indira Gandhi Government and take over the Central Government would not have succeeded. The disruption of the U.F.s and the toppling of the U.F. governments directly play into the hands of the Syndicate-led reaction, and strengthens it. No wonder they have been the most vociferous acclaimers of all such efforts.

In these conditions, it is absolutely necessary to realise that the present ruling Congress wing and its Government with their class composition, with the heterogeneous crowd of opportunists gathered in it and its basic policies, will not be able to ward off and liquidate the syndicate menace for a long time. The support that our Party and other democratic parties and groups are rendering the Central Government against the threat of a Syndicate take-over loses all meaning, and becomes utterly opportunistic, if they fail to organise widespread and determined class and mass struggles for the reversal and defeat of the anti-people policies of the Central government as well as of the state Governments run by the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress. Moreover, a serious political battle has to be ceaselessly conducted against the policy of disrupting the U.F. and toppling the U.F. Gov-

ernments and the battle for the alternative policies and programmes put forward by our Party, designed to weaken the position of the landlords, monopolists and foreign imperialists has to be vigorously pursued. These struggles form an inseparable part of the struggle against the Syndicate menace. Without them a new realignment of class and political forces cannot be brought about, which realignment alone is the sure guarantee for success in the struggle against the Syndicate, as well as for a democratic path of advance.

However in organising and conducting these economic and political struggles of the people, the criticism, exposure and attack on the powers that be, should be so carried on as to appeal to the wider democratic sections and to rouse their political consciousness to the menace of the Syndicate and how, contrary to the proclaimed policies of weakening and defeating the reactionary forces of the Syndicate alliance, the anti-people policies and practices of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government go to strengthen the hands of these reactionary forces. In short, the innumerable class and mass struggles we sponsor and lead, and the serious political struggle we wage in the present phase of the political situation should be related to the immediate political need, namely, warding off the threat of the extreme reactionary alliance. This alone will help to smash the conspiracy to isolate our Party, by bringing about a new realignment of class forces in the country.

In implementing this line, there is every danger of slipping into the stand of equating both the Congress wings, or even getting provoked into the position of treating the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government as the more direct and immediate enemy than the Syndicate alliance which appears only as a potential main enemy. Such an error on our part disorientates the Party from its political line worked out on the basis of a concrete analysis of concrete political conditions in the country. It will reduce the Party, in practice, to adopting the unprincipled and opportunist tactics that the SSP leadership has adopted at its recent Sonapur session, a

tactic that plays straight into the hands of reaction and its political game. The second danger, considered from the existing state of affairs in the Party and taking into account other realities, though not looming as serious as the one pointed out above, is that of tailing behind the Indira Gandhi Government, reducing the Party to the position of a docile camp-follower of the Central Government.

These dangers are not confined to the field of our activities in the Central Parliament and the state legislatures, but also may arise in the agitation and propaganda of our Party, where the aspect of concentration of fire on the Syndicate might recede into the background, taking its exposure among the people for granted, and objectively, landing us in the position of concentrating the main fire on the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government on the ground that they need to be thoroughly exposed before the people to disillusion them.

Our Party will have to guard itself against these possible errors if its tactical line is to be correctly implemented and the desired results are to be achieved.

It should be clearly understood and always be remembered that our line of irreconcilable opposition to the Syndicate and the *conditional* support to the Indira Gandhi Government is neither based on the revisionist thesis of the Congress split between monopolists and anti-monopolists nor is it of an eclectic and pragmatic nature that "we support all good steps and oppose all bad steps" of the Indira Gandhi Government. The aggressive anti-people offensive launched by the Syndicate alliance is not accidental but is born out of the conditions of a sharpening economic-political crisis, and it is directed in the main against the Communist and democratic forces which have set the pace for the alternative process of political development in the form of non-Congress democratic state Governments, particularly the Left-oriented U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala. It is to counter this process and counter it as early as possible and preferably long before the ensuing fifth general elections that the Syndicate and its other reactionary allies

embarked on the drastic course of setting up its own nominee in the Presidential contest, and if it won, to begin implementing its political line utilising the Presidential office. It is at this point that the inner-Congress crisis erupted, leading to the split, and power at the Centre and in some states passing to the rival wing headed by Indira Gandhi.

Thus a situation has developed when the vanguard of the democratic and revolutionary forces, instead of standing alone on its own to meet and resist the united forces of reaction and their offensive, secured a respite and breathing space, thanks to the opposition of Indira Gandhi's wing to the Syndicate's political strategy and the split in the ruling Congress party. As history had it things did not work out in the manner the reactionary ruling circles wished. The political crisis has further deepened and the unity of the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes is further undermined. The democratic revolutionary movement, which is in no small way responsible in inflicting this blow on the unity of the ruling Congress party and its Government, and in bringing about the deep differences over policies leading to a split, has no reason why it should leave things at that instead of forging ahead, further isolating the extreme reaction, utilising the division among the ruling classes.

It is in the context of foiling the Syndicate's bid for power that our Party's support to the Congress wing headed by Indira Gandhi arises, and not because of any illusion that the anti-Syndicate line is a "progressive alternative" to the 'reactionary' Syndicate line. Our support is not based on the erroneous premise that the two opposed Congress lines *fundamentally* differ from the class point but on the clear understanding that such differences which had come about in the ruling Congress party have significance in terms of the immediate tactics to be pursued by the revolutionary working class party. The following highly instructive observation of Lenin would go a long way in clarifying the topic under discussion.

"The differences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national distinctions, these

political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure (i.e., abstract) Communism, i.e., Communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical action by the masses. However, from the standpoint of this practical action by the masses, these differences are most important. To take due account of these differences, and to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these ‘friends’ which weaken and enfeeble *all the ‘friends’ taken together*, will have to come to a head—that is the concern, the task, of a Communist who wants to be, not merely a class-conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution. It is necessary to link the strictest devotion to the ideas of communism with the ability to effect all the necessary practical compromises, tacks, conciliatory manoeuvres, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to speed up the achievement and then loss of political power by the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to name individual representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy who call themselves socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of Communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and complete disintegration among the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Constitutional Democrats, the monarchists, the Schidemanns, the bourgeoisie and the Kappists, etc.); to select that proper moment when the discord among these ‘pillars of sacrosanct private property’, is at its height, so that, through a decisive offensive, the proletariat will defeat them all and capture political power.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 94-95)

This, of course, needs no elaboration. What is required is the ability to apply this Marxist understanding to the concrete situation we are now facing. The problem is how to foil the conspiracy of the reactionary ruling classes to turn

the tide against the Communist and democratic forces through its diversionary tactics of whipping up anti-Communist hysteria, singling out the CPI(M) and its close allies for attack, and how to isolate the extreme reaction and assist the process of disintegration of the bourgeois-landlord parties and their hold on state power. In other words, the question is, are we to permit the diabolical strategy of the reaction to push the contradiction between the Communists and anti-Communists prematurely to the forefront, with a view to smashing the Communist vanguard in isolation or counter it by intensifying the contradiction between the extreme reaction and the rest, a contradiction which has figured prominently at the present stage of political developments. Utmost efforts will have to be made to foil the former attempt and foster the latter development, notwithstanding all the difficulties and the several twists and turns that will have to be encountered in the process of doing this job.

The party is already facing a severe test in pursuing the new tactics it has decided upon. The venomous anti-CPI(M) stand of the Right Communist Party has found ready allies in both the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate wings of the Congress, to divert the struggle in the main into anti-CPI(M) channels, gladdening the hearts of all the scoundrels who have been cursing the U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal and offering prayers for their early disruption and disintegration. Several of the constituents of these fronts, who are alarmed of the implications of the sharpening class struggle and the ever-increasing mass support the CPI(M) is securing for its political line in these two states in particular, are being lured into this treacherous strategy of 'mini-front' formation as a stepping stone for the formation of the so-called National Democratic Front around the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government at the Centre. The momentary and seeming success of this disastrous strategy in Kerala and the attempts at repeating the same in West Bengal should not mislead anybody into the naive belief, as the revisionists on the one hand and extreme reactionaries on

the other are gleefully spreading, that the CPI(M) is "isolated" because its policies are sectarian and erroneous. If the independent upholding of the proletarian class stand, in sharp opposition to the line of flocking either to the Syndicate Congress or the Indira Gandhi Congress is itself "isolation", our Party should be proud of such "isolation" since it is in opposition to the highly opportunistic and unprincipled line of 'amalgamation' with every reactionary force for forming 'mini-fronts', the latest model of undiluted anti-Communist fronts designed by the Indian revisionists.

As cruel logic has its way, today the Right Communists in Kerala have succeeded in manoeuvring themselves into the sad plight of relying and depending upon every reactionary class and its political representatives from the Kerala Congress to the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate Congresses, for the survival of the mini-front Government and the continuation of its police raj against its political opponents and the toiling masses. If through the unprincipled and shameless alliance and formation of state Governments along with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra during the 1967-68 period, the Right Communists had exposed their hollow claims to Marxism-Leninism, the present mini-front strategy and opportunist deals in pursuance of it are sure to remove the last fig-leaf from their Communist pretences. And their desperate political adventures are bound to end in a fiasco.

An objective look at this contemplated all-India version of the mini-front or the so-called "National Democratic Front", in the background of a deepening economic-political crisis and growing mass awakening would reveal how it is standing on feet of clay. If the present Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress is itself an amalgam of several heterogeneous and conflicting groups of Congressmen in different states with different class and sectional pulls, the proposed all-India mini-front comprises all and sundry, including the Right Communists, the DMK, the Akali Dal, the Muslim League, Bangla Congress, BKD, Jana Congress, etc., with all conceivable contradictions and divergent pulls. It is anybody's

guess as to how this amalgam dreams of fighting the two-front battle, one against the Syndicate challenge and the other against the CPI(M) and the fast awakening millions of the toiling people, let alone the question of sustaining the unity of such an amalgam and leading the country out of the present economic-political crisis. The situation today, as the unfolding events show, is such that these neat and nice anti-Communist stratagems can be defeated and must be defeated, provided the CPI(M) stands firm on its principled political stand, adheres to its new practical line and strives to build class and mass unity and a united front of all democratic forces on a new basis and on a much higher political level, to lead the country out of the economic-political rut in which it has got stuck.

In this connection, it requires to be remembered that the concept of unity of the democratic forces and the building of a united front is basically a revolutionary class concept of forging a front of different democratic classes and strata, i.e., workers, peasants, middle classes, and the bourgeoisie other than big business. It is also needless to repeat that all these classes and strata do not politically remain in a vacuum, that they are represented by different political parties and groups, and the forming of a united front of these democratic classes does certainly imply the forging of a front including these parties. Our Party can neither assume the role of directly representing these different classes, nor bypass the political parties and groups representing them. Before a revolutionary People's Democratic Front materializes under the firm hegemony of the working class, the revolutionary working class party will have to go through a painful process of forging united fronts and organising united actions, of a very elementary form and on a very low key, as was the case, for example, after 1952, when such fronts were formed and they went out of existence after exhausting their positive role in that particular stage of political development.

The united fronts that came to be formed either for the fourth general elections or following it, such as in Kerala

and West Bengal, though they reflect a higher stage compared to the U.F.s of 1952-53 because of their class composition and political objectives, are in no way to be confused and treated on a par with the People's Democratic Front of our concept, either in its class content or even as its embryonic form. They are essentially united fronts within the framework of parliamentary forms of struggle, within the framework of the present bourgeois-landlord constitution. The actual correlation of forces both in the legislatures and among the people outside is such that these fronts and front Governments are unable to stand the pressure of the growing class struggle, even at its present stage of development, which by no means can be described as having assumed a high revolutionary character. This is the basic political weakness behind the disunity and disruption of these fronts.

It obviously follows that a united front of democratic classes and the parties that represent them will have to be forged on a much higher political level and with a programmatic character. But they cannot be forged at will, a new correlation of class and political forces is required. To bring about such a change, it is first and foremost necessary that we extend our independent mass base, and hurl it in the struggle against the big bourgeoisie, landlords and foreign monopoly capital, and in due course, wean away the democratic classes and their political representatives, who are temporarily being drawn by one or the other Congress wings against the revolutionary working class. The fronts we visualize on a still higher political level definitely imply that vague anti-Congressism is no more adequate, and definite commitments for a struggle against the big bourgeoisie, landlords and foreign monopoly capital are a pre-requisite. But it by no means implies that we advocate a revolutionary PDF as an immediate perspective and as a substitute to the U.F.s that correspond to the existing class realities, nor consider that all the democratic parties and groups have exhausted their potentialities since several of them today are acting in a hostile manner to our Party and its political line of advance.

It would be wrong to draw the pessimistic conclusion that several democratic parties and groups which are tending to be lured by this disastrous slogan of forming an anti-CPI(M) front, will be able to remain under the evil spell for long. Life and experience will shatter such illusions with amazing rapidity, due to the class contradictions that are fast maturing under the impact of the economic crisis and the tremendous mass radicalization resulting from the speedy unfolding of the political crisis. Our Party, without either being provoked into a head-on show-down battle prematurely, and in isolation from the vast democratic forces which have not yet sufficiently awakened, or succumbing before the conspiracies without a determined political-ideological fight, will have to work out concrete slogans, forms of struggle and organization, particularly for the advanced movements in Bengal and Kerala, besides the general line chalked out for the Party as a whole on an all-India scale.

The Central Committee will have to undertake this responsibility because it is in these two states that the revolutionary movement and our Party happen to be comparatively stronger, which the class enemy is striving his utmost to disrupt and even destroy, if possible. The reactionary forces, during the last three years, made these two state Governments their principal targets of attack, singling out our Party for directing their main fire on it. Hence it follows that our supreme task at this juncture is to strive our utmost to defend the democratic revolutionary movement in these two advanced pockets against the onslaughts of the enemy and to ward off the attacks. This we have been doing. —

A look at the developments during the last six months reveal the fact that the forces of the class enemy are having an upper hand at the moment, as they have already succeeded in dividing and disrupting the U.F. and its Government in Kerala, and with the confidence gained from this, they have been at the same game in West Bengal. The fact that we have, so far, successfully fought against it and defended the UF and its Government in West Bengal should

not blind us to the reality that it has been virtually brought to the verge of collapse. If it can be averted and its former role restored to the U.F. and its Government to enable it to carry out the tasks expected of it, it would really be a victory for the democratic forces. But it is evident that the organized strength of the working class and the democratic consciousness of the masses following most of the constituent parties of the U.F. are far from adequate to defeat the enemy plans here and now and defend the U.F.s in the present shape. A big gap exists between the opportunities and possibilities of advance opened up with the deepening economic-political crisis on the one hand, and the degree and maturity of the political consciousness of the working class and the organized strength and unity among the democratic parties on the other. This gap has to be filled to utilize the situation to the full for the advance of the revolutionary movement.

The struggle we are putting up in defence of the existing U.F. Government of West Bengal, even while realizing well the limitations of this front Government as it is constituted today, is an integral part of the struggle to bridge the gap, and the results of this struggle should not to be viewed and judged simply from the immediate success or otherwise in defending it. Nor should the break-up of the U.F., if the disruptive forces succeed, be viewed as final and irrevocable and as the total exhaustion of the possibilities of formation of such fronts, under the erroneous impression that the success scored by the reactionary class enemies is durable and lasting. Both the political alliances projected by the Syndicate and Indira Gandhi's wing are riddled with innumerable corroding contradictions. They are bound to express more and more sharply, as the economic-political crisis unfolds itself in all its dimensions and as the correct class line of our Party is consciously, undeviatingly and vigorously pursued, by pin-pointing our attack on the reactionary Syndicate alliance as the immediate and the principal target of political attack while exposing the hollowness of Indira Gandhi's line and resisting its disruptive attacks on the revolutionary working

class and the united people's democratic front it is striving to forge.

Here we come up against the class enemy's tactic of attacking our Party and the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in isolation and that, too, with the active assistance of the bulk of our potential allies who have not yet overcome their anti-Communist prejudices and outlived their bourgeois illusions. The class enemy is fully aware that the developing economic-political situation goes more and more in our favour and against him, and with the deliberate intent of forestalling it, he conspires to intensify the contradiction between Communism and anti-Communism a contradiction which has not yet been forced to the forefront objectively. He is making every attempt to divert mass attention from the actual, growing and acute contradiction between the forces representing the big capital, landlordism and foreign monopoly capitalism and the popular democratic forces on the other. The solgans, tactics and forms of struggle stem from this diabolical scheme of not only defeating our political line but even destroying the Party and the vanguard revolutionary movement if possible.

Under these circumstances, our Party's tactics, slogans, forms of struggle and organization should be so worked out as to meet the enemy's offensive and foil his game, instead of unwittingly playing into his hands. If our Party and the advanced revolutionary movement in these two states fail in this task of concentrating our efforts in spearheading the anti-Syndicate struggle and intensifying the fast maturing contradiction between the forces of extreme reaction and the general democratic masses, while warding off all attacks and conspiracies, the entire talk of isolating the extreme reaction and defeating it on a national scale reduces itself to empty phrase-mongering.

It is highly instructive to remind ourselves of some relevant observations made by Lenin on the tactics that a revolutionary working class party should follow. "Without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions facilitating

the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never develop into action", he said and pointing out how in Russia "lengthy, painful and sanguinary experience taught us the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on a revolutionary mood alone" he observed:

"Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of *all* the class forces in a particular state—and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over—as well as the experience of revolutionary movement."

Further, advising caution against any temptation to get drawn into decisive battles prematurely, he wrote:

"It is as though 10,000 soldiers were to hurl themselves into battle against an enemy force of 50,000, when it would be proper to 'halt', 'take evasive action', or even effect a 'compromise' so as to gain time until the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements that are on their way but cannot go into action immediately. That is intellectualist childishness, not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class."

Judged in the light of these penetrating observations, even a cursory examination of the prevailing political situation in the country, with special reference to the two states of West Bengal and Kerala, would show that such a 'revolutionary mood', is surely beginning to develop, causing alarm in the enemy's camp about its future safety. Learning from experiences from all over the world, and mastering and perfecting the cruel art of counter-revolution, our class enemy, determined not to take any chances, is conspiring to drive a wedge between the advanced revolutionary vanguard and the vast masses of the people, and force an unequal battle on the advanced vanguard with a view to destroying it in isolation if possible. Faced with such a difficult situation, we have to choose between two alternatives—accepting a decisive battle with the enemy when it is more advantageous to him or changing tack, manoeuvring and biding time which surely will work in our favour and against the enemy. As Lenin said, "To accept battle at a time when it is obviously advantageous to the enemy, but not to us, is criminal; political leaders of the revolutionary class are

absolutely useless if they are incapable of 'changing tack or offering conciliation and compromise' in order to take evasive action in a patently disadvantageous battle". Our Party, drawing on the innumerable lessons from the history of the modern revolutionary working class movement as well as from our own experiences in the country, should not fall into the enemy's trap and accept a battle on his terms at his chosen time and situation.

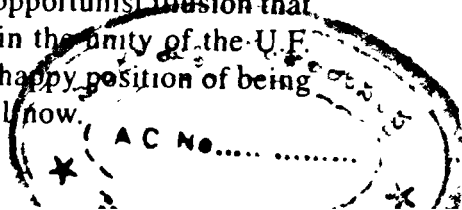
The meaning is clear. It does not at all imply that we avoid the political battle with the enemy, only a decisive showdown battle is to be evaded and put off for a future date, most favourable for us. It only means that we do not permit the enemy to dictate to us his choice or accept helplessly the one forced on us on the plea that it is inevitable. Such a course is nothing but despair and succumbing before the conspiracies of the class enemy.

The situation in Kerala following the undermining of the U.F. Government and forming of an anti-Communist 'mini-front' Government, thanks to the political crisis and the consequent disarray in the ruling classes and also due to the concrete class realities obtaining in that state, has not gone so out of hand as to make us oblize our class enemy and its perfidious plans of imposing a premature show-down battle on the Party and its advanced revolutionary following. The struggle to dislodge the treacherous 'mini-front Government' and in defence of the gains achieved by the people so far, has assumed a specific political form. It will have to be pursued and further concretized and given more flesh and blood, as events develop.

But the situation in West Bengal is somewhat different and more complicated. The physical situation of the state and its strategic importance, the relatively advanced industrial and commercial character and the greater concern it is causing to big business and the foreign monopolists, the preponderant influence gained by our Party over the state's working class movement, the big headway made in the agrarian front, the vital role the CPI(M) has come to play in the state

U.F. Government and its administration, etc., are becoming an eyesore to the reactionary classes. They are working for and eagerly looking for an opportunity to deliver a crushing blow, if possible, on the Party and its mass base, before it makes any further big advance. The fanning of the bloody inter-party clashes between different constituents of the U.F., particularly between the CPI(M) and the rest, the big encouragement and boost given by the monopolist-controlled press to the Bangla Congress and its damaging and disruptive activities, the manner in which the leaders of the Right Communists, Forward Bloc and certain other groups are egging on the Bangla Congress to undermine the U.F. Government and to exclude the CPI(M) from the front Government, etc., are dangerous portents. These perfidious conspiracies of the enemy can neither be underestimated nor would it be permissible on our part to leave things to the spontaneous course of development.

The first thing that we will have to clearly realize is that the U.F. and U.F. Government of West Bengal as constituted at present and with their present class composition, are unable to withstand the pressure of the developing class struggle and sharpening class contradictions even though the tempo of their advance is painfully slow, considered from the angle of the objective needs of the situation and people's expectations. The degree of class-consciousness and organization of the working class, the degree of the democratic consciousness and awakening of the people in general, and the degree of the democratic unity and the sweep of the movement are such that it is not yet powerful enough to here and now arrest the backsliding of some political parties and groups into their time-old anti-Communist prejudices. Our Party as the leading constituent of the U.F. and its Government cannot afford to further slow down the rate of advance it was making through the U.F. Government under the right-opportunist illusion that it might enable us somehow to sustain the unity of the U.F. and its Government nor are we in the happy position of being able to carry on the same lines as till now.



The present correlation of class forces in the political arena in the case of Kerala is such that the CPI(M) has already been excluded from the U.F. In the case of West Bengal, with degrees of difference, the correlation is such that the Party will have to prepare itself for the possible success of the efforts of our opponents for the formation of a 'mini-front'. It may have to concentrate, once again, primarily on the class and mass activities, and prepare itself to be outside the Government and administration, consolidating the gains and extending the mass movement.

The CPI(M) has declared in unequivocal terms that the mini-front formation in Kerala and the attempts on the same lines in West Bengal go only to abet reaction and assist anti-Communism. Our state unit in Kerala while mobilizing the people to dislodge it, should not slip into any opportunist error of trying to achieve the same by hook or by crook and to replace it with some other opportunist combination of forces. Such haste on our part will not bring about the desired change in the correlation of class forces necessary for our next step of advance nor will it help our Party to break from its present 'isolation' from the wider democratic forces, giving necessary scope to the inherent and inevitable inner-contradictions of the mini-front to intensify and mature. They are bound to be intensified, and will corrode the unity of these opportunist and unprincipled fronts from within, both under the impact of the economic-political crisis as well as under the pressure of the extra-parliamentary struggle carried on by the people.

To conclude, it would be folly on our part to contemplate a straight line of advance. The advance so far registered in the fight against the Congress regime was possible only in alliance with several other democratic parties and groups who took up anti-Congress positions. Most of them today are not only tending to desert that alliance and join hands with both the wings of the split Congress party but have also become hostile to our Party. With great deliberation, we will have to devise ways and means to work patiently to win

over the masses led by these parties, isolate the disruptors and bring about a new favourable realignment of political forces. The talk of 'higher forms of struggle' as a substitute for the above-mentioned supreme political task is simply infantile in the extreme.

The second point on which we need to be sufficiently clear is, as already pointed out in the present report, that the economic-political crisis prevailing in the country has not yet matured into anything like a revolutionary crisis and a revolutionary situation. Even the two advanced pockets of our revolutionary movement, West Bengal and Kerala, are no exception to this generalization.

But it should be made absolutely clear that these two strong pockets of the advanced revolutionary movement will not be able to defend the victories gained so far and take the movement forward except by putting up determined and stubborn resistance to the attempts of the reactionary ruling classes as well as their so-called 'mini-front' servitors to undo these people's gains and victories. Depending on the mass sweep and growing tempo in the course of such resistance, our Party should be prepared to evolve appropriate slogans and forms of struggle, including strong and militant mass resistance. In deciding on such militant forms of struggle, care should always be taken that it should be directly linked with the issues and demands of mass struggle instead of the entire struggle assuming the character of a direct political struggle between the vanguard Communist movement on the one hand and the rest of the forces mobilized behind the class enemy who is bent upon crushing the vanguard. Without any schematic thinking that such a resistance movement should either necessarily and inevitably culminate in a popular upheaval or fatalistically reconciling and restricting it to parliamentary forms of struggle as the only or the main form, every effort should be consciously made to shatter the parliamentary and constitutional illusions that have come to prevail among considerable sections of the people, including our own Party's following. It should be remembered that

if the running of the vanguard too far ahead of the mass of the people is a dangerous sectarian error, it will be equally wrong to trail behind the backward masses on the plea of their backwardness and unpreparedness. This will only further breed and foster reformist illusions of achieving gradual victories, through the U.F. state Governments of the type of West Bengal and Kerala.

However, all this does by no means imply that our Party has come to the over-simplified and erroneous conclusion that either in the country as a whole or in these two states of West Bengal and Kerala, the revolutionary mass upsurge has reached such great heights as to warrant the conclusion that the era of bourgeois elections and bourgeois parliamentary institutions in our country has ended. As things stand today, and as the overall political situation in the country presents itself, the possibility of a mid-term poll for the Lok Sabha and even the eventuality of another round of mid-term elections in both Kerala and West Bengal before the ensuing general elections in 1972 cannot be ruled out. The disgust that has come to prevail among our leading comrades and the advanced sections of our people about the corrupt bourgeois elections and parliamentary forms of struggle, and the repeated betrayals experienced at the hands of several democratic and petty-bourgeois parties, particularly in Kerala and West Bengal during 1967-70, should not be allowed to cloud our clear perspective of political developments in the immediate future as indicated above.

If a mid-term poll for the Lok Sabha actually comes, then that electoral struggle is bound to once again bring to the forefront innumerable conflicts and contradictions inherent in both the proposed alliances of the Syndicate Congress and the Indira Gandhi Congress. Maximum advantage must be taken to utilize these conflicts and contradictions with a view to routing the Syndicate alliance, defeat the Indira Gandhi group's efforts to isolate the CPI(M) and break up the non-Congress United Fronts, to undermine the treacherous mini-front and break its honeymoon with the Indira

Gandhi Congress, and to win back as many parties and groups for cooperation and electoral alliances with our Party. Besides the electoral victories we aim at from such alliances in the big political struggle ahead, our tactics for it should also enable us to bring about a new regrouping and realignment of political forces, wrecking the plans of forging an anti-CPI(M) front, by preventing its fructification. Such a big electoral political struggle and our participation in it, of course, is in no way a substitute but only a good supplement to the innumerable class and mass battles that we will have to organize and lead, in order to alter the present correlation of class forces in our favour. This prospect should not be brushed aside as mere 'speculation' and 'guess work'.

Lastly, the determined political offensive launched by the extreme reaction, in the wake of the unfolding economic-political crisis, and its new anti-Communist designs making the CPI(M) and its political line the principal target of attack, will have to be viewed more seriously. The cry of banning the Party, raised by the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and some top leaders of the Syndicate, the vicious attacks on it by the Right Communists and certain leaders of other parties such as the SSP and PSP, the formation of the anti-CPI(M) mini-front in Kerala and the repressive police raj it has set up there, the diabolical aims of reaction to disrupt and destroy the advanced democratic movement in West Bengal, etc., will have to be seen in this particular background. Special note also has to be taken of how the entire monopolist-controlled press in India is not only indulging in constant and systematic ravings against our Party, utilizing the services of the Dangeites to the maximum, but also is stooping so low as to exploit incidents like the provocative attack of a desperate and anarchic individual on Kerala Muslim League Home Minister Mohammed Koya, painting it as 'planned violence' by the CPI(M). This they do with the deliberate purpose of fanning the flames of anti-Communism.

In the conditions when the world bourgeoisie has succeeded, in a considerable measure, to erect walls of anti-Communism

through its persistent, prolonged, systematic and lying propaganda and agitation, and in the light of abundant experience throughout the world of how the decadent bourgeois-landlord classes resort to any and every bestial method to destroy the working class revolutionaries, it would be a grave error on our part to take the present legality of the Party for granted under the present state and Government. Though we are fully aware that in the final analysis it is through the victorious political-ideological struggle against the bourgeois-landlord classes that this anti-Communist threat can be beaten back and defeated, and that these conspiracies up to now have not succeeded should not lead us to any complacency in this regard, and we should be ever alert. Utilizing all the conditions favourable to beat back the contemplated attack on the Party and putting up a tenacious fight in defence of the democratic liberties and Party's legality, the Party will have to be constantly vigilant of this foul conspiracy of the class enemies. In the political slogans we evolve, in the tactical line we pursue, in the forms of struggle and organization we choose no room should be allowed for anything which the enemy can exploit and take us by a surprise attack.

This detailed discussion over the tactical line to be pursued in the two states of West Bengal and Kerala, while omitting all other states from such a treatment in the present report, does by no means imply that what is stated here in general is adequate for the rest. The scope of this report being limited, they are not being dealt with here. But the need and urgency to work out statewide tasks for the Party can, in no way, be minimized and under-rated.

The unfolding economic-political crisis is not only offering the revolutionary working class movement great opportunities for advance, but also confronts it with complex and difficult problems and consequent dangers. Let us consciously and confidently face the situation.

CPI(M) Central Committee's Statement on Present Political Situation*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from February 2 to 7, 1970, discussed the current political situation in the country and has adopted the following "Statement on the Present Situation".

With the emergence of two Congresses having their respective Presidents, Working Committees, Parliamentary Boards and so on, and each of them trying to topple the Governments functioning under the other Congress, the political crisis in the country has reached a new stage.

The one-party rule of the Congress against which the Opposition has been fighting since the first General Election of 1952 and which was broken occasionally in one or two States before and in several States in 1967, has ceased to be a practical proposition either at the Centre or in any State.

The two Congresses have, today, to see electoral alliance in order to continue in power or to get into it. Hunt for the so-called "like-minded" parties; adjustments and accommodation with even those who are not "like-minded"; forging and breaking of alliances, crises and break-ups not only of the existing United Fronts but of the individual constituents of these Fronts—these have become common phenomena at the State level everywhere. At the Centre, too, the process has begun and will undoubtedly grow and become as serious as in the States.

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All this gives new opportunities for those democratic parties which, from the days of the first General Election, have been taking the position of opposition to the Congress from a radical democratic standpoint. For, behind the political crisis that has gripped the Congress and led to its break-up lies the rapidly-growing and accumulating discontent of the working people, manifesting itself in the strike struggles of workers and middle class employees, in the struggles of peasants and agricultural labourers, and in the general upsurge among all sections of the people against the anti-democratic and corrupt regime of the Congress. Now that the steamroller majority of the Congress party in the Central Parliament and in most of the State Legislatures has become a thing of the past, it will become possible for the parties of the democratic opposition to the Congress to further consolidate the mass movement and give clear and more effective expression to the growing discontent against the regime. If only the radical democratic parties, groups, organisations and individuals strive to unite their electoral, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary mass activities and forge a genuine force of struggle against the landlord-bourgeois policies pursued by the Congress regime, headed by either wing, they can inflict still more crushing defeats on the Congress which today stands internally divided and discredited among the people.

As against these new opportunities for still further advances, however, are the new difficulties and problems which have come up precisely because the one-party domination of the Congress has come to an end. For, it was against the one-party domination of the Congress that a firm and determined struggle has been waged since 1952. Now that has become a thing of the past, many of those political parties which had taken up positions of struggle against the Congress have become victims of new illusions that the present ruling Congress wing at the Centre and several States has become "progressive" and hence the concept of "anti-Congressism" is no more relevant, etc. New dangerous tendencies have

made their appearance even among the parties and groups of the democratic opposition which would have the people rally themselves behind one or the other Congress wing. There is also a tendency among some of the parties of the democratic opposition to the Congress to take up positions which would enable them to opportunistically rally behind one group in one State and another elsewhere, and behind one on a particular occasion and another a little later.

The result of all this is that, at the very time when the break-up of the Congress has provided new opportunities for the democratic opposition to advance, the parties of democratic opposition have themselves got entangled in controversies on the particular Congress group behind which they should align with at the Centre and in individual States. The two Congress wings naturally take advantage of the confusion arising out of these differences within the democratic opposition and use it to divide and disrupt the democratic opposition as a whole, and individual parties that constitute this opposition. The spectacle of different constituents of the non-Congress United Fronts joining or supporting the two groupings of like-minded parties being forged around the Syndicate or the Indira group for the formation of a new Ministry in Bihar and for the toppling or preservation of the existing Ministry in U.P. is the most graphic example of the confusion that has gripped the democratic opposition parties.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) is deeply concerned at this development. This, in its view, is a serious development and will, unless immediately checked, do immense damage to the rapidly-developing democratic movement and struggles. No section of the working people will be able to carry on a successful struggle against the bourgeois-landlord policies of the Congress if the parties of the democratic opposition start supporting and defending the policies of either the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, or of Indira Gandhi's wing in alliance with such non-Congress parties as the BKD, Bangla Congress. Akalis,

DMK, the Muslim League and with the revisionist Right Communists. The cause of the working people demands that their mass organizations and the democratic parties which help and lead these organizations fight their own battles rather than being rallied behind this or that combination of bourgeois parties headed by this or that Congress group.

The Central Committee would, therefore, appeal to all those parties, groups, organizations and individuals who have been fighting the Congress from a radical democratic standpoint not to be swayed by consideration of immediate electoral advantage for themselves and align themselves with this or that Congress group, but be guided by the supreme need of uniting the democratic classes and masses in struggle against the landlord-bourgeois policies pursued by either of the two combinations of bourgeois parties.

The Central Committee, in this connection, reiterates its view that both the Syndicate and the Indira group Congresses basically represent the same landlord-bourgeois classes and therefore pursue essentially the same basic policies which help India's capitalist path of advance. That is why both the Congress groups swear by the old resolutions of the united Congress including its ten-point programme. The Syndicate which though undoubtedly is out to shift the internal and external policies further to the Right does not, in its formal policy declaration, go back from them; nor does the Indira Gandhi Congress, which is trying to assume a more radical posture make a Left-ward departure from the old resolutions of the united Congress. It is therefore inconceivable that parties which constituted the democratic opposition and have been fighting against these basic class policies should now join a new combination led by either of the two Congresses.

The Central Committee, however, does not subscribe to the view that there is no difference between the Syndicate and the Indira Gandhi wing. Even while operating within the framework of the broad landlord-bourgeois policies, helping the capitalist path of advance, the Indira Gandhi group is appealing to the urges of non-Big Business and the rural

rich. Even though its leadership includes a large number of those who have become notorious for their reactionary anti-people outlook which has made them thoroughly discredited among the people, the Indira Gandhi wing also contains within its fold a healthy trend which hates big landlords and monopolists. Despite the support its leaders seek and receive from the foreign monopolists and Indian reactionaries, it has raised certain slogans and taken certain measures which are in tune with the anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people. Above all, its political line is such that the biggest danger threatening the democratic movement in the country—the danger of Hindu communal reaction demanding the suppression of religious minorities and non-caste Hindus under the notorious slogan of “Indianisation”—is sought to be opposed.

The Syndicate, on the other hand, is trying to forge a united front of extreme reaction and counter-revolution: aggressive anti-Communism, pronounced anti-Sovietism, bitter attack on whatever remains of the foreign policy of non-alignment and peace, shameless pleading for Indian and foreign monopolists—such is the essence of the policy to which the Syndicate and its Jana Sangh-Swatantra allies are committed. This combine therefore is, without doubt, the immediate danger that threatens the democratic movement. The democratic movement, therefore, should do all in its power to isolate and defeat this combine.

The CPI(M) however does not draw from this the totally erroneous conclusion that the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine can be effectively fought and defeated if only the democratic opposition rallies behind the Indira Gandhi wing and its allies. On the other hand, the anti-people policies pursued by the Indira Gandhi Congress and the Government headed by it at the Centre and in most of the States help and strengthen the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine.

Most of the State Governments headed by the leaders of the Indira Gandhi wing in the respective States have always been and still are the dogged defenders of landlord interests.

It was due to their sabotage that land reforms have been scuttled. That position still continues even after they have once again demagogically reiterated their faith in land reforms. Most of them are also resorting to brutal acts of repression against peasant and working class struggles. These state Governments headed by the Indira wing are therefore in no way different from their opposite numbers headed by the Syndicate in this regard.

As for the Centre, at the very time when the leaders of the Indira group try to put up a show of radical policies and actions, they have been giving new concessions to the Indian and foreign monopolists, as is seen in the clearing of the licence for the Birlas to set up a fertiliser factory with U.S. collaboration, the sanctioning of the steep rises in steel prices, the final decision in favour of purchasing the Boeing 737, and the undue exuberance displayed in wooing West German, Japanese and American monopoly capital, and so on. The democratic opposition therefore cannot afford to depend on the Indira Gandhi Government to carry on the struggle against the Syndicate and defeat it.

Serious note should also be taken of the efforts being made by the Indira Gandhi wing and the Central Government headed by it to topple those U.F. Governments in which the CPI(M) and its allies have a predominant role to play—the former Marxist-led Government of Kerala and the present Government of West Bengal. Not even the leaders of the once-united but now-divided Congress hide the fact that, had it not been for the support given by them, the mini-front in Kerala would not have been able to topple the former Marxist-led U.F. Government. Today, too, the mini-front-Kerala Congress Government is carrying on and unleashing a reign of unprecedented terror only with the support rendered by the Indira Gandhi Congress. As for West Bengal, the Right Communists, the Bangla Congress and their allies would not dare to carry on the anti-Marxist crusade as they are doing, unless they have been assured that at an opportune moment, the Indira Gandhi wing would come to their

aid in toppling the present Government and forming an alternate non-Marxist Ministry on the lines of Kerala.

This toppling game, directed against the Governments formed by parties of the democratic opposition, is in accordance with the line laid down in the Bombay session of the Congress of simultaneously fighting Right reaction and the "extreme political Left" The practical implication of this line is that while the leaders of the Indira Gandhi Congress expect the CPI(M) and other parties of the democratic opposition to give them unconditional support in the struggle against the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, they are themselves free to do anything to prevent the parties of the democratic opposition from so strengthening themselves as to form their own Governments. This is a position which no party of the democratic opposition can accept. The C.C. hopes that all those leaders and followers of the Indira Gandhi Congress who are earnest about the struggle against the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine will realise that this approach to the parties of the democratic opposition would defeat and disrupt the much-desired united struggle against extreme reaction, and in turn pave the way for the Syndicate and its allies to assume the reins of power.

The C.C. also hopes that the leaders and followers of the other parties of the democratic opposition would seriously consider the damage that they will be doing if they rally themselves behind this or that Congress wing. It appeals to them to join the CPI(M) in the independent struggle against both the Congress wings and their anti-people policies, even while concentrating the main fire on the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine as the immediate and most serious danger to the democratic movement in the country.

The C.C. appeals to all members and friends of the Party to take upon themselves the responsibility of approaching the leaders and followers of all parties in the democratic opposition and make earnest efforts to bring them to joint action against the basic policies of both the Congress groups, even while fighting the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra

combine as the immediate menace to the democratic movement. It appeals to them to remember that, swayed as they are by the high-powered propaganda of the two Congress wings, most of the parties and groups of the democratic opposition are today being rallied behind one or the other Congress wings. Our Party, guided by the correct proletarian outlook and able to see the class essence of the policies of the two Congress wings, is determined to carry on consistent ideological-political struggle against these anti-people policies. This alone will make it possible to remove the confusion that has gripped a big part of the democratic opposition and pave the way for the development of a far broader front of the democratic forces, including a section of the Indira Gandhi Congress who are earnest about the struggle against the vested interests.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on Kerala*

**Adopted at the Central Committee meeting held
in Calcutta from February 2 to 7, 1970.**

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) had warned that the mini-front-Kerala Congress Government is an anti-Communist, anti-people Government. Its three months in office has confirmed this. In this short period it has let loose unprecedented repression on the mass democratic movements, allowed the use of the police as an instrument in the hands of the big landlords and employers to suppress the working people and made agricultural labourers, the poor peasants and workers the targets of brutal attacks by hated Central Reserve Police and the State's police and landlords' goondas. That is why all the forces of reaction—inside Kerala and outside and the monopolist-controlled Press hail this Government as their own and give it full support.

This being the class essence of the change of regime brought about by the combined effort of the mini-front, the Kerala Congress and the once united but now divided Congress it is natural that the present Government has resorted to all measures of repression and launched all forms of attacks on the working people. The ruling parties combine brutal attacks by the police with equally brutal attacks by the goondas organized by the employers and landlords.

All this has evoked energetic protest from the working people who under the previous United Front regime enjoyed

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unprecedented opportunities for coming out in action against the exploiting classes. The organized workers, peasants, agricultural and other rural labourers, students have been protesting against and resisting this repression.

The extent of the attacks on the working people can be seen from the fact that during the last three months when this Government has been in office, 18 active organizers of the mass struggle were murdered—13 by the goondas and five by the police. There have been instances of molestation of women by police and by goondas. Hundreds more have been maimed and injured in lathi-charges and lock-up beatings by the police, as well as in goonda attacks. Houses and other property owned by the poorer sections of the people have been damaged and destroyed on a large-scale, the most notorious cases being the destruction of 92 houses at Paraal in Kottayam district and 146 at Thykkattusseri in Alleppey; in Nilambur in Malappuram district 72 houses were demolished by the police and 46 houses by police and goondas in Jeerakappara in Kozhikode district. Far from bringing the perpetrators of these crimes to book, the police have registered hundreds of cases against the victims of these attacks. Such is the “protection to property and life” provided by the mini-front-Kerala Congress Government!

One of the devices resorted to by Government and the ruling parties is to register false cases whenever the goonda attacks lead to some incident. In the case of every such incident, well-known leaders and organizers of mass struggles are falsely implicated and large number of persons “whose names are not known, but who can be recognized at sight” are also put in the list of accused. Then, on the strength of such a list, the police indulge in a search for the accused and under that garb, harass a large number of families. Men, women and even children are beaten up, taken to the police station and again beaten up in the name of “case investigations”. In this entire process, the police is effectively “assisted” by the local leaders of the parties that support the present Government. The numbers of cases registered and the number

of accused involved in them would run into thousands and tens of thousands respectively. Never before has Kerala—not even during the worst days of the post-Punnapra-Vayalar and of 1948-51—witnessed such a widespread and brutal regime of police terror combined with goonda attacks.

This brutal reign of terrors is sought to be covered up and justified by a few deplorable incidents like the attempted attacks on Home Minister Mohammed Koya. The CPI(M) disapproves of such acts of individual terrorism, as they hinder rather than help the development of the united mass movement. It is, however, necessary to point out that the mini-front and other supporters of the present Government, who express their indignation at these acts of individual terrorism, have not a word to say against the widespread terror unleashed by their own supporters and the police.

For instance, they have not a word of condemnation about the Muslim League “volunteers” who accompanied Home Minister Mohammed Koya and murdered one of the demonstrators who showed a black flag to the Minister. Nor do they protest against the brutal lock-up beatings and torture to which the alleged assailant of the Minister, Gangadhara Marar, has been subjected.

As for the widespread practice of lock-up beatings which had been put an end to in 1957 by the then Communist-led Ministry and was not restored even by the Congress Ministry of 1960-67, it has now been restored; here, too, they have not a word to say in protest.

The limit to their shameless defence of police atrocities was reached on January 29, when as against the eye-witness accounts given by MLAs, who were present at the time of a police attack on a peaceful procession and meeting the previous evening in the city of Trivandrum, the Home Minister repeated the police version and denied any action having been resorted to by the police; and on the strength of the Minister’s denial, discussion was barred in the Legislature.

The mini-front and other accomplices of the Government are actively supported in the suppression of truth, and the

propagation of falsehood by the monopoly Press and the All India Radio, both of which day in and day out relate stories of alleged "Marxist atrocities" and deliberately refuse to publicise the facts regarding the atrocities of the police and the goondas.

Naturally, all the forces of reaction representing the big landlords and employers, big traders and the other vested interests are elated, and they and the monopolist-controlled Press are giving full support to this Government for having reversed the democratic, pro-working class, pro-peasant policies of the former Marxist-led United Front Government. They are all expressing their glee that "Marxist domination has been put an end to", "law and order have been restored", "there is perfect safety and security for the person and property of the citizens" and so on. The parties of the vested interests like the Kerala Congress, the Syndicate Congress, the pro-Jana Sanghite Karnataka Samiti and Indira Congress are all supporting this mini-front Government and its police terror. It survives with their 16 votes which from the beginning of 1967, always used to be cast against the U.F. Government. The recent voting on the Governor's speech also reveals this.

It is worthy of note that, although the two Congress groups are fighting each other on an all-India scale and in most other States, they have joined together in maintaining the present mini-front-Kerala Congress Government. The reason why the two Congress groups joined the mini-front and Kerala Congress in supporting this Government is that both of them are interested in the reversal of the democratic, pro-working class, pro-peasant policies of the former Marxist-led non-Congress Government.

The militant mass movement, however, has not been and will not be suppressed by these methods. Thousands of hutment-dwellers, agricultural labourers, tenant-cultivators and so on, have defied the will of the ruling parties and acted in accordance with the call of the peasant-agricultural labourers' conference held at Alleppey for a mass initiative in enforcing the land

reform legislation. Agricultural labourers have resorted to large-scale strike actions in order to secure their economic demands. The agricultural labourers of Kuttanad are today in the midst of general strike to realise various demands, including the withdrawal of the CRP from that area. Industrial workers, students, unemployed youth, etc., are also going into action, both on the basis of their own immediate demands as well as against police repression. The MLAs belong to the CPI(M) and other democratic opposition parties are carrying the fight outside into the forum of the legislature.

The Central Committee hopes that all these forms of action will be united and co-ordinated into a common democratic political struggle against the Congress-supported anti-people regime whose policies are directed against the militant mass movement headed by the CPI(M) and other democratic parties.

The Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress has declared as its aim to fight the reactionary combine of the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra. But what this group of Congress is doing in Kerala is supporting this mini-front Government whose survival depends on the support of this reactionary combine, and which is ruthlessly suppressing the working people. The Central Government headed by Indira Gandhi has given the CRP which makes the militant Communist forces its main target of attack. All this has pushed into oblivion the struggle against the reactionary Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, and the brutal terror against the people and the fight against the CPI(M) has come into the fore. The people of Kerala, especially those youth, who had hoped that the Indira Congress would set on a new course and fight the reactionary combine must force the Indira Congress to desist from its present course. The Committee appeals to the democratic parties, groups, organizations and individuals throughout the country to express their solidarity with and support the fighting democratic people of Kerala.

Particularly would the Committee appeal to the rank and file of those parties and groups, who earlier constituted the

U.F. and who are genuinely interested in the unity of all the radical democratic forces in the struggle against the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine to consider whether this attack on the militant mass movement in Kerala, launched with the support of all the reactionary forces in the country, would help the cause of unity against reaction. We would appeal to them to consider whether the time has not come to retrace the steps which their leaders took when they joined the reactionary forces in toppling the former Marxist-led Government and bringing into existence the present anti-people and anti-Marxist regime.

The present Government of Kerala, composed of some parties which went to the electorate in 1967 with an anti-Congress programme but who shamelessly violated their electoral pledges and joined hands with the Congress to topple the United Front Government, has no moral right to continue. The monstrous repression it has let loose all over the State requires that it should not be allowed to rule with bullets and lathis. This Government must be forced to quit and the Kerala people given the opportunity to give an immediate fresh verdict through a mid-term election.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on West Bengal*

**Adopted at the Central Committee meeting
held in Calcutta from February 2 to 7, 1970**

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) has reviewed all the developments that have taken place in the functioning of the U.F. and U.F. Government in West Bengal after its November 1969 session up to now, the boycotting of the U.F. meeting on February 4 by the Bangla Congress, and Sri Ajoy Mukherjee, the Chief Minister, once again asserting on the floor of the Assembly that the U.F. Government is “uncivilized” and his urging the people to “mend it or end it”.

It is our Bengal unit that took the initiative and forged the nine-point agreement between 14 U.F. constituents by September 1969 to resolve the differences that were arising and to enquire into and take all necessary steps to prevent the so-called inter-party clashes. It is our Party leader, Comrade Jyoti Basu, in charge of the Home portfolio, who offered that complaints against his department might be reviewed first by the U.F. as per the agreement. Immediately after this agreement, even without submitting any concrete instance or taking up any complaint in the U.F., the Bangla Congress leaders came out with a resolution on October 5, slandering the U.F. Government on the plea that law and order had broken down, hundreds had been killed, land was being illegally occupied, a severe crisis in industry had been created due to loss of millions of workdays, gheraos, that

*Published in “People’s Democracy”, Calcutta, February 15, 1970. Also published in the compilation of CPI(M) Documents from February 1969 to April 1971.

women's honour was in jeopardy and that no action had been taken in murder cases, etc.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in its resolution on October 11 had to come out warning that the progeny of P. C. Ghosh was busy re-enacting the 1967 October episode and the same treacherous role was being played by some parties... The Bangla Congress has joined the chorus, initiated by the Dangeites against our Party and particularly attacking the Home Ministry, slavishly echoing the Congress cry of breakdown of law and order under Communist rule. Once again what has panicked these parties is the accentuation of the class struggle, the great initiative of the West Bengal peasants fighting for land under the illegal occupation of the landlords, and the mighty strike struggles of the workers which have compelled many a concession from the employers. Revealing its real class affiliations, the Bangla Congress demands suppression of gheraos and peasant struggles. It is the unmistakable voice of the jotdars that speaks through the virulent attack of the Congress on the United Front Government and our Party.

The enemies of the United Front, the Congress leaders and some parties in the United Front, are exploiting the so-called inter-party clashes to give a bad name to our Party, to the United Front and the Home Ministry. Let it be clearly understood that these clashes are in the main not so much conflicts between our Party and other parties, but principally they are the attacks of the jotdars and other vested interests on the peasants and the people. Some of the parties in the United Front which have close links with these vested interests are using the goonda elements to attack the peasantry and our Party leading it, and describe them as inter-party clashes.

The Polit Bureau warned the democratic forces that these are not just verbal sallies born out of party interests but serious attempts to undermine the U.F. and rob the popular forces of their further successes.

Our West Bengal unit had replied back soberly to all the

allegations brought by the Bangla Congress, in its resolution of October 18 and offered to do all in its power to keep the unity of the U.F. based on the 32-point programme of the U.F.

In the United Front meeting held on October 26, our Party, in order to preserve the unity, had again agreed to the seven-point agreement, though it was the Bangla Congress and the Right Communists that broke the earlier agreement.

But, even before the ink was dry on the paper, the Bangla Congress leaders in their State Conference at Bankura once again violated it, and indulged in wild slanders against our Party. The Chief Minister and his followers immediately after their Bankura Conference started their scandalous "relay" hunger-strike at Curzon Park in Calcutta and in certain other centres in West Bengal, to discredit the West Bengal U.F. Government in the name of protesting against what they styled "breakdown of law and order". When this hunger-strike became a flop and a butt of ridicule of the people, the Bangla Congress leaders lost their head. Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and his lieutenant Sushil Dhara, started maligning our Party, as "the party of dacoits", as "molesters of women", etc. Sri Ajoy Mukherjee was continuously branding the Government, of which he himself was the Chief Minister, as "uncivilized and barbarous", and does not stop this foul campaign.

Member of our Polit Bureau and the Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee, Comrade Promod Dasgupta, in a letter to all the constituents of the U.F., had correctly described this slander in his statement that, "Sri Ajoy Mukherjee by characterizing his own Government as an 'uncivilized and barbarous Government, has insulted the people of West Bengal, put a slur upon them, and stigmatized the glorious achievements of the workers and the toiling peasantry won through struggles with the backing of the U.F. Government. This is an open campaign against the U.F. Government and this is nothing but a well-planned campaign to throw overboard the 32-point programme of the U.F... These declarations of the Chief Minister have gladdened the hearts of the vested

interests, the reactionary mill-owners and the jotdars. He has voiced their feelings and interests and for this the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party have congratulated the Bangla Congress leader.”

A few days later, the slander campaign of Sri Ajoy Mukherjee against the U.F. Government had assumed another serious shape. He cancelled the transfer order of a thana police officer issued by the I.G. of Police, without even consulting the Home Department. What else is this except setting officers against officers and encouraging indiscipline amongst them, bringing the administration to the point of a breakdown?

Our Party, as pointed out by Comrade Promod Dasgupta's circular note, has demanded the withdrawal of such derogatory remarks as 'uncivilized' and 'barbarous Government'. This demand is a just one and it expresses the feelings and sentiments of the fighting people of West Bengal. This is not a question of prestige for any party but a question of people's policy. Such slanderous utterances of the Chief Minister are meant to undermine and finally break the U.F. Government. No self-respecting party interested in the toiling people should put up with such a state of affairs.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta in the above letter again reiterates: “Our Party stands for preserving and strengthening the U.F. Government, for implementing the 32-point programme giving priority to the working people's demands. Our Party sincerely wishes the end of inter-party clashes and desires the establishment of really cordial atmosphere inside the U.F. ensuring the proper functioning of the U.F. Government in the interests of the toiling millions.”

Even after this letter, the Bangla Congress and its mentors, the Right Communists, did not retrace their steps. Sri Sushil Dhara, the Bangla Congress secretary, had openly started issuing statements about forming a mini-front Ministry, excluding the CPI(M) as in Kerala.

In the U.F. meeting held on January 25, though the Bangla Congress leaders had not given any indication that they would

not at least, in future, repeat the slanders on the U.F. Government and interfere in the departments of other Ministries using so-called Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business, our Party, in the interests of preserving the United Front, once again, agreed to a resolution of the U.F. to see that no vilification of U.F. constituents or U.F. Ministers or of any Department of Government or clashes between the U.F. constituents take place, though during all this period of one year, it was the Bangla Congress and the Right Communists who had been carrying on vilification campaigns or provoking clashes against our Party.

But the Bangla Congress, backed by the Right Communists, determined on the course of forming a mini-front Ministry excluding the CPI(M), has started issuing ultimatums demanding that U.F. Committees be set up to advise and guide the Home Minister at the State level, and police officers at the thana level.

Our Party representatives have correctly rejected this fantastic proposal of thana-level committees as impracticable, as it would only lead to the paralyzation of the administration. They made it clear that the U.F. must first disapprove categorically the moves for mini-front ministry excluding the CPI(M) and assure the public that any such attempt is to deny the very basis of the U.F. and the betrayal of election pledges, and as such it will be resisted. If such a declaration is agreed to by the U.F., then only our representatives were willing to place before our Party the question of State-level consultative committees for all Ministries for consideration, and report our decision back at the next meeting.

Yet, the Bangla Congress leaders without even a formal notice not only boycotted the U.F. meeting on February 4 but on the floor of the Assembly concentrated their attack against the Government and especially against the Ministers belonging to the CPI(M) and their departments. The climax was reached when Sri Ajoy Mukherjee in his concluding remarks in the debate on Governor's speech, repeated his slanderous characterisation of the West Bengal Government

as “uncivilized and barbarous” and appealed to “either mend it or end it”. Thus on three occasions, since September 1969, when unity moves were agreed upon by the U.F., the Bangla Congress, instead of carrying out the resolutions, took recourse to unilateral actions of sabotage and disruption.

The Right Communists who, from the very beginning, following the mid term elections, had taken up as their main task to exclude the CPI(M) from taking its due place in the U.F. Ministry and in the political life of West Bengal, and who had been master-minding the conspiracy of forming a mini-front Ministry as in Kerala, were going on egging the Bangla Congress to come out openly. In their resolution of February 6, 1970, they have accused the CPI(M) that it was deliberately pursuing an anti-U.F. and anti-people line and that it was trying to impose its own party line on other constituents and wanted to blackmail the Bangla Congress and to oust it from the U.F., etc. It shamelessly justified the Bangla Congress behaviour that it was nothing but a “lop-sided assessment of the situation and counsel of despair” and a negative and pessimistic outlook caused by the “extremely provocative” and irresponsible policies and practice of the CPI(M)!

Thus, the U.F. and U.F. Ministry of West Bengal with whose backing the people of West Bengal won several resounding victories and inspired all the democratic forces throughout India to look to West Bengal as showing them the alternative way out for future, is on the point of total breakup. The C.C. feels that even now it is not yet too late to prevent this. The Central Committee urges upon the Bangla Congress and the CP(Right) to retrace their steps. It urges upon all the constituents of the U.F. to unreservedly declare that whatever differences that may arise among U.F. constituents in implementing the 32-point programme, they shall be settled by discussion inside the U.F. but under no circumstances, a mini-front Ministry excluding any constituent of the present U.F. will be allowed to be formed, as such a mini-front Government with direct or indirect support of the

Congress will be a gross betrayal of the struggles and hopes of the people of West Bengal, besides being a total betrayal of the electoral pledges given. If, for any reason, the present U.F. cannot be maintained, then the constituent parties of the U.F. would go to the people and seek a fresh people's verdict in an immediate mid-term election. It must also declare that the Chief Minister will not take recourse to his so-called special powers under Rule 29(3) and interfere with the other Ministries.

The Central Committee appreciates the struggle so far put up by the West Bengal people in defence of the U.F. and its Government and calls upon all the ranks and the people following the U.F. constituents to realize the great danger looming ahead and to prevail upon their leaders to give up their present disastrous course of disrupting the U.F. Government. The C.C. appeals to all the democratic forces throughout the country to rally behind the fighting people of West Bengal and frustrate this Bangla Congress-Right Communist conspiracy of disrupting the existing U.F. Government in West Bengal, as such a disruption would only help the extreme reactionary Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine that is threatening to take over control even over the Central Government, and to establish police and military raj in our country.

CPI(M) Expels Mirajkar*

Central Committee's Resolution

After S. A. Dange's letters from jail in 1924 to the British Governor-General offering his services to the alien imperialist Government became known to the world from the National Archives of the Government of India, S. S. Mirajkar had staked his political career on the genuineness of the letters written by Dange.

Free Press Journal of Bombay on August 6, 1964 reported that Mirajkar had "confirmed on Wednesday in Bombay that the controversial Dange letters of 1924 to the then Governor General offering his services to the British Government, were 'genuine'." The paper also reported Mirajkar as saying "that he had known of the existence of the letters written by Sri Dange for 40 years but he had kept quiet in the larger interest of maintaining 'Party unity'."

A few days later, on August 17, in an interview to the Malayalam daily, *Deshabhimani*, Mirajkar challenged, "If Dange has the courage, let him prove that what I have stated is a lie. In fact, I do challenge the whole lot of them to disprove what I know is the truth".

In the same interview, Mirajkar had also a lot to say on the functioning of the AITUC under Dange's leadership. He said "With the passing away of Comrade N. M. Joshi and the assuming of the General Secretaryship by Dange, the chances of doing whatever little in the service of the working class have also become less". He also said, "I had, as a

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 15, 1970.

matter of fact, contemplated resigning my position (as President of the AITUC) even before they plotted to remove me. But now I think I should let them do the job themselves”.

About Dange, Mirajkar said during the course of the same interview, “In the business of making money and keeping the whole lot of it to himself, Dange can any day beat the blackest blackmarketeer hollow. Dange’s sole interest is his vested interest. We, Indian communists, ought to feel ashamed that such a person as Dange has come to occupy the supreme executive position of the Party. This Dange who is merely after wealth and power has never been and is not—a communist”.

The same Mirajkar writing about the same Dange on the occasion of the latter’s seventieth birthday recently not only eulogized Dange’s “services” to the working class but also paid him glowing tributes for “making substantial contribution to the ideological development in the revolutionary thinking”.

And when an explanation was called for by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) as to how he sent such a message, Mirajkar’s explanation was: “I thought over the matter very seriously and I do not understand what explanation I should give. The fact remains that I did send the said message hurriedly without giving much thought to the matter. While dictating the message I should have been careful enough. There is no doubt that I overstepped the limit. I request the Party to take any appropriate action against me for my political slip.”

In reply to this letter, the General Secretary of the CPI(M), Comrade P. Sundarayya, while conveying the Polit Bureau’s disapproval of Sri Mirajkar’s greetings to Dange, wrote : “It really does not fully express the feelings of the P.B. or the Party ranks and leaders over this incident.

“The ranks were indignant and justifiably so. Your letter of explanation made matters worse. You casually describe it as a political slip, and fail to see the gravity of the mistake. You—who knew Dange’s letters, about his role, have gone out of your way to pay tribute to him and extol his contribution to the communist movement. You knew the deep gulf that

divides Dange and our Party and you casually refer to it as differences. This is nothing but disgracing our Party and organization and showing servility towards Dange for reasons best known to yourself. Such conduct is reprehensible in the extreme. I hope you will realize it that this is no ordinary slip but a grave misdemeanour on your part. I hope you will learn from it and be more self-critical in future. Also you will always remember the politics and prestige of our Party when you are dealing with individuals who are the sworn enemies of our Party.”

The General Secretary also informed Mirajkar, “Our Party has decided not to attend the AITUC session at Guntur unless it is postponed and an agreement is arrived at and all the TUs are unified or recognized on the basis of the 1966 December General Council Resolution. As such I request you not to attend the AITUC session being called by the Dange group at Guntur.”

Even at this stage, in reply to Comrade Sundarayya's letter, Mirajkar, wrote on January 18, 1970, *“You have reminded me of Dange letters and what I said about them. Please allow me to tell you that I have withdrawn nothing, nor will I ever do it, nor would I be badgered to take up wrong positions.”*

And, yet, when it was obvious to everyone that Dange was splitting the AITUC to make it his pocket organization, Mirajkar, who was so critical of Dange's functioning of the AITUC not so long ago, went to Guntur, helped Dange's splitting game and now sings paeans to Dange's class-collaborationist line.

Following is the text of the resolution expelling Mirajkar from the Party, adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) meeting in Calcutta from February 2 to 7, 1970.

CPI(M) Central Committee's Resolution on Mirajkar

The Polit Bureau disapproved of Mirajkar's conduct when he sent a servile message of greetings to Dange's political

past and the stand of our Party. It also nailed down his cringing attitude towards Dange and his group in the AITUC, his failure to stand for his own dignity and of the Party he represented, when Dange gave precedence over him to a junior official of the AITUC at the WFTU Congress.

During the last few months, besides, Mirajkar has failed to associate himself with Party comrades functioning in the AITUC; has failed to put up a fight against the disruptionist and anti-working class policies of the Dange group. Corrupted by the love of office and the benefits it brings Mirajkar went more and more under Dange's influence, and violated the P.B.'s direction not to attend the Guntur session of the AITUC. Having gone there in the name of fighting Dange's policies, he got himself elected as the President and announced his open crossing over to the revisionist side. While the Party and the militant trade unions have to wage an irreconcilable struggle against Dange's disruption of trade union unity, Mirajkar has joined hands with the revisionist leader who is splitting the AITUC.

The Central Committee is of the opinion that such an opportunist person has no place in our Party and it hereby expels Mirajkar from the membership of our Party.

West Bengal Party Plenum Decides People Will Defend Their Hard-Won Gains*

**Hartal and General Strike if
U.F. Government is Toppled**

“We have complete confidence that we shall be able to fulfil the targets set by the Plenum within the year 1970 and build our Party organization in a way so that we are in a position to successfully carry out the historical responsibilities devolving on our Party... Create tremendous political enthusiasm throughout the Party, side by side engender mass initiative to strengthen our organization. The enemy is poised for the attack, he has to be repelled.” With these words Comrade Promod Dasgupta, Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M) summed up the week-long discussions of the Plenum held at Ho Chi Minh Nagar in Noapara (district 24-Parganas) from February 9 to 15.

The Plenum discussions were rounded off with a huge mass meeting at the Babughat Maidan, Garulia, on the bank of the river Hooghly on the evening of the 15th.

The Plenum has called upon the people of West Bengal to go on hartals and general strikes the moment the United Front Government is toppled and prepare for active resistance struggle to defend the people's gains throughout the State.

One of the founders of the communist movement in India, octogenarian communist, Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad, hoisted the Party's Red Flag, and the Party's General Secretary,

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The Plenum of West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) was held at Noapara, North 24 Parganas, on 9-15 February, 1970.

Comrade P. Sundarayya, placed wreaths on the Martyrs' Column—thus was inaugurated the Plenum on February 9.

It was undoubtedly a significant moment in the life of the West Bengal United Front and its Government that this Plenum was convened. The significance was all the more discernible from the way the bourgeois Press showed interest in it. The people—particularly of the industrial belt of 24-Parganas district—also did not fail to grasp its momentousness and they came forward to help the Plenum in whatever way they could. They donated Rs. 42,000 as also food for the delegates and visitors. More than 80 per cent of the 800 volunteers—men and women—also came from the working class and lower middle class families of this area.

The 271 delegates who represented all the districts and the mass fronts including the trade unions and kisan organizations were enjoined upon by Comrade P. Sundarayya in his speech before them, not to belittle the dangers that are looming up in the political horizon of India. Analysing the all-India situation, he said that toppling of the U.F. Government of Kerala was a blow at the democratic movement. Similar conspiracies were going on in West Bengal to topple the U.F. Government and to replace it with a mini front Government. Those conspiracies are to be foiled through widest mass mobilization and movement in the interest of the democratic movement throughout the whole of India. If the conspirators succeed in their nefarious game, it would mean a severe blow on the democratic movement, on the gains achieved by the working class, peasantry and other sections of the people. That was why we must keep ourselves alert to confront such a critical situation.

We have to take forward the rights of the workers and peasants gained under the U.F. regime. And for that we need organizational preparation, Comrade Sundarayya said. He also warned against the dangers of adventurist deviations in the struggle for the preservation of the people's gains. He said, we must not commit the grievous mistake of judging the democratic movement in the whole of India from the

situation obtaining in Kerala and West Bengal, both of which together form only a small part of the whole of India. We should also remember this vital fact while assessing the Indian political situation.

The Political Organizational Report presented before the Plenum by Comrade Promod Dasgupta dwelt both on international and national questions. The report while discussing the national situation mentioned that one of the phenomena of the deepening crisis in India is that there is not one party in India which alone is capable of replacing the Congress in order to safeguard the profits of the bourgeois-landlord classes within the framework of a parliamentary system and maintain the political influence of these classes.

The report went on: The main question that faces this Plenum is this—will the reactionary forces be able to utilize the crisis to denigrate democracy, or the democratic forces be able to foil the reactionary conspiracies by extending the militant alliance of the working class and the peasantry for the successful implementation of an alternative democratic programme utilizing the U.F. Government as a weapon in that struggle. The United Front of West Bengal and its Government have achieved an all-India importance as the main weapon of struggle in the battle for democracy after the fall of the U.F. Government of Kerala through betrayal. Our Party is the major force and constituent of this U.F. Government. Our Party, therefore, has become the target of all attacks from within and without the United Front. To counter this concentrated attack, we shall have to strive to bring those millions of poor who are still under the sway of the reactionary forces over to us.

A presidium consisting of Comrades Abdullah Rasul, Binoy Choudhuri and Kamal Sarkar conducted the deliberations of Plenum. In all 80 delegates took part in the debate in the six days.

From the deliberations a number of interesting facts emerged from which the extent of the Party's influence with the masses could be gauged. For instance, the Nadia district

was among those districts where the Party was weak. Today there is not even a small factory in Kalyani in this district where there is not a union led by the Party. Significant advances have been made in the kisan front also in this district. Again, in the West Dinajpur district, another 'weak' district, of the 35,000 acres which have been harvested in this district, more than 25,000 acres have been under the leadership of the Party and the Kisan Sabha.

It was clear from the district reports that the working people have gained a new consciousness, the United Front Government had helped to gain it. Naturally, it will not evaporate with the toppling of Government. As such, the people will stand up to resist the gains they achieved. They will not stand any mini-front betrayal.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta summed up the debate and Comrade P. Sundarayya addressed the delegates in a speech concluding the delegates' session.

According to the report placed at the Plenum, the target set by the State Committee at its meeting in June 1996 has been fulfilled. The total number of members enrolled into the Party as well as those who have renewed their membership comes to 22,821, the total number of auxiliary group members is 47,370, and that of volunteers 1,10,280. The Special Party Fund target has been fulfilled and the State Committee has already paid its full quota of Rs.50,000 to the Central Committee.

The Open Session

It was believed for some time that it was not possible to hold big rallies outside Calcutta. The mammoth gathering at the open session of All-India Kisan Sabha, held at Borsul on November 2, 1969, smashed that fondly-believed idea.

The magnificent rally there drove home the fact that the stupendous enthusiasm generated in the poor peasants and agricultural workers rallied them in such large numbers at the call of the Kisan Sabha.

Borsul was on everybody's mind in Noapara. For the

organizers, the Borsul experience made them devise ways of organizing the meeting, marshal the cars and trucks and buses in an order to avoid traffic congestion. The main approach road being no wider than 30 feet—and the lanes and by-lanes leading to the maidan narrower still—, they had to see that these are kept as clear of traffic as to permit the maximum number of people to pass through on their way to the maidan. In Borsul, more people were far away from the meeting-place than those who were there. To alleviate such an eventuality, loudspeakers were placed even half a mile away from the maidan and a forty-foot tower was specially erected to relay speeches for those who could not get into the maidan.

And everything went off so well, so naturally and effortlessly! It was very difficult for the participants to realize the tremendous amount of planning, organization and co-ordination that went into the preparation for the rally.

If Borsul showed buoyant enthusiasm, Noapara demonstrated organization and planning. If Borsul is to be remembered for its elemental massiveness, Noapara deserves a place of honour for its organized grandeur. If Borsul was a gauge of the consciousness generated in the poor peasants and agricultural workers of West Bengal, Noapara signified another of the working-class organization.

Comrade Jyoti Basu presided over the meeting and Comrades P. Sundarayya, Promod Dasgupta, Harekrishna Konar and Krishnapada Ghosh spoke at the rally.

Polit Bureau of CPI(M) on Supreme Court Verdict— on Bank Nationalization*

**Statement issued by the
Polit Bureau on February 12, 1970.**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement in Calcutta on February 12, 1970, on the Supreme Court verdict on the Bank Nationalization Act :

The verdict of the Supreme Court invalidating the Bank Nationalization Act has rightly caused grave concern to all democratic and progressive forces in India while it has brought deep satisfaction to the reactionaries and the vested interests. Only one Judge has upheld the Act establishing conformity between the law and the demands of the situation. The Supreme Court verdict, coming in the wake of several verdicts of High Courts on issues like worker's right to gheraos and the agrarian legislations, brings the courts into direct confrontation with the aspirations of the people. It is also a clear warning that every democratic legislation, rectifying economic inequalities and curbing the interests of monopolists and landlords in the interest of economic advance, will inevitably come into conflict with the provisions of the Constitution, the so-called rule of law.

It may sound ironical that the Supreme Court has struck down the Act in the name of equality of all citizens before the law. The people considered the nationalization of fourteen major banks as a measure to curb the monopolists and they wanted nationalization of foreign banks also. The "rule

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 22, 1970.

of law" declares this to be hostile and discriminating—this distinction between big and small banks.

The Supreme Court has struck down the Act on the ground of compensation also. One-third of the judgement, deals with this one question alone and the Court comes to the conclusion that the compensation provided under the Act is such as to make the Act invalid. The principles advocated in the judgement demand that full market value or equivalent must be given to those whose property is acquired and in estimating this value good-will and several other considerations should be given their due weight.

This makes short work of public purpose and will make it impossible for any property to be acquired by the state for public purposes. Nationalization thus is made to lose all its meaning, is virtually ruled out if this proviso is accepted.

While the democratic masses demand a drastic curb on big money and mobilization of economic resources for economic advance at the cost of the big landlords and monopolists, both foreign and Indian, the rule of law demands that full compensation be paid to them, and their economic power must be kept unimpaired.

This confrontation between the provisions of the Constitution and the demands of the people who are supposed to be the sovereign authority in India is the direct result of the rapidly advancing mass movement which has exposed the real class character of the laws and the Constitution. The facade of democracy, of equality before law, of fundamental rights of organization is now getting exposed. On every occasion, the rule of big property to exploit the common man and the Constitution reveals itself to be an instrument of the class rule of the capitalists and landlords.

No political party worth its name can shirk facing the issue raised by the judgement of the Supreme Court. The Bank Nationalization Act was only a mild measure and by no means revolutionary. And yet it has been struck down by the "rule of law". All the parties which hitherto glibly talked about the sacrosanct character of the Constitution, and attacked

our Party for demanding its complete overhaul and replacing it by a genuinely democratic Constitution should see how erroneous their views were. The present bourgeois-landlord constitution cannot be made to serve the purpose of achieving rapid democratic progress, much less socialism. What a howl was raised when our Party stated this simple a few months back. From Nijalingappa to Dange, all combined to abuse and villify our Party. And yet that is the unmistakable truth that emerges from this judgement.

In this connection, some parties and individuals are rightly raising the issue of the fundamental rights to property embodied in the Constitution and demanding its removal from the Constitution. It will be no doubt a welcome and progressive step, if this fundamental right of big moneybags and landlords is removed from the Constitution. But it is an illusion to think that this step alone can solve the problem that has come to the forefront.

The conflict between the present Central Government and the Supreme Court is likely to continue if the Indira Gandhi Government passes another Act and decides to enact some progressive measures. The verdict on the Act has strengthened the position of the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine and this combine is bound to resort to the court to fight every progressive measure. And there are enough loopholes and open provisions in the Constitution to strike down each and every measure of progress. The rising demands of the masses will only accentuate this conflict pitting the two wings of the state, the judiciary and the executive, against each other. And through all this the people will learn the inevitable lesson—the bourgeois-landlord Constitution will have to go lock, stock, and barrel.

Report on the Plenum of West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)*

The immediate background to the Plenum of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), held at Noapara in 24-Parganas from February 9 to February 14, 1970, was the crisis in the United Front and its government, caused by the calculated moves mainly of the Bangla Congress and the Right Communist Party and certain other constituents of the United Front to topple the Government as it is and form a 'mini-front' Government minus the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on the pattern of Kerala and thereby change the United Front Government from being an instrument for unleashing the mass struggles and carrying forward the democratic forces in West Bengal into an obliging tool of the vested interests, the big bourgeoisie and the landlords. The concern expressed by these parties over the 'law and order' situation, in West Bengal is, significantly enough, echoed in the big bourgeois Press all over India and voiced by both wings of the Congress, the Swatantra and Jana Sangh.

The resolution 'Against the conspiracy to topple the United Front', which was adopted unanimously by the Plenum warned the people against this danger and called upon them to frustrate the conspiracy and prepare themselves to meet the attack of the reactionary forces on their hard-won gains and rights in

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 1, 1970.

This document be connected with the document covered under Item 18 of this Volume.

case the conspirators with direct or indirect help from the Congress, dared to put into effect this conspiracy

Summing up of Experience

The crisis in the United Front, the resolution said, has occurred at a time when after the heavy defeat of the Congress at the mid-term polls, the people in West Bengal have come to look upon the United Front as a real alternative to the Congress and are using it to advance the struggle of the workers, peasants, and the democratic masses against the vested interests, and the forces of reaction.

The threat to the United Front comes at a moment when with the split in the ruling party under the impact of the sharpening economic and political crisis in the country and consequent struggles of the people, it has become imperative to preserve the militant character and unity of the United Front to develop further the independent, militant spirit of the people. For the Bangla Congress and Right Communists this split has come as an opportunity to topple the United Front in alliance with the Indira Congress, and they are frantically pursuing this goal.

The resolution drew attention to the warnings repeatedly given by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) that the moves of the Bangla Congress were not the outcome of any genuine concern to put an end to inter-party clashes, they really reflected the reactions of the vested interests gone berserk at the intensification of class struggles.

The resolution pointed out briefly the achievements of the people of West Bengal during the last fourteen months under the aegis of the United Front. Using the United Front as an instrument of struggle, millions of workers have by their united struggles wrested from the hands of industrialists 50 crores of rupees.

More significant have been the gains of peasants. In spite of the conspiracies of jotdars and systematic circumvention of the law by them, the peasants in West Bengal have occupied nearly ten lakh bighas of vested and benami lands and

harvested and taken possession of 50 to 70 lakh maunds of paddy.

All these have not only created a new consciousness among millions of workers and poor peasants, other sections of the people have also been benefited and inspired with a new consciousness during the last fourteen months. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) feels legitimately proud of having been always in the forefront of these struggles.

The Plenum, however, did not concern itself solely with the immediate problem, the imminent danger to the United Front, although naturally enough, it loomed large in the deliberations. The Plenum took stock of the developments which have taken place in the national and international situation and in the state, since the State Conference of the Party in December 1968, especially the developments during the last fourteen months, changing the former correlation of forces. The Plenum also summed up the experience of the Party during this period and then charted out after deliberations spread over six days (for more than thirty hours) the broad tactics to be followed in the changed situation.

Significant Developments

The significant developments in the international scene, as the Political Organizational Report pointed out, were: (a) the great advance of the liberation war in Vietnam, and (b) the counter-revolutionary conspiracy of American imperialism in collusion with the revisionist leadership in Czechoslovakia against which the Soviet Union and four other Warsaw Pact countries had to militarily intervene. The events in Czechoslovakia once again underlined the magnitude of the danger posed by revisionism in the international communist movement and even in the socialist states.

The report also drew attention to the danger of sectarianism, which like revisionism overlooked the danger of imperialism.

The report, however, took note of the fact that the national liberation movement has become stronger, with the further deepening of the economic and political crisis of

imperialism. Further intensification of the fundamental contradictions in the world had taken place.

The present crisis in the national situation, the report said, should be analyzed and understood in the context of the international situation.

The crisis has reached a stage when under its impact the most powerful party of the Indian ruling classes has split in two warring camps. With the Congress disintegrating very fast all over India, the ruling classes are in search of new tactics and new ways to perpetuate their class rule. A section of the ruling classes, represented by the Syndicate, wants to pass off the entire burden of the crisis on the people, to intensify exploitation by attacking the democratic rights of the masses and establishing a police state in order to crush the growing resistance. The other section wants to regain for the Congress its former influence over the masses by hiding its class character behind protestations of democracy and socialism and by giving the non-big bourgeoisie and the rural rich some minor concessions without prejudicing the interest of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie.

Perils and Opportunity

The split has created a new danger as well as a new opportunity. The danger of an outright reactionary take-over by the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine has increased. On the other hand, the split has created the opportunity for the working class and the democratic forces to consolidate themselves further, to extend their democratic rights to some extent and thus to create favourable conditions for preparing themselves for struggles, wider in scope and higher in form in the coming days. How successfully we can utilize this opportunity to isolate the extreme reactionary forces and to expose right and left, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois opportunism, to widen the mass struggles and raise them to a political level and build the militant unity of the peasants, workers and the toiling people depends on the strength of our Party and the leadership it can provide.

The split has also created a new danger. Some of the parties who had been opposing the Congress so long are turning again towards one or the other wing of the Congress and seeking to establish an anti-communist front in alliance with the Congress.

Our Party, the State Committee report said, has become the target of attack both inside and outside the United Front and attempts are being made to create an atmosphere of anti-communism in order to isolate our Party from the masses and to set up on the pattern of Kerala an anti-communist reactionary Government in place of the present anti-Congress United Front Government.

The report underlined also another feature in the situation. While the disunity among the parties was growing, the forces of unity among the people were advancing. This was evidenced in the rally on December 26 last against the conspiracy to wreck the U.F. and its Government.

The report also drew attention to the spectacular advance during this period in the influence and organization of the Party among the workers, peasants, students, teachers, employees and women, and the unprecedented rise in the sale of Party journals and literature. This growth is reflected also in the rise in the collection of Party fund.

Some Instances of Growth

A few instances will illustrate the extent of this progress.

The membership of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union has increased to nearly 100,000 this year as against 39,000 last year.

In the colliery belt, there were only 13 unions under our leadership. But now, as was reported by Comrade Robin Chatterjee, there are 90 unions, representing about 80,000 workers, under the leadership of the Party. This advance is all the more significant since about nine out of every ten workers in the colliery area are non-Bengalis. The Party there has not only led the workers in the path of united struggles on common demands, but through sustained political

campaign has put disruptive forces of provincialism very much on the defensive.

Of equal significance has been the Party's progress among the tea garden workers. In the Terai region, we have today under our leadership 27 gardens instead of 11 last year. In Nagrakata in Jalpaiguri, we had formerly one union under our influence; now we have under our leadership 11 unions out of thirteen.

On the students' front, the growth of Party influence is reflected in the recent union elections in colleges. Out of 188 elections held in the recent period the Students' Federation has won single-party majority in 125 unions and hold 12 other unions jointly with other forces.

Unmistakable evidence of the growth of Party influence is reflected in the increasing demand for the Party's weekly organ, *Deshitaishee*. Since the installation of the United Front its sale has risen to over 60,000 copies per week. There is demand for more, but it cannot be met without expansion of the printing press.

Ganasakti, the Party's evening daily, prints 16,000 copies daily, all of which are sold, although the present demand is for 25,000 copies daily.

Another indication of the measure of politicalization of the masses is the remarkable rise in the sale of Party literature, including basic Marxist literature through National Book Agency. In 1968, National Book Agency sold literature worth Rs. 331,633.91. The figure rose to Rs. 405,008.66 in 1969.

The single most remarkable feature of the advance of democratic forces in West Bengal is the awakening of the rural masses on a scale not witnessed at any time in the past. This is reflected in the advance of peasant movement and formation of Kisan Sabhas in all the districts of West Bengal including Bankura, Birbhum and Purulia where prior to the formation of the United Front Government there were hardly any kisan organization worth speaking of.

A new feature in the kisan organizations is the emergence into leadership of cadres from agricultural workers and poor

peasantry who are joining the kisan organizations in much larger number than ever witnessed before.

This, according to delegates who participated in the deliberations, was possible because of more or less correct application of the Party's document on the Tasks on the Kisan Front.

While the delegates, one after another gave reports of immense advance of democratic movements and mass organizations in general and the considerable growth of Party influence in different areas and on various fronts, they did not hesitate to admit errors and deviations which had occurred in the course of development of mass movements.

They also analysed the weaknesses which are preventing the Party from making the fullest utilization of the possibilities of the situation and preparing the Party and the masses to defend the gains they have made so far.

The main weaknesses were briefly enumerated in the report and found confirmation in the reports from various district and front organizers.

While the Party has already started to consolidate politically and organizationally the democratic forces so that the possibilities of the new situation can be realized to the fullest extent, and there has been remarkable progress in this direction, the Party is lagging much behind what the situation demands.

Although there has been, as compared with the past, remarkable advance in political consciousness among the working class and the peasantry, their movements are still mainly marked by economism. In the trade unions, there has been spectacular growth of Party influence, but the Party remains weak in some vital sectors, e.g. the railways, the port area, transport, etc.

A basic weakness on the kisan front is that the majority of the peasantry remains to be organized in the Kisan Sabhas. Not enough efforts are being made to organize agricultural labourers. The most serious weakness of all is that the Party organization is still very weak and cannot keep pace with the rapid growth in the influence of the Party and mass movements and the needs of the new situation.

As many as eighty delegates participated in the deliberations. Reports from the districts brought out the role of the various parties, especially the disruptive role of the Bangla Congress, the Right Communist Party, etc. in the colliery belt and the difficult struggle that the Party is waging to defend itself against the onslaughts of these parties and the vested interests without allowing the unity of the masses to be disrupted.

The Plenum was meeting under the shadow of the grave crisis in the United Front and a massive smear campaign by the bourgeois Press which has played up every bit of slander against the Party uttered by the Bangla Congress, the Right Communists and Forward Bloc and some other constituents of the United Front.

The Plenum made a sober analysis of the crisis and delegate after delegate gave reports of the growing determination of the people to fight for the preservation of the United Front with its present militant character, and to defend the gains won by them during the last fourteen months in case the pledge given by the United Front parties at the time of the polls was betrayed.

The Plenum adopted three resolutions besides the resolution 'Against the Conspiracy to topple the United Front'.

A resolution was adopted in support of the liberation struggle in Vietnam, the success of which, the resolution said proves that man is stronger than arms.

The resolution on Kerala drew attention to the massive repression launched by the mini-front-Kerala Congress Government, a Government of betrayal, and greeted the struggle of the militant people of Kerala to compel the mini-front to resign and seek a fresh mandate from the people. The resolution pledged to mobilize the people of West Bengal in support of the heroic struggle of the people of Kerala against the mini-front of the betrayers.

In another resolution on the Supreme Court's judgement on the nationalization of banks as unconstitutional, the Party emphasized the urgent need for fundamental reform of the

Constitution and nationalization of all foreign and Indian banks.

The success of the Plenum depended to a great extent on the planning and organization as well as the devoted service of more than 800 volunteers. Working in three shifts round the clock, the men and women volunteers in their olive-green caps with visors were always on hand to do all sorts of duties — guarding the gates, standing on sentry duty at the tower, serving in the first-aid post, serving tea and refreshments at the stall, helping in the kitchen, serving as guides to the exhibition of posters and photographs, controlling crowd, marshalling vehicles, assisting visitors and delegates at railway stations. Theirs was the invisible hand that smoothened the way for the successful conclusion of the Plenum.

The Plenum ended with the singing of the *Internationale* after which the volunteers presented a guard of honour to Comrade P. Sundarayya. Comrade Sundarayya congratulated the volunteers for the discipline displayed by them in discharging their duties and called upon them to prepare themselves for all eventualities in defence of the rights of the people.

Implement the Programme and Save the U.F.*

Statement issued by the
West Bengal State Committee of
the C.P.I.(M) on March 4, 1970 in Calcutta

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), in a statement to the Press in Calcutta on March 4, 1970, put forward its proposal to solve the present crisis in the United Front.

The following is the text of the statement:

We consider that the present crisis in the United Front has developed because, instead of welcoming the mass upsurge of the toiling people of West Bengal who with the support of the U.F. Government, won significant victories in achieving some of the economic demands of the working class and the peasantry and are eager to go ahead to get other urgent and vital demands fulfilled, the Bangla Congress aided and abetted by the Right C.P. and other allies took up a course of isolating the CPI(M) and of forming a Kerala-type mini-front Ministry in West Bengal.

We are also witnessing the fact that the jotedars and certain other vested interests who in the past used to get all protection from the Congress, are now seeking protection from the Bangla Congress and some other constituent parties of the U.F. As a result of this link-up, some of the

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This statement was issued a few days before the betrayal of Ajoy Mukherjee, Chief Minister of Second United Front Government of West Bengal, who unilaterally tendered resignation to dislodge the United Front Government of West Bengal at the dictates of Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, and this betrayal was fully supported by the Right Communists.

constituents of the U.F., instead of sincerely trying to settle the differences, and the disputes are more interested in intensifying the campaign of vilification against the CPI(M) to facilitate the formation of a Mini-Front Ministry.

The CPI(M) is being accused that it is misusing the Governmental machinery to extend and strengthen its party. Everyone knows that it is a travesty of truth. In spite of repeated requests and decisions no discussion on the concrete grievances was held. In reality, the CPI (M) is sincerely implementing 32-Point Programme of the U.F. True to its promise, it has not allowed the police to interfere in mass struggles of the working class, the peasants and the toiling people of West Bengal. It has already achieved significant victories through its Land and Land Revenue Department and Labour Department.

Eviction has been stopped, landholdings below three acres have been exempted from rent, nearly 3.5 lakh acres of land has been distributed amongst the agricultural labourers, bargadars and poor peasants, five cottahs of homestead land has been granted free of cost to the homeless peasantry.

Nearly ten lakh workers of the engineering industry, jute industry, tea gardens, textile industry got an increment varying from Rs 20 to 45 in their monthly wages. State Government and other employees got nearly Rs. nine crores.

The constituent parties, which are so much vociferous in denouncing us are completely ignoring their duty to implement the 32-Point Programme in the departments held by them. Though a year has already passed the workers of the State Electricity Board, Oriental Gas, Saxby Farmer, etc., who were victimized for trade union movement, etc., have not yet been reinstated, Service Conduct Rules for the State Government employees have not yet been suitably modified, no active step has yet been taken to reopen economically viable closed factories nor has anything yet been done to secure unemployment benefit for the unemployed, necessary finance is not being sanctioned to introduce free education up to Class VIII, nothing has yet been done in the matter of administrative reforms.

In our opinion, the present crisis can only be resolved if we can take up sincerely and seriously the positive task of implementing the 32-Point Programme of the U.F. which is the bedrock on which the edifice of the U.F. has been built. It is a matter of common sense, that all the 32 points cannot be taken up simultaneously for immediate implementation. While campaigning for all the 32 points, we should, therefore, take up the most urgent and vital matters on priority basis for immediate implementation. Knowing, as we do, the limitations imposed on us by the Constitution and the existing institutions, we cannot make any headway in this matter unless we can unleash mass initiative through united and countrywide mass struggle for the implementation of the 32-Point Programme of the U.F.

Accordingly, we suggest that the following demands from amongst the 32 points should be taken up immediately for developing mass struggle:

In the Sphere of Centre-State Relations :

1. All-India services like IAS, IPS, etc. should be entirely under the control and disciplinary jurisdiction of the West Bengal State;

2. The Union Government should hand over a major share of its collections from jute, tea and coal produce, and of Excise duty, Customs duties and taxes from corporate bodies from West Bengal to the State Government;

3. The State Government should have the right to impose tax on the growing industrial sector which has been assigned to the Central Government;

4. The Centre should transfer all the developments and all its industrial, agricultural, educational, social establishments as well as the CRP if and when the State Government requires it with the necessary financial resources to the management and control of the State Government,

5. The Centre should give automatic sanction for all legislations passed by the State Government on subjects listed in the State and Concurrent List, pending certain amendments to the Constitution; and

6. The Constitution has to be suitably amended to give more powers to the State Government :

(a) It has to be changed in a manner so that all items excepting defence, communications, foreign affairs, currency., etc., are handed over to the States.

(b) Provision for Property Right has to be taken away from the chapter dealing with Fundamental Rights and the Constitution has to be amended in relation to it.

(c) Article 226 has to be suitably amended so that the vested interests may not take advantage of it against the people.

For the Peasantry :

1. Enact legislation to enforce ceiling on land on the basis of family with no exemption.

Ceiling on agricultural land to be between 20 acres to 25 acres (irrigated and non-irrigated).

Ceiling on non-agricultural land to be three to five acres.

2. Bargadars to be conferred with the hereditary right of cultivation. Bargadars' share should be two-third of the total crop produced.

3. Owners having five acres of land already in personal cultivation or annual income of Rs. 3,600 from other sources will have no right of resumption for personal cultivation.

4. Restoration of land sold under duress up to a certain year.

5. Granting of adequate long-term and short-term loan to the peasantry by the nationalized banks. Moratorium on long-standing debts.

6. Fertilizers to be sold to the peasants owning up to five acres of land at a subsidized rate.

7. To open State Purchasing Centres for jute and to ensure Rs. 45 as the minimum price at the lowest purchasing level.

8. Extension of existing irrigation facilities, timely supply of irrigation water, introduction of graded irrigation tax.

9. Enforcing of agricultural labourers' minimum wage.

10. Taking over of cold storage and lowering the rate.

For the Workers:

1. Enact legislation making it illegal for any employer to close a factory or an establishment without the permission of the Government.

2. Take over economically viable closed factories and make arrangement for running the same.

3. Enact legislation to introduce unemployment benefit scheme.

4. Develop adequate mass pressure to get President's consent to the Trade Union Recognition Bill.

5. Enact legislation for severe punishment for defalcation of Provident Fund and E.S.I. dues by the owners.

6. All recruitment through employment exchange with proper supervision by the trade unions.

Education

1. Immediate implementation of the decision to introduce free education up to Class VII.

2. Enactment of the comprehensive Primary Education Bill.

Conclusion

Our Party feels this priority programme can only be realized if the U.F. and its constituent parties and the mass democratic organizations sincerely mobilize the entire people of West Bengal to fight for the implementation of the above programme.

In this democratic mass movement of the people of West Bengal, all sections of the people that can be united should be united and mass struggles launched on a widening scale. The State administration and the police forces in-particular must help the people's struggles. While strictest control should be kept over the police forces in this matter, the police must deal sternly with the anti-social and communal elements.

We appeal to the U.F. and all its constituent parties to bend their energies for the fulfilment of the above tasks and uphold the U.F. and the U.F. Government as the fighting instrument of the people.

Chief Minister Standing in The Way of Granting Rights to Employees*

The State Government employees in West Bengal have been demanding the abolition of the annual confidential report introduced during the days of the British rule in India and retained by the Congress after Independence. The employees have also been demanding the abrogation of the Conduct Rules and the grant of full trade union and democratic rights, including the right to strike.

These legitimate demands of the employees were conceded in the 32-Point Programme of the U.F. The Cabinet has also on various occasions assured the employees of these rights. Yet there is inexplicable dilly-dallying on the part of the Government in framing rules for granting these rights to the employees.

These just demands of the employees do not have any financial implications. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in implementing the promises made by the U.F. Government in relation to these demands. Full one year has passed since the Cabinet assured the employees of these rights. The employees have a right to know why the promises made by the Government are not being kept and who is responsible for this. All right-thinking people will also demand an explanation in this regard.

Newspapers have reported that there are serious differences

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This document be connected with the document covered under Item No. 21 of this Volume.

of opinion within the Cabinet Sub-committee formed for the purpose of implementing the assurances of the Cabinet in regard to the demands of the employees for T.U. and democratic rights. For finalization of the recommendations of the Sub-Committee another meeting is to be held with the representatives of the employees' unions and associations.

Ajoy Mukherjee, Chief Minister, is reported to be not very eager to hold this meeting of the Sub-Committee. According to a report in "*The Statesman*", he is not agreeable to granting the right to strike to the employees unless the employees gave assurances on some specific points.

Jyoti Basu, Deputy Chief Minister, has written a letter to the Chief Minister urging him to take prompt action.

Jatin Chakrabarti, another member of the Cabinet Sub-Committee, has also tried without success to persuade the Chief Minister to hold the meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee. It, therefore, appears that Chief Minister is holding up the matter.

He is reported to have said that he will decide on the date of the Sub-Committee meeting after seeing the outcome of the next U.F. meeting to be held on March 4. What is the meaning of this? How is this question of conceding the demands of the employees connected with the meeting of the U.F.?

There has been enough of dilly-dallying. The Chief Minister must now categorically state whether he is opposed to the granting of T.U. and democratic rights to the employees. These demands concern not only the Government employees, they also touch the toiling people as a whole. The U.F. Government must concede these demands without any further delay.

The procrastination of the Government has quite naturally made the employees restive. In a memorandum to the Chief Minister and the deputy Chief Minister, the Co-ordination Committee of the State Government Employees Unions and Associations has stated that if the Government failed to concede their demands within 15 days, the employees

would resort to direct action by squatting for 24 hours from 6 p.m. on March 10, in front of Writers' Buildings in Calcutta and in front of the offices of District Magistrates, Sub-Divisional Officers and Block Development Officers. On March 10, an All-India Demands Day will be observed. The employees throughout the State will wear badges on that day and hold demonstrations and meetings.

Bombay Witnesses a Mighty Demonstration*

Massive Participation of Landless Labourers and Poor Peasants

The deadening spectacle of a great city held to ransom by the fascist arm of reaction and vested interests. The inspiring sight of a mighty demonstration of worker-peasant unity on basic class demands. It is rare that these two events follow in quick succession, illuminating the entire political scene, throwing into sharp relief the role of parties and politics. Bombay's citizens had this rare experience in the first week of March. On March 2, Bombay witnessed the total Bandh, organized by the fascist Shiva Sena, backed by big capital abetted by the State Government, and helped by the utter collapse of all democratic parties with the sole exception of the CPI(M) which alone opposed the reaction's Bandh. On March 4, Bombay saw a sea of red surging through its streets, 10,000 landless labourers and poor peasants, led by the CPI(M). If March 2 made the people feel despondent and helpless, March 4 gave them courage and hope. All parties were put to test in these two days and only the CPI(M) passed the test with flying colours.

The call for Bombay Bandh on March 2, to back the demand for inclusion into Maharashtra of the disputed Maharashtra-Mysore border area, was given by the Shiva Sena Chief, Bal Thakaray on February 8. All observers have noted the fact that the call came two days after the S.S. Chief had met the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress (Indira

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 15, 1970. This report was received from Prabhakar Sanzgiri of Bombay (now Mumbai).

Group) President, Vasantrao Dada Patil, to discuss this issue. No doubt, the call originated in this meeting. In the days to follow Thakaray's Sena was to whip up chauvinist frenzy and tension and panic among the people, while Congress bosses were to hint at danger to law and order if their demands were not conceded by the Centre forthwith.

Fascist Offensive

The numerous incidents of S.S. attacks on the Red Flag workers and offices in Western and Eastern suburbs and at Ambernath were all of a piece which fitted into this pattern. The S.S. instinctively knew which of the democratic forces would stand up to its blackmail and gangsterism and concentrated its attack on workers. The murderous attack on Comrade Nambiar, the leading CPI(M) trade unionist in Western suburbs, the recurrent armed attacks on Devidayal workers at Bhandup, the unceasing assaults on the CPI(M) stronghold at Vadala and the attempted mass-raid on the Ambernath office were the glaring examples. But for the first time, in its four years' existence, the Shiva Sena thugs met with determined resistance and severe rebuff. Even with the police conniving at their attacks and in some places actually abetting them, the assailants were beaten off. The Marathi working class, on whose support and neutrality the Shiva Sena counted in the past, recoiled from these attacks on the Red Flag and the gangsters remained isolated. This is a significant development.

Communal Incitement

As for communal incitement, the S.S. speeches surpassed anything in this line in the past. Even the diluted versions appearing in the Marathi Press testify to their virulence.

It is revealing that the Maharashtra Government did not move a finger to halt or curb this open incitement to communal riots. In fact, the prohibitory orders issued by the local D.S.P. were suddenly relaxed to enable Thakaray's hordes to make a triumphant entry into Mahad and hold the rally

there. The local Congress MLA, Sri S. B. Sawant, who has been the target of Shiv Sena blackmail and threats, has come out with startling revelations alleging that the relaxation was ordered by the Ministry on a phone-call by Thakaray. Sawant has bluntly alleged that the Ministry has been conniving at and encouraging the Shiva Sena in this connection.

In the week preceding March 2, the Shiva Sena organized in most wards mock funeral processions carrying the effigies of Mysore's Chief Minister, Veerendra Patil. Carrying of effigies in processions and burning them is prohibited in Bombay and this ban has been used in the past to prevent effigies of President Nixon and the like being taken in support of Vietnam processions. But the ban did not operate this time! Nowhere did the Police object to effigies being paraded. Obviously, for the Congress rulers of Maharashtra, the Mysore Chief Minister does not deserve the 'courtesy' extended to the American war monger!

Democratic Counter-Offensive

It was in this background that the kisan Morcha was organized by the CPI(M), Lal Nishan Party, Right Communists and the SSP. The Morcha attracted widespread attention because the bourgeois Press had sedulously propagated that only the reactionaries, Shiva Sena, could mobilize large numbers of people. There was also the fear that clashes might ensue during the march of the peasants and workers to the Vidhan Sabha.

Besides, it had a political importance of its own in the special conditions of Maharashtra. The Sampoorana Maharashtra Samiti, which included all the democratic parties had degenerated and collapsed as the majority of the constituents were not prepared to go beyond the demand for settling the border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Many parties refused to combine on the class issues directly facing the people.

The Maharashtra State Committee of the CPI(M) had initiated the idea of organizing a giant demonstration in Sep-

tember last year of adivasis, landless labourers and poor peasants in Bombay, at the time of the March session of the Assembly, to highlight the basic demands of the peasantry, to win the support of all democratic people for these demands and to lay secure foundation for their coming struggles. The State Committee had appealed to other democratic parties to join it. The appeal had met with positive response from the SSP and the Lal Nishan Party. The revisionists, who had cold-shouldered the appeal earlier, joined the front only late in January. The SSP participation remained only symbolic to the end. The revisionist part remained a minor one.

Thus two campaigns were on: reaction's campaign spear-headed by the Shiva Sena, and the democratic campaign of the united front of parties — a campaign spear-headed by the CPI(M).

Hundreds of meetings were held, activists' meetings, factory and mill-gate meetings area meeting, lakhs of hand bills were printed and distributed. 5,000 copies were sold of a 16-page pamphlet explaining the problem and demands of the landless peasantry in Maharashtra. The city walls were plastered with thousands of posters and extensively painted with slogans. Several thousands of workers, middle class employees and housewives were individually approached for funds and food packets. It is no exaggeration to say that this campaign eclipsed even the election campaigns in the past.

The Lal Nishan Party was with us in the campaign all along. Its leaders and ranks worked along with us for the success of the campaign. The revisionists bestirred themselves only towards the end.

Unprecedented Response

The campaign met with unexpectedly great response. The meetings were largely attended and the intent faces bore testimony to the tremendous interest awakened by peasants coming to the city. The response to the appeal for food packets literally overwhelmed the Party towards the end.

The Left Debacle and Revisionist Surrender

What lead did the political parties give to the people in face of the vicious campaign of the Shiva Sena? In particular, what role did the Left and democratic parties play?

It is clear as daylight that any party professing faith in democracy, national integration, secularism and socialism must have unhesitatingly opposed the Shiva Sena's campaign and call. The real issue was not the expression of the opinion of the people of Bombay on the border question. The real issue was whether a rabidly communal, fascist body, sworn enemy of all democratic and Socialist values, was to be allowed to hold the city to ransom and to attack the minorities unopposed and unhindered.

With the one honourable exception of the CPI(M), all parties failed in the test. They failed to uphold democratic values. Chauvinism, opportunism and even sheer cowardice dominated their stand on the March 2 Bandh. After all that the State Government had done to encourage the Shiva Sena and to further chauvinism, the Chief Minister's last-minute appeal to "the sponsors of the 2nd March Bandh" to withdraw their call impressed no one. The people took it as a platitudinous exercise meant for record.

It may be mentioned here that the Indira Congress group in the Bombay City Corporation has now entered into an alliance with the S.S. Group there to oppose the Syndicate Congress.

The Syndicate Congress group, whose all-India Chief is demanding implementation of the Mahajan Commission Report, supported the Shiva Sena call for the Bandh.

The PSP sat on the fence, neither supporting nor opposing the S.S. call.

From far-off Delhi, Madhu Limaye of the SSP declared support to the Bandh call, causing some rumbling in his local unit. Ultimately, the SSP decided on "support to the Bandh but not to the Shiva Sena"!

But the lowest depths were reserved for the revisionists.

Here was a party whose cadres and offices had been subject to violent attacks by the Shiva Sena, whose trade unions are being attacked and smashed by the Shiva Sena; a party which flaunts the name "Communist" and claims to hold the 'Red Flag' which the Shiva Sena proposes to burn and destroy, a party which professes concern for the protection of the minorities whose life and property the Shiva Sena is threatening. What attitude did it take towards the Shiva Sena's Bandh call?

On February 2, the revisionists came out with a contemptible statement pledging "full support to the 2nd March Bandh" not only in Bombay but all over Maharashtra! Not content with that, the statement advised the Chief Minister "not to raise the false bogey of an orgy of loot and arson on the Bandh day" but to resign on the border issue! This was not only support to the Shiva Sena's bandh, it was publicly certifying the Shiva Sena's campaign as being above blemish!

This astounding statement of the Right C.P. has shocked even its supporters and sympathizers who have uncomplainingly stomached all the opportunist antics so far. B. S. Dhume, a leading revisionist and secretary of the MRTUC, issued a statement opposing the Bandh!

CPI(M) Opposed S.S. Bandh

Only the CPI(M) declared its firm opposition to the Shiva Sena's Bandh call. The party statement reminded the people that the CPI(M) had all along stood for a principled solution of the Maharashtra-Mysore border question. It was the only party in India whose Central Committee as well as Mysore and Maharashtra Committees had rejected the Mahajan Commission Report as being unprincipled. Despite this the Party was opposed to the March 2 Bandh.

The statement pointed out that the Bandh call was given by the Shiva Sena whose record of violent attacks on the linguistic minorities was well known and who was even now carrying out virulent propaganda and organizing attacks against

the Muslim minorities. Support to its Bandh call could only help strengthen this pernicious trend. The statement said that organized efforts were being made by vested interests on both sides of the border to promote hatred and enmity between the people of the two States and that the Bandh was part of this campaign. It would harm the cause of the people, rather than contribute to a just solution of the dispute.

The statement called upon all democratic forces to unite to oppose such minority-baiting reactionary forces as the Shiva Sena.

The Imposed Bandh

The bourgeois Press has joyfully reported that the March 2 Bandh was a total one. Yes. It was more or less a total Bandh, no doubt. But with a difference, a big, basic difference.

It was not a normal Bandh, the voluntary stoppage of work and activity by people in support of a democratic cause.

The mills and factories were closed, but not because of voluntary abstention by workers. They were closed because the employers, taking the hint from the State Government, shifted the weekly holiday from Sunday to Monday and enforced the closure. The buses were off the streets because the BEST undertaking took them off the streets, following the Government's advice. All shops were closed too, not because the shop-owners sympathized with the Sena's call, but because they dreaded repetition of last year's orgy of looting and arson by the S.S. gangsters and knew that they could expect no protection from the State Government's police.

Inspiring Demonstration of Worker-Peasant Unity

The enemies of the Party had thought that the March 2 build-up would frighten the Party into postponing the March 4 Morcha. Such a postponement would have meant a victory for them and a set-back for the democratic movement. The Party made it very plain that the Morcha would not be postponed under any circumstances; even if prohibitory orders were in force, they would be defied and the Morcha taken out.

The entire Maharashtra Party was busy campaigning for March 4. In the vanguard was the Thane district, where the Worli adivasi peasants had successfully fought for the crops they had raised in the jungle plots occupied by them and will have to fight for again this year. For four full months, meetings had been held in hundreds of villages, names enrolled and contributions collected. Adivasi peasants from as far as Nagar Haveli, over 100 miles away from Bombay, were eager to join the Morcha. They were to set out on February 28 and march on foot to Bombay being joined on the way by other *jathas*. Far-off Wardha district had already led in the big demonstration before the Nagpur Assembly session and was to begin its land occupation struggle in February. Dhulia district had held its landless peasant conference in December, planned a morcha in the district in February and proposed to send a big contingent to Bombay. The Bhir district too had held its conference, planned an agricultural labour strike and enrolled nearly 150 names for the *jatha* to Bombay. The Nasik district had a demonstration of peasants hit by drought while the Parbhani district was preparing for the struggle of project-hit peasants for re-settlement. Thus the preparations for March 4 had in themselves led to an advance in struggles in the State.

So it was that nearly 10,000 adivasis, landless labourers and poor peasants poured into the Dadar Station on the morning of March 4. Half of them came from the Thane district, 3,000 of them being Worli adivasi peasants. Conspicuous among them were 250 women, wearing bright-coloured saris and their peculiar ornaments. All those had been the guests of Thane working class on the previous day. A huge public meeting had welcomed them in Thane.

Some 20 districts of Maharashtra were represented in the Morcha. Even the far off districts of Bhir and Parbhani, and sent *jathas* of 200 and 100 peasants respectively, when each of them had to spend over 40 rupees for the journey.

Large batches of sugarcane farm workers came from Nagar and Kolhapur districts. From South Maharashtra district came

batches of the Goali-Dhangar peasants. They came under the leadership of the Lal Nishan Party. The revisionist contribution was the smallest. A batch of 200 Katkari adivasis from the Colaba district deserves mention among them.

Workers too poured in at the Dadar Station to join their peasant brethren. Thousands came in procession after procession from Thane and the western and eastern suburbs, where a large number of factories had stopped work. Textile and Railway workers came from south of Dadar.

The amount of food voluntarily donated by workers and middle class families exceeded all expectations. It proved more than sufficient for two meals and when the peasant visitors departed the next day, they were given food packets for their home journey too!

By noon, the maidan opposite the Ruia College was a sea of red. From there nearly 20,000 workers and peasants marched in procession the six mile-long route to the Council Hall. The streets were packed on both sides all along the routes by lakhs of admiring and enthused workers and their families. Particularly enthusing and inspiring was the reception at Delisle Road and Madanpura. One could read on the lakhs of smiling faces the love and admiration for the poor peasant comrades, the feeling of relief and joy that the Red Flag had given a fitting reply to the Shiva Sena's Bandh.

Any plans the S.S bosses had for attacking and disturbing the Morcha — and they did have some such plan— they had to give up at the sight of the huge, militant and confident mass surging through the streets.

By 6 p.m the Morcha reached the vicinity of the Council Hall where it was stopped by the police. It had been planned to turn back and hold a meeting at the Azad Maidan. But the Government refused permission for meeting there on the spurious plea that the Maidan was exclusively reserved for sports, though only two months earlier, the Indira Gandhi Congress had been allowed to hold its session there. The meeting was, therefore, held at the spot where the Morcha was stopped by the police. It was presided by Comrade

Godavari Parulekar and addressed by Comrade B.T. Ranadive, Datta Deshmukh and Yashwantrao Chavan of Lal Nishan, Dange and S. Deshmukh of the Right Communist Party, Adhav of the SSP and Ahilya Rangnekar of the CPI(M).

Beginning of New Advance

As Comrade BTR stressed in his speech, the March 4 Morcha was a brilliant beginning in the direction of building worker-peasant alliance. It is but fitting that this step was being taken in the birth centenary year of Comrade Lenin, who taught that there can be no salvation for workers and peasants without building such an alliance. The task before the Party and the democratic movement, Comrade BTR emphasized, was to carry forward the job now begun, through further struggles.

Yet another significant feature of the Morcha as Comrade BTR pointed out was that it brought together the democratic parties on a basic class issue. This front had to be extended and consolidated through mutual support of struggles and their co-ordination and drawing in other democratic forces. Comrade Godavari made an inspiring speech rousing the thousands of peasants that had gathered. In clear terms she announced the determination of the landless and agricultural labourers to take possession of land and improve their wages come what may. She told the Government that the peasants, backed by the united strength of several parties, are prepared to face all repression to secure their demands.

For the working class and democratic people of Bombay, the March 4 demonstration was the re-assertion of the strength of the democratic movement and a powerful rebuff to the forces of reaction who only two days earlier thought that they held Bombay in their grip. The Morcha has given courage and confidence to lakhs of people and laid the basis for a resurge of the democratic forces in Bombay. It has proved the efficacy of the united front of democratic parties.

For the Party in Bombay who toiled for the success of the Morcha, it gave fresh confidence in the correct policy of

the Party and its ability to fight reaction and lead the democratic forces.

The correct stand of the Party on March 2 and its leadership on March 4 has greatly enhanced the prestige of the Party in the eyes of the democratic section. Secure foundations have been laid for the advance of the Party.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement on Recent Political Developments*

Released in Calcutta on March 16, 1970

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), after its meeting at Calcutta from March 11 to 14, 1970, released the following communique to the Press on March 16, 1970:

The Polit Bureau has reviewed the national political situation and, in particular, the development in the States of West Bengal and Kerala.

It notes that the political crisis in the country has been further aggravated during the last two months, and the same is clearly manifested in the utter instability and uncertainty that has come to prevail in several State Governments such as U.P., Bihar, Kashmir, Orissa, Kerala and West Bengal, and also the Central Government. These developments demonstrating nakedly the bankruptcy of the two bourgeois lines offered by the two rival wings of the Congress party, increasingly expose the hollowness of the tall claims of the ruling Congress party at the Centre about Socialism and 'new deal' to the people.

The Central Budget, presented by the Prime Minister in her capacity as Finance Minister, keeps to the traditional pattern of defending the vested interests. The economic policies projected in the Budget go only to perpetuate all the evils afflicting our crisis-ridden economy — the indirect taxation,

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March, 22, 1970. Also published in the compilation of CPI(M) Documents from February 1969 to April 1971.

inflation, price rise and making the rich richer and poor still more poor. Is it any wonder that it has come to be universally acclaimed by the entire Big Business and applauded by the monopolist-controlled Press, without exception? Such is the real face of Socialism, conceived by the Congress wing led by Indira Gandhi.

The unashamed alliance forged between the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress on the one hand and the fascist-minded Shiva Sena on the other in the Bombay Corporation, the open encouragement given to the Shiva Sena's anti-Muslim and anti-working class activities by the Naik Government which swears by Indira Gandhi Congress, the secret confabulations conducted between Messrs. D.P. Mishra and Kamaraj at Delhi, the rank opportunist unity forged by the Indira Gandhi Congress in U.P. with the notorious political turn coat Mr. Charan Singh and his BKD, the proposed alliance of the Indira Congress with the Swatantra Party in Gujarat, the shady hobnobbing with the leaders of Telangana separatists who have been leading a disruptive movement, the toppling of the Kerala U.F. Ministry and the conspiracies that are being hatched to topple the U.F. Ministry in West Bengal highlight the shallowness regarding the tall claims of fighting the Syndicate, Swatantra, Jana Sangh menace. The unprincipled and highly opportunist moves and steps are shattering the illusions among the people that the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress stands for democracy, secularism and Socialism, and they are becoming apprehensive that it will not take too long a time that the political demarcation line between the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate alliance is demolished, if the present trend persists.

People are also increasingly coming to realize as to how the self-same ruling Congress party, which has plunged the country into the present economic-political impasse, is once again proving a menace to the progress of democratic forces and their unity, when the two wings of the split Congress, with their respective bankrupt political lines and opportunist alliances, are busy disrupting the Left-oriented democratic

fronts and their State Governments and objectively fostering the forces of reaction and counter-revolution.

The Polit Bureau, once again, draws the serious attention of all the democratic parties and groups in the country to realize as to how the two Congress-sponsored alliances are disrupting the unity of the democratic forces and how the rallying of different democratic parties behind one or the other projected bourgeois-landlord alliance is undoing the democratic gains registered in the arduous struggle against the Congress Government and its anti-people rule. It appeals to all the consistently democratic and progressives in these parties to rethink calmly and coolly as to where these two bourgeois-landlord-led alliances are leading our country and as to what dangers are inherent for the future of the democratic movement in the prevailing craze of several parties to rally behind one or the other wing of the Congress deserting the Left-oriented united democratic fronts in the States.

In this connection, the Polit Bureau takes special cognisance of the treacherous role played by the Right Communist leaders in the course of the present political crisis in the country. This party has spearheaded the conspiracy of blowing up of the U.F. and U.F. Government and setting up an anti-people's raj in the State. Police lathi-charges, shootings, beatings in police lock-up and the suppression of people's struggles have not only become a normal feature in the State but false cases are foisted on as nearly as forty thousand people to harass them. Its police terror rule is drawing universal acclaim from every reactionary quarter in the country, and it is not ashamed of taking comfort in the good conduct certificates showered on it by the same big bourgeois Press.

This party is now at the same treacherous game blowing up the only remaining U.F. and its Government in West Bengal and paving the way either to the imposition of the President's rule or the formation of a mini-front Government to act as the stooge of the ruling Congress party at the Centre. It is acting as the unashamed apologist of the Bangla Congress leaders who have chosen to defect from the Front and its

Government under the dictates of the vested interest; it is openly coming in support of every tactic of Bangla Congress leaders to slander the U.F. Government and maliciously malign the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which happens to be the single biggest constituent of the U.F.; and it has even politically degenerated to the point of openly opposing a call for the general strike of the working class in defence of the U.F. Government and in protest against the defection of the Bangla Congress. This, indeed, is the limit for a party which calls itself Communist and pretends to fight for the defence of U.F.!

Strangely enough, after carrying out a persistent, vicious propaganda against the CPI(M), echoing every foul accusation levelled by the Bangla Congress leaders. S. A Dange now comes out with fulsome praise for the achievements of the U.F. Government in West Bengal and argues for the defence of the U.F. Government. It is anybody's guess as to what this stuff is intended for—whether it is for the consumption of the ill-informed world Communist leaders and the gullibel following at home or honestly and sincerely meant for mending his party's perilous path.

Dange has been reported to have said, 'Never in the history of Bengal were the exploited toiling masses so free, so fearless, so organized as under the U.F. Government'. It is evident that the masses could not have been so fearless had it not been for the police policy of the U.F. Home Ministry which refuses to use the police against the fighting people. This knocks out all the slanders against our Party and the Home Minister Jyoti Basu. If Dange sincerely believes that the exploited masses have gained under the U.F. Ministry, then the only honest course for his party is to repudiate the treacherous group of Bangla Congress defectors and defend the interests of the masses by agreeing to form a new ministry as proposed by our Party. To refuse to do so is to be a party to the betrayal of the U.F., notwithstanding expression of pious wishes for its unity.

However, the Polit Bureau, even at this late hour, hopes

that the leaders of the Right Communist Party, realize the enormity of the political crime they are committing through playing second fiddle to the Bangla Congress defectors and by opposing the formation and functioning of the U.F. Government. It also appeals to the entire membership of the Right Communist Party and their mass following to awaken to the grave dangers that are developing to the gains of the people in West Bengal and prevail upon their leaders to reverse their disastrous course of alliance with any and every political force and enmity and hostility to the CPI (M). It is a shame for a political party which calls itself Communist and gangs up with all other parties to fight the CPI (M) which has earned the proud place of becoming the single biggest political party in the State and forms the biggest constituent of the U.F. Government. How else can one characterize such a political line except as a line of crassest class collaboration and grossest betrayal of the working class and its revolutionary objectives?

The Polit Bureau congratulates the fighting people of Kerala and the State unit of the CPI (M) for carrying out the determined struggle against the repressive police rule of the mini-front Government, braving every terror let loose against the toiling people. It is equally proud of the great mass mobilization carried by the State Committee of West Bengal and the heroic struggle it is organizing in defence of the U.F. Government and the gains secured by the people under the U.F. regime. It is confident that the treacherous mini-front of Kerala will be overthrown by the people, and similar conspiracies brewing in West Bengal will be scotched by the fighting workers and peasants and progressive middle classes of West Bengal. The CPI(M) spares no effort in defeating and routing the diabolical mini-front strategy of Right Communist invention, since it is a dangerous anti-working class and anti-Communist strategy of polarizing the political forces around one or the other bourgeois-landlord alliance, namely, the Syndicate alliance and the alliance headed by the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress. This mini-front

strategy, in the final analysis, is aimed at nothing but to assist the bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties in isolating the revolutionary working class and disrupting the democratic unity of our people, and perpetuate the reactionary class rule of big capitalists and landlords. In this great and glorious struggle against the mini-front strategy and in defence of the independent line of the working class and its unity with the democratic classes and masses from the onslaughts of the reactionary ruling classes and their proteges, the CPI(M) seeks the full co-operation and support of all the democratic classes and defends their vital interests.

In this context, the Polit Bureau is duty bound to warn every democratic and patriotic party and person in the country, that not only the political line of the Syndicate and its allies pose a grave menace to democracy, secularism and integrity of the country, but the ruling Congress wing and its Government at the Centre, which claims opposition to the Syndicate's political line are also found pampering different kinds of disruptive forces which spell disaster to the unity among different nationalities of our land and to the very unity and integrity of the Indian Union.

The leaders of the Central Government refuse to take a forthright stand against the separatist demands of disruption and dismemberment of linguistic States, such as the separate Telangana and Vidarbha, etc. They are playing a hide and seek game with these separatist leaders, and thus abet, encourage and strengthen these disruptive forces.

The Central Government refuses to either evolve a principled and democratic procedure or to adhere firmly to it in the matter of resolving several border disputes or river water disputes among different linguistic States. This woeful failure and undue delay in resolving the disputes is coming as a handy weapon to the chauvinist and jingo elements to incite linguistic riots between different States and to organize riots against linguistic minorities in several States. The border disputes between Maharashtra and Mysore, Mysore and Kerala are the instances of this nature, let alone the Central

Government by such policies is fostering to breed the avowedly dark forces such as the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and its counterparts in other States. These unresolved and vexatious problems coupled with the complex problems of Centre-State relations, are breeding the disruptive forces, who are out to utilize them for the disruptive purpose of dividing the class and mass unity of the democratic forces in the country and thus endanger the united struggle of our people for democracy, progress and Socialism. The bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties have been proving their bankruptcy not only in resolving the economic-political crisis in the country, but also demonstrating their total failure to forge fraternal bonds between different language-speaking peoples and States and to defend and take forward the integrity of the Indian Union. The present political crisis has pushed this bankruptcy to the forefront and demands that the democratic parties accept this challenge.

Such is the gravity of the economic-political crisis and the situation confronting the democratic parties and groups in the country today. The Polit Bureau appeals to all the democratic parties and groups to shed all complacency and rise to the occasion and to forge the unity of the democratic forces. The CPI(M) pledges to fulfil its part, and invites the co-operation of all other democratic parties and groups in the country in this great task facing our people and the country.

Dissolve the Assembly and Arrange for Polls in May*

CPI(M) Demands of the West Bengal Governor

A Delegation of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M) met the Governor

A delegation of the West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M), consisting of Comrade Promod Dasgupta, Secretary, and Comrade Jyoti Basu, member of the Secretariat, met the Governor of West Bengal on March 24 and apprised him of the viewpoints of the Party with regard to the developments since the promulgation of the President's rule in the State.

A letter of the West Bengal State Committee was handed over to the Governor by the delegation. Here is the text of the letter:

The vast majority of the people of West Bengal voted unmistakably against the Congress and for the United Front in 1969. The Government endeared itself to the masses through its activities and large masses of workers, kisans and middle classes enthusiastically rallied round it as evidenced by massive movements, elections in various spheres, by-elections to Assembly and Parliament, etc.

But Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and his party began to slander the Government inside and outside the Assembly which gladdened the hearts of the reactionaries and all those who were inimical to the U.F. Government. Finally, he chose unilaterally to quit the U.F. and by taking advantage of his position as the Chief Minister to bring down the Government by his resignation in the midst of the Budget Session. He refused to discuss within the U.F. or the Cabinet the differences that had arisen between the Ministers and parties with regard

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 29, 1970.

to powers of Ministers in their own sphere and powers of the Chief Minister, etc., or the question of inter-party clashes or the fantastic charges which he made about law and order, etc. His party boycotted the U.F. meetings which were called for discussion of such issues and there after deserted the Front.

Our Party, the CPI(M), was of the view that such an irresponsible and unilateral decision of one party went against the interest of the people and should not mean the end of the United Front and its Government. Consequently, as the largest single party in the Assembly, we were prepared to take the responsibility to form a Government without the help of the Congress. But the leadership of some parties of the U.F. such as the Right CP, Forward Bloc, SUC declared their support to the Bangla Congress and an end of the U.F. and expressed their active hostility to our efforts.

We desired to test our support on the floor of the Assembly after the formation of a ministry. But you expressed your inability to permit us to take recourse to this step in view of such active oppositon of the leadership of some parties. The outcome of all this is the imposition of President's rule and we are totally opposed to the indefinte prolongation of such rule because it is authoritarian and nothing but rule of the Congress Government from the Centre. For such a state of affairs, there is no mandate of the people of West Bengal.

May we remind you that in 1967, flouting the will of the people a traitorous PDF-Congress Government was installed by the Governor. But a massive movement of the people sealed its fate within a short time. Later, after the imposition of President's rule, high-powered propaganda was let loose that peace and safety had been assured to the citizens and hence they would prefer President's rule to continue and they would be apathetic to mid-term elections. But the falsity of this propaganda was amply demonstrated in the elections in 1969.

We are constrained to remind you of all this because President's rule has not been accompanied by the dissolution

of the Assembly and the announcement of dates for mid-term polls. In the meantime, once again assiduous and motivated propanganda is being organized from some quarters that law and order had broken down during the U.F. regime and on the morrow of President's rule it has been restored, and hence President's rule should be continued indefinitely. There is also a conspiracy to instal a mini-front Government with direct or indirect Congress support and hence the Assembly has not been dissolved and dates for elections not announced. Glib talk of forming a mini-front Government in the name of restoring the U.F. is being talked about by some people.

The people of West Bengal will never permit either a prolonged President's rule or a mini-front Government in collusion with the Congress party. Since some of the parties of the United Front have violated the mandate of the people, the only alternative is to go back to them and have fresh elections. We believe that the people of West Bengal, based on their rich experience, not only of the Congress but parties of the United Front, are capable once again of electing a Government which will serve them sincerely. We hope that through unnecessary delay in taking this correct decision, the people will not be compelled to assert their rights through struggles and sufferings. It is only such an elected Government which can with the co-operation of the people carry forward the unfinished tasks of the U.F. In the agenda of the Budget Session of the Assembly, there were various Bills concerning land reforms, workers, primary education, etc. Many schemes were being worked out with regard to unemployment benefits, refugees, irrigation, agriculture, industries, etc. The workers, employees and teachers expected extension of their democratic rights and improvements in their conditions of life, after the initial gains made by them.

Whilst all this will be kept pending, already there are talks of depriving the kisans, workers and others of the gains they have made in regard to their economic demands and democratic rights. There is grave apprehension among the

people in this regard. In the name of law and order, the police administration are being geared against the people. Indiscriminate arrests have started and the CRP has taken up positions. Those officers of the police and the Government who were unhappy because they were restrained from acting against democratic movements will now be moved by a spirit of revenge. The Intelligence Branch, Central and West Bengal, have started functioning against political parties and to prepare tendentious reports. The West Bengal Congress has started dictating to officers even in *sub-judice* cases. This bodes ill for the future of the State.

Our Party, therefore, urges upon you to end the uncertainty and set at rest all speculations by immediately dissolving the Assembly and announcing the dates for elections in the month of May 1970.

After the Fourth General Elections, the people of West Bengal have been deprived for months together of a popular Government because of conspiracies and betrayals. But the people asserted their rights against conspiracies and a puppet Government in 1967 and established their elected Government in 1969. Once again, they have been betrayed by a section of the U.F. But can the people of West Bengal be deprived of an elected Government immediately to suit the interests of the Congress Government at the Centre or the betrayers here? There is an authoritarian and dangerous talk that elections may be put off till 1972. Our Party is of the view that the people of West Bengal will never tolerate such a position and they must be given the right to choose their Government without delay.

CPI(M) Delegation Meets the President Demanding : Dissolve West Bengal Assembly, Order Fresh Poll, Don't Undo People's Gains*

A delegation from the Polit Bureau, of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) consisting of Comrades Jyoti Basu and P. Ramamurti met the President of India at New Delhi on March 25, 1970 and apprised him of the developments in the State since the imposition of President's rule on West Bengal and appealed to him to end President's rule and to order a fresh poll.

The Memorandum submitted by the delegation to the President follows :

1) It is the second time, during the last thirty-seven months, that a popularly elected Legislative Assembly and the Government formed by it is denied to administer the State of West Bengal. The U.F. Government, in the year 1963, was illegally dismissed, a minority defector Government of P. C. Ghosh was foisted on the people of the State only to be thrown out of office within three months, and President's rule was imposed for a year, preceding the ordering of the mid-term poll of February 1969. The people of West Bengal who resented this raw deal to them at the hands of the Central Congress Government and carried on a prolonged and bitter struggle to end President's rule, voted the U.F. into office, reducing the Congress party's strength in the Legislature to a bare number of 55 out of the total strength of 280.

But to our great regret the second U.F. State Government was not permitted to function for more than thirteen months,

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and once again an indefinite President's rule is imposed on the State, hindering the duly elected U.F. Government from grappling with the stupendous economic-political problems of the people of the State, as promised and pledged to the electorate. Neither the offer of our Party, the single biggest constituent of the U.F. with the strength of 83 MLAs to form the Ministry and test its majority on the floor of the Assembly, within a couple of days of its formation, was accepted by the Governor nor the Assembly is dissolved, ordering an immediate and fresh poll. On the plea that leaders of some political parties had written to the Governor of their intention to oppose a Ministry under the leadership of our Party, and with the unseemly and indecorous demand to parade the majority before him by providing a list of names, which, of course, was unacceptable to our Party, President's rule was declared for an indefinite period. The Legislature is kept in suspense on the ostensible ground of facilitating the formation of a new U.F. Government on the one hand, while openly throwing threatening hints on the other that President's rule would last until the Fifth General Election of 1972.

2) The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is of the considered view that the entire procedure is wrong, undemocratic and harmful to the interest of the people of West Bengal, and if these grave errors are not rectified they would surely undermine the confidence of the people in the efficacy of elections and the rule by elected legislature under the present Government of India. In this connection, we draw your attention to two major points involved here, namely, the complete absence of any uniform and just code of conduct in exercising the gubernatorial powers and the unwarranted and high-handed interference by the Central Government in the smooth functioning of the State Governments which are constituted by the democratic Opposition parties and the U.Fs they have been forging.

3) A look at the history during the last twenty years since the First General Election of 1952 would convincingly prove with what elastic conscience the Governors are using their

discretionary powers and how invariably the decisions are given in favour of the ruling party in power and to the detriment of the parties of democratic Opposition. This, of course, is besides the indiscriminate use and misuse of the Article 356 of the Indian Constitution, to suit the political expediency of the ruling party at the Centre.

4) In the year 1952 following the First General Elections in the former Madras State, the Congress party suffered heavy defeats and did not emerge as a majority party. When late T. Prakasam Pantulu approached the Governor with a list of MLAs who formed a U.F. and pledged support to him, the Governor using his discretion stated that his list comprised of several parties and groups, and as such, would call the Congress party leader since that party was the single biggest party returned by the electorate, even though its strength was less than that of the United Front. Thus the Congress party was enabled to form the Ministry and in course of it to secure the required majority. But when it comes to West Bengal now, in the year 1970, the single biggest party in the Legislature, the CPI (M), is not to be permitted to proceed with the formation of the Government, until its majority is paraded before the Governor and until the Governor is convinced that there is majority. He does not accept the offer that the issue whether there was majority or not can be tested on the floor of the Legislature, within a week's time, and even entertains untenable and absurd plea of some parties and their leaders that giving such an opportunity to the CPI (M) to form the Ministry would result in the defections and breaking up of these parties.

5) Similarly, in October 1969, when Chief Minister E.M.S. Namboodiripad had tendered his resignation, the Right Communist leaders and their allies approached the Governor to allow them to form a Government. The Governor is pleased nither to ask the list of a majority nor a parade of the MLAs but gracefully permits the formation and does not insist even the testing of its majority on the floor of the Legislature,

allowing for full two and half months time to secure a majority before facing the Assembly.

6) In the year 1954, a minority of 17 member-strong PSP was allowed to form a Government in Kerala and the Governor had raised no objection, nor asked for a list of majority.

7) In Kerala, following the mid-term poll of 1965, no political party was called by the Governor to form the Government, even the biggest which secured 40 seats, and using his discretion, he recommended the immediate dissolution of the newly elected Legislature straightaway, on the ground that no stable Government could be formed. But in Bihar, after the mid-term election of 1969, a similar and even worse situation had arisen that no party or front of parties emerged to be able to form a Government, and yet the Assembly was retained undissolved for an year, till the ruling Congress party was able to manufacture its majority to form a Government under its leadership.

8) During 1954-55, when the Congress Government in the newly created Andhra State was defeated through a no-confidence motion, the Governor used his discretion to straightaway recommend the dissolution of the Assembly and to order a fresh poll, while refusing even to give a chance to the Opposition to form a Government.

9) The instances can be multiplied, and there are any number of them, particularly in the period following the fourth General Elections, when the ruling Congress party at the Centre had lost its majority in as many as eight states or more. Ingenious explanations apart, for all these divergent and unprincipled practices, the common people of our country have come to consider them as double standards, intentionally pursued to strengthen the hands of the ruling party at the Centre, denying fair play, democracy and justice to the political parties of the Opposition, more so with the parties of consistent, democratic and revolutionary Opposition.

10) We urge upon you, the supreme head of the State, to put

an end to these undemocratic and objectionable practices, the practices of Governors misusing the powers of discretion to the advantage of the ruling party at the Centre. We also appeal to you to seriously ponder over the disastrous consequences for our democracy and the integrity of the Indian Union, if the Article 356 is used frequently and on ever so many flimsy excuses to suspend and dismiss State Governments, to dissolve Legislatures, to impose President's rule, and to deny the electorate their legitimate right of being governed by a popularly elected Legislature and its Government.

11) For this tragic state of affairs, where people of the State were denied the rule by an elected Government, and were repeatedly subjected to the long spells of President's rule, no body had been more responsible than the leaders of the Central Congress Government who were freely utilising their power and authority to corrupt the groups and sections of the legislators among the U.F. constituents with promises of favours and offices, with a view to organise defections and to engineer the toppling operations of the U.F. Governments in states. It is hypocritical to assume airs of innocence and throw the blame on the differences and divisions among the parties of the U.F. for their failure to govern.

The case of West Bengal is a positive proof of our contention. It is a proved fact that it was the ruling Congress party at the Centre, which, first, attempted to effect the defection of the Bangla Congress and install a new coalition Government in the State under the Chief Ministership of Ajoy Mukherjee with the backing of the ruling Congress party. When this shady deal misfired, owing to the division in the State Congress Legislature Party, defection of some Bangla Congress legislators and certain other splinter groups, under P.C. Ghosh's leadership was organised, the U.F. Government was dictatorially dismissed. and the puppet regime of P.C. Ghosh was installed. When this Government was rejected by the people compelling it to resign after three months of popular resistance against Government's repression, President's rule was imposed for full one year. The

people detested all this and registered their protest by massively voting the parties of the U.F. into office, reducing the ruling Congress party's strength to a bare number of fifty-five out of a total of 280 in the Legislature.

12) Once again in 1969-70 the ruling Congress party at the Centre, instead of drawing correct lessons from the electoral debacle it had suffered, was found busy organising the defection of the Bangla Congress from the U.F. Government, promising its support for an alternative ministry headed by the Bangla Congress leader, Ajoy Mukherjee. Our Party, in its memorandum to the Prime Minister had drawn attention to this conspiracy and warned against this toppling game of the State Governments. The Central Congress leaders pretended innocence and pleaded that their party was neutral over the internal divisions and disputes of the U.F.

But within a couple of month's time events proved the conspiracy, when the leader of the Bangla Congress was openly advocating an alternative Government, excluding the CPI (M), a Government that obviously cannot command a majority without direct or indirect support of the ruling Congress party. It was further confirmed when the leader of the Legislature Party of the ruling Congress abandoned his party's earlier neutral pose and announced his unconcealed hostility to permit the formation of a Government under the leadership of the single biggest party, thus creating the ground for the imposition of President's rule, and for keeping the Assembly in suspended animation without dissolution, so that in the time thus gained, further intrigues of defections may be pushed through and a Government obedient to the Congress party's dictates can be brought into existence. Such in brief is the sordid story behind the crisis engineered in West Bengal by the Central Congress leaders, leading to the imposition of President's rule.

13) The people of West Bengal during the last three years, had twice rejected the Congress party and voted it down, after twenty years of its unbroken anti-people rule. They consider President's rule as an indirect rule by the Congress party from the Centre, and hence keeping the Assembly in suspense without

dissolving and ordering of an immediate fresh poll is conceived with an evil motive of bringing into existence a so-called mini-front Government in collusion with the ruling Congress party and under its dictates. Our Party fully shares this anxiety with the rest of the democratic-minded people of West Bengal and appeal to you to take prompt steps which would ensure the people of the State a popularly elected Government, which alone can successfully grapple with the stupendous socio-economic problems that the people are facing today, in the face of deepening economic crisis and all its devastating consequences.

14) These steps in our opinion are :

(1) Dissolution of the Assembly and ordering of an immediate fresh poll ;

(2) Stoppage of the frequent abuse of Article 356 and putting an end to the arbitrary use of discretionary powers of the Governors by evolving a uniform code of procedure and conduct ;

(3) Stop the ruling party at the Centre from misusing its power and authority for furthering its partisan party interests by undermining and toppling democratically elected and constituted State Governments, comprising democratic Opposition parties, thus restoring the confidence of the people in democracy and duly elected democratic institutions in the country;

(4) Assure the people that nothing would be done under President's rule which would adversely affect the gains of the people secured under the U.F. regime, and prevent the bureaucracy from all attempts to undo the gains of workers, peasants, and other middle classes. Ensure full civil liberties and democratic rights to facilitate a really free and fair elections *without delay*.

We are enclosing herewith the memorandum submitted on behalf of our State Committee to the Governor of West Bengal.

Copies of the above memorandum, signed by Comrades Jyoti Basu, P. Ramamurti and A.K. Gopalan, have also been given to the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister.

Decision of All India Trade Union Convention in Goa:*

All India T.U. Conference in May 1970 in Calcutta for Defence of Working Class Unity and Interests

One hundred and forty delegates, including members of the General Council and State Committees of the AITUC, participated in a Convention at Vasco da Gama in Goa on April 9 and 10 to decide the future course of action to fight the disruptive game of Dange and company to split the AITUC.

The eight members of AITUC Working Committee who walked out of the Working Committee meeting held in December last, in protest against the refusal of the revisionists to accept the elementary norms of democratic functioning, had called this Convention.

The Convention was held in D'Cruz Nagar, named after the martyr who laid down his life in March 1969 under torture in police lock-up in connection with the mine-workers' struggle.

Comrade P. Ramamurti, M. P., member of the Working Committee, AITUC, hoisted the Red Flag in front of the martyrs' column and all delegates paid homage to the martyrs.

Comrade Mohammad Ismail, Vice-President, AITUC, presided over the Convention.

Comrade Ramamurti, while presenting a report to the Convention, gave a brief resume of the patient efforts made by the office bearers of the Working Committee, participating

*Published in "People's Democracy" Calcutta, April 19, 1970. The Trade Union Convention was held in Goa on April 9-10, 1970. Refer Document covered under Appendix (ii) of this volume.

in the Convention, to preserve the unity of the AITUC. He sharply criticised Dange for refusing to accept every proposal for democratic functioning of unions and merging of disrupted unions through holding new elections under joint supervision. He pointed out the anti-working class stand of revisionists' representatives of the National Labour Commission where they took positions on various issues contrary to accepted stand of the AITUC.

Comrade Ramamurti recalled that even when the Working Committee of the AITUC decided G. Sundaram should issue a contradiction about the Study Group report on Oil Distribution he refused to do so.

Comrade Ramamurti explained that the disruptive policy of the revisionists could be seen from the alliance that they are having with a section of the Congress, "Our presence in the AITUC became an obstacle in the path of the revisionists", he said.

He stated further that the possibility of unifying the working class by remaining in the AITUC has now been exhausted. "We are, therefore, being forced to take this step" he concluded.

Twenty two delegates who participated in the discussions gave one instance after another to show how the revisionist leadership was sabotaging working-class struggles in different States.

They indicted the revisionists for joining hands with employers to disarm the workers.

Comrade Balanandan, Member, Working Committee, AITUC, gave a graphic picture of the repression let loose by the Achutha Menon Government in Kerala on the striking workers. The revisionists have shamelessly justified police repression on the workers.

Comrade Monoranjana Roy, General Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the AITUC, depicted the historic strike of over two million workers in protest against the toppling of the U.F. Ministry. After the strike Ranen Sen and Indrajit Gupta issued statements describing the strike as

partial—which was ridiculed by the entire working class of West Bengal. He narrated how in Birla's Kesoram Rayon Factory in Hooghly the revisionists even went to the extent of taking a gun from the security staff and shooting at the workers.

Comrade Nallasivam, Member, General Council, AITUC, highlighted the refusal of revisionists to function jointly in almost all the unions. He gave a number of instances of revisionist splitting and forming rival unions and getting them affiliated to the AITUC by using their majority.

Comrade S.Y. Kolhatkar, Member, General Council, pointed out how the revisionists supported the Shiv Sena's call for the bandh on March 2 in contrast to their opposition to the unprecedented strike in West Bengal on March 17.

Comrade B. N. Kuttappa, Member, General Council, stated that the revisionists refused to hold a Karnataka State Conference for nearly ten years and even the Executive Committee was not convinced for more than five years.

Comrade M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, AITUC, pinpointed how the revisionists were getting closer to the INTUC and the HMS leadership. Instead of building unity from below they are trying to unite with the leadership only to betray the interests of the working class, he said. He cited instances of revisionist betrayal in steel and oil industries.

Comrade, Mohan Punamia, Member, Working Committee, described the growing isolation of the revisionists in Rajasthan and described how the State Committee of the AITUC had ceased to be an organ of class struggle.

Comrade Shanti Ghatak, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the AITUC, gave a report on the district-wise position of revisionists and the unions led by the CPI(M) in West Bengal and exposed the fictitious character of the revisionists' claims regarding their strength there.

Comrade, B. T. Ranadive, Member, General Council, AITUC, in his one-hour speech made a scathing attack on the theory and practices of the revisionists and underlined how they were acting as servitors of the bourgeoisie during

a period of crisis. He gave a brief account of the past splits in the AITUC and pointed out how revisionists were distorting the history of the trade-union movement to cover up their anti-working class stand.

Comrade Ranadive attacked the revisionists' policy of forming fictitious unions and inflating their membership. He also brought into sharp focus the effort of the revisionists to mobilise all the reactionary forces against the trade unions led by the CPI(M).

While stating how the AITUC under revisionist leadership was playing almost the same role as the INTUC, Comrade Ranadive stressed the need for another trade union centre to organise and unite the working class struggles.

Comrade Ranadive concluded his speech by emphasising the need for building unity in action—which alone could guarantee the advance of trade-union movement in India.

Among those who participated in the debate were Jamini Saha (West Bengal), Ravi Sinha (U.P.), Parsa Satyanarayana, Member, Working Committee, Chandi Prasad (Bihar), Kalyan Bhattacharya (Assam), Biren Roy (West Bengal), Bishweshwar Ganguli.

Comrade Ramamurti moved a resolution calling upon the trade unions in India who oppose class collaboration to participate in an all-India Conference to be held in West Bengal from May 28 to 31 to take a final decision in the matter.

The delegates collected Rs. 1,007 and donated the amount as relief to the dependents of Comrade J. B. X. D'Cruz.

The Goan Arts Cultural League organised a special cultural programme for the delegates and other citizens depicting the revolutionary struggle of the people of Goa.

The Convention ended with a mass rally presided over by Comrade Gerald Pereira, General Secretary, Goa State Committee of the AITUC. The meeting was addressed by Comrades P. Ramamurti, Niren Ghosh and Krishnapada Ghosh, who explained the decisions of the Convention.

Convention Resolution

The following is the text of the resolution adopted by the Convention of the General Council and State Committee members of the AITUC, held at Vasco da Gama (Goa) on April 9 and 10, 1970 :

1. A grave situation faces the militant trade union movement and all class-conscious workers in the country. The AITUC, which over long years had grown as the rallying centre for all militant trade unions in the country for carrying forward the united struggles of the working class has, due to the class collaborationist policies of the Dangeites, ceased to be so and is serving as an instrument in their hands for splitting the trade unions and disrupting the united struggles of the workers.

2. These class collaborationist policies were marked out as the official line of the AITUC in the notorious "Two Pillar Policy". The Government of India's plans of capitalist development in collaboration with foreign monopolies and with massive aid from American and other imperialists, whose bankruptcy stands completely exposed today, were eulogised as plans for "independent development" and the working class was asked to support the plans. The working class was thus sought to be disarmed and prevented from playing its role of rallying the democratic forces against the danger of penetration of American imperialism into our economic, political, social and cultural life, and the struggle against the Government's plans and policies in the interests of the monopolists and the big landlords.

3. As a natural *corollary* to this line, the dominant leadership of the AITUC praised to the skies the tripartite conferences and committees, the wage boards and such other machinery set up by the Government to sow illusions in the working class and paraded them as big victories of the working class. Rationalisation 'without tears' was accepted in 'national interests'. The leadership gave its full co-operation to the Government's scheme of 'productivity' and so-called 'workers'

education'; the so-called 'code of discipline', weighted against the working class, and which was used by the employers as an instrument to malign the militant working class struggles, was agreed to. And finally, in 1962, Industrial Truce was accepted.

4. When the militant workers began to revolt against these *fetters* on their struggle and carried on their class struggle, the dominant leadership resorted to bureaucratic dictatorial methods in the trade unions. The Dangeite leaders in many unions, entered into the agreements with the management on questions of increased work-loads, rationalisation and automation, wages, bonus, etc., against the interests of the workers, and behind the backs of the Executive of the unions and the general body of the workers and thus forced them on the workers.

When this met with the resistance of the workers and fearing the verdict of the workers, in many unions the Dangeites refused to hold elections and submitted fake returns to the authorities. When, finding that democratic functioning was totally barred, many of the workers held the elections on their own initiative, the AITUC dominant leadership refused to recognise them and kept these workers and unions outside the organisation. Where elections were held and the Dangeites were defeated, they, in many cases, split away and formed rival unions and these rival unions were given affiliation to the AITUC. Hundreds of militant unions that sought affiliation were denied affiliation and thus hundreds of thousands of militant fighting workers were kept outside the pale of the AITUC.

5. Repeated efforts made by the class-conscious workers and those who wanted to carry forward the line of class struggle to put an end to this disruption and unite the trade unions were frustrated by the dominant leadership. The leadership refused to implement even the principle that had long ago been accepted by the AITUC itself of unity of the trade unions on the basis of democratic elections with proportional representation and democratic decision by the

workers and their elected organs on all questions affecting the workers.

6. Not content with all this, the dominant leadership inflated the membership of their unions, refused check-up of membership, on the basis of any norm and affiliated bogus paper unions—all with a view to keep absolute control over the organisation.

7. With this control, it nominated its own nominees in Governmental bodies, such as Tripartite Committees, Wage Boards, Study Groups of the National Labour Commission, in which these so-called representatives of the working class joined hands with the employers and Government representatives, demanded the curtailment of the right to strike, slandered the working-class action and asked for greater police intervention in workers' struggles. Dange's own role in the Bonus Commission, as a result of which the bonus then obtained by hundreds of thousands of workers has been substantially reduced, is well known.

8. Despite all these disruptive and splitting activities, the militant trade unions struggled hard to forge the unity of the workers from below and launched heroic united struggles against the determined offensive of the employers and the Government to transfer the burden of the crisis on to their shoulders. Their awakening brought into existence the U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala, which served as weapons in their hands to carry forward the struggles. The general strikes of jute, tea gardens, textile workers of West Bengal and innumerable other strikes and other forms of struggles, in which they had the fullest support of the U.F. Government, compelled the employers to concede their demands, and the workers won victories unknown in recent years. Similarly, the strike of 2 lakh plantation, cashewnut, and coir workers, and agricultural workers won substantial wage increases thanks to the policy of the U.F. Government of Kerala. These victories inspired the workers throughout the country and enabled them win sizeable improvements in wages, in the engineering, jute and other industries both in the public and private sectors.

9. Precisely at such a time, when the leaders of the Bangla Congress, and its Chief Minister, started slandering the working class actions and struggles, and launched a campaign of vilification of the Government, the dominant leadership of the AITUC abetted and encouraged the Bangla Congress leaders. When the working class and employees marched together to smother the conspiracy to topple the Government and take away from their hands this weapon of struggle, these leaders did their utmost to prevent the rallying of these forces. When after the toppling of this Government the working class of West Bengal went for a General Strike on March 17, 1970, these leaders came forward as strike-breakers. They had no compunction in joining hands with employers' goondas in barbarous assaults and shooting down of workers as in Kesoram Rayon Mills in order to break the strike. Their activities led to the butchering of many militant workers on that single day. The unity and awakening of the workers, however, failed their nefarious attempts and the general strike was a glorious success.

10. In Kerala, these leaders in collusion with the Congress and all reactionary parties toppled the U.F. Government and formed a mini-front Government with the support of the Congress and all reactionary parties and groups, after toppling the U.F. Government those leaders have come forward as strike-breakers in every struggle of the working class—the coir workers' strike, the transport workers' strike and agricultural workers' struggles and supporters of the unprecedented repression let loose by the mini-front Government against the struggling workers.

11. Thanks to the class-collaborationist policies of the dominant leadership, the AITUC thus has been reduced to an appendage of the ruling Congress party. It can no longer serve as a rallying centre for the militant working class, and for forging the unity of the entire class in struggle against the attack on the monopolists and their policies, if these collaborationist policies, the anti-democratic and dictatorial methods, and splitting activities are not given up forthwith.

12. This Convention of the members of the General Council and of State Councils and Committees of the AITUC is convinced that the struggle for trade union unity cannot be advanced by those unions who want to carry on the line of class struggle and unity and for trade union democracy continuing to remain inside the AITUC. It must be pointed out that in the greater united struggles that took place in the last few years it was these unions which forged unity and launched struggles. They did so, by overcoming the obstruction of the dominant leadership and by forging unity of the workers from below. It is equally significant that in these centres like Bombay, where Dangeites boast of great influence, they did not launch any struggle worth the name, despite the fact that the working class faced tremendous offensive such as closures, retrenchment, bonus and wage cuts. No wonder that they offered no resistance to that anti-working class, fascist force—the Shiv Sena—but on the other hand began to kowtow it and actually support its call for a 'Bombay Bandh' in a chauvinistic campaign.

13. This Convention therefore is of the opinion that a new All-India Trade Union Centre should be established to carry on the struggle for unity and to rally the entire working class around consistent policies of class struggle, and for unleashing the united struggles of the workers against the offensive of the ruling classes.

14. It decides to hold a Conference of the delegates of all trade unions, who are opposed to those class collaborationist and disruptive policies of the dominant leadership of the AITUC to discuss this proposal, take a final decision and to chalk out further course of action.

15. The Convention is happy to note that the BPTUC, which stood in the forefront of the struggle against these disruptive and class collaborationist policies, which has such a proud record of leading united struggles has come forward to invite the Conference in West Bengal. The Convention gladly accepts the invitation and decides to hold the Conference on May 28, 29, 30 and 31, 1970.

16. It authorises the BPTUC to make all the arrangements for holding the Conference. The members of the General Council of the AITUC, who had boycotted the Guntur Session, and other members who agree with this line will take all steps for the successful conduct of the Conference.

17. The Convention invites all Trade Unions, who are wedded to the policy of class struggle, who want to fight these disruptionist and collaborationist policies, to send their delegates and take their rightful place in this great battle of the Indian working class.

A Rule of Terror and Violence in West Bengal Under President's Rule

With Sri Shanti Swaroop Dhavan in Raj Bhavan all is well with law and order in West Bengal. While he mouths big phrases about democracy and gubernatorial responsibility, his policemen are indiscriminately arresting and beating up workers, peasants, employees and students. Swapna Banerjee, a law student and former General Secretary of Burdwan Raj College Students' Union, was attacked and maimed by Gunamoni Roy, Bijayesh Ganguli, Nurul Islam, Dilip Bhattacharjee and other Congressite students. Swapna Banerjee named all the assailants to the police. But Shanti Swaroop Dhavan's custodians of law and order arrested not the assailants but the complainant, Swapna Banerjee, on the plea that he might possibly be one of those unnamed accused in the Burdwan incident of March 17. What is more, while Swapna was awaiting treatment in the hospital, untreated he was taken away to police lock-up.

Comrades Ganesh Ghosh and Niren Ghosh, both members of Parliament, conducted separate, on-the-spot inquiries into the cruel murders of Comrades Nani Debnath, Ram Jiban Santra and Taran Mali in Kesoram Rayon Factory in Tribeni. According to Dr. B. Hazra, Principal of Bagati College and other eye-witnesses, led by Right CP people, Babulal Chowdhuri, Nimai Ghosh, Sultan Rajbir Singh, Sewpujan, Subal Ghosh, Chandan Singh, etc., Birla's security staff and goondas attacked the striking workers on the day of the

general strike with lathis, bombs, tangi, spears, swords and guns.

Many a local inhabitant saw the Right CP people pointing out from a distance the Marxist workers. According to one eye-witness, Taran Mali was cut to pieces with a sword by Ranbir Singh. Manish Biswas of the staff colony was threatened with murder by Nimai Ghosh, Sewpujan etc. Chandan Singh, Siman Singh, Nimai, Sewpujan, were seen rushing through the staff colony with guns in their hand. Many local men received gun and bomb injuries. According to Amar Mahato, all the ornaments of his wife were taken away by Madan Sain.

A month has passed and notwithstanding the F.I.R., the police have not so far arrested a single one of these miscreants above-named. But, in connection with the Burdwan case, more than seventy persons have been arrested at Congress dictation and scores are awaiting arrest by his police, all only on the excuse that they might probably be connected with the case.

In a letter to the Governor, Comrade Monoranjan Hazra and eight other MLAs of Hoogly district have described how the police along with under-world creatures are terrorizing poor peasants, share croppers and other democratic people at Mogra, Haripal, Panduah, Dadpur and Dhaniakhali.

At Haripal, Sri Amal Sinha Roy, Anchal Pradhan of Olipur-Kashipur who had been arrested earlier and given bail, was arrested again on March 30. He was severely beaten and taken to the thana without medical attention.

With the connivance of the police of Kalachara camp, notorious anti-social elements like Mohammed Ali, Muzibar, Fokir Mohd., Shera and others created panic by indiscriminate and merciless beating and looting properties of poor agricultural workers of the surrounding villages.

At Mogra P.S, it is reported that on March 29 in the village of Damra, Bibhuti Chatterjee and his hired goondas forcefully occupied lands which are under the legal possession of the peasants. The police have neither arrested the trespassers nor given any protection to the peasants.

In village Sudarshan unde Polba P.S., Jotdars are forcefully occupying lands which are in the legal possession of poor peasants.

At Dhaniakhali, P.S., on March 26, at Kangsaripur under Gurap Anchal, jotdars and their henchmen attacked the village with lethal weapons. After driving out the male members they pounced on the womenfolk and some of the goondas like Mohsin and Bejoy manhandled them. It is also reported that Smt. Karmi Mandi, Lakshmi Mandi, Sukhi Hansda and Maku Murmu were molested and raped.

A direct complaint to this effect has already been made to the Governor by the aggrieved women.

At Pandua P.S, in an incident on March 26 in the village Buragram under Haral Daspur Anchal peaceful Santhal villagers were attacked and the police resorted to firing and severe repression. Several persons were arrested. This incident was a sequel to a conspiracy between a Forward Bloc leader, Sri Dibyendu Kundu, a rice-mill owner and in charge of the Resistance Group, and the Pandua Police.

At Dadpur P.S., Jahur Ali Mondal, Ansar Ali, Bhusan Ghosh, Satya Charan Khorat and many other jotdars and their hired goondas attacked all on a sudden Sardarpara in village Esta. Tarapada, Duryodhan and Subal received severe bleeding injuries. The miscreants then took them to Kalachara police camp where they were kept confined without any police warrant or order. On the same day at about 3 p.m., the same gang of jotdars and goondas inhumanly beat Badal Karmakar of Shatampur and forcibly dragged him to the Kalachara police camp. In the evening they again beat up Sutakar Rahman, President of the local Krishak Samiti, Sk. Manikar Rahman, Baidyanath Saren, Suklal Murmu and Sambhu Murmu. They were beaten up once again in the presence of the police at the Kalachara police camp and detained there. It is reported that Sutakar and Manikar sustained bleeding injuries as a result of repeated beatings, but even then they were not spared. The goondas hung them up, head downwards from the branch of a tree. They were confined in the camp for 48 hours and

then left off without any charge having been framed against them. No medical assistance was given to them.

The MLAs have also furnished the governor with the names of 40 persons who have been maimed by the police beating.

In another memorandum to Dhavan, the North and South Hooghly District Committees of West Bengal College and University Teachers' Association have given names of teachers who were tortured by police and goondas but no action has been taken so far.

Dhavan's police are behaving like jotdars' hirelings in Malda. At Gazol P.S. the O.C. at the instance of jotdars, has started wreaking vengeance upon peasants. They are swooping upon the activists of Krishak Samiti, Democratic Youth Federation and CPI (M) activists. At Alipur village, Kaliachak P.S, policemen, abetted by anti-social elements and in alliance with jotdars, are on the rampage. At dead of night, they broke into houses, beat even female inmates and robbed money and ornaments. They took away all house-hold articles they could take. After mass beatings of men and women and children, the policemen arrested 19 including peasants, artisans and teachers. At last, they began firing recklessly, Sajjad Hossain, a nineteen year-old youth, was shot at and later he succumbed to his injuries at hospital. In the face of resistance from villagers, the police fled. At Bibi Gram, jotdars are plotting to fan up communal frenzy against the minorities who are in occupation of vested land earmarked for them by the Government. Severe police action has also been unleashed against the peasants at Ratua, Harishchandrapur, Manikchak, and Daulatpur. Scores are being arrested and assaulted.

At Falakata, in Jalpaiguri district, the police are beating up men, women and children and even disabled old men indiscriminately after breaking into houses. They are terrorizing people at Sauchandpara. In one case, they attacked all members of the family of De Mohammed, a peasant. Later Harekrishna Das and Jahirul were caned and kicked openly

with their necks, hands and feet tied with ropes. The police broke into his house and assaulted his octogenerian mother.

At Sujapur, Farakka, police and jotdars are jointly springing upon the poor peasants. They are terrorizing the peasants into flight. Jotdars trespassed into the house of Kshitish Sarkar, a peasant and ransacked everything they could lay hands on.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement *

Issued in Calcutta on May 2, 1970.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in Calcutta from April 27 to April 30, 1970, and issued the following communique after its deliberations :

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) which met in Calcutta from April 27 to April 30 reviewed the national and international developments since its last meeting in March 1970.

The developments in West Bengal convincingly demonstrate that the ruling Congress party and its Central Government headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi is bent upon perpetuating President's rule in the State, imposed with a view to suppressing the surging popular democratic movement of workers, peasants and the oppressed middle classes in the State. The ruling Congress party, as well as some other political parties in the State such as the Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc and the Right Communist Party, dare neither to unite and set up an anti-Marxist State Government, nor are honest and courageous enough to accept a mid-term poll to seek a fresh mandate of the electorate, as demanded by the CPI(M) and its allies.

The Governor's rule by bureaucrats is nakedly revealing that it is nothing except the rule of the bourgeois-landlord Congress regime, and the ruling Congress party from the Centre is busy intensifying its repression against the workers'

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and peasants' struggles on the one hand and hatching every conceivable conspiracy against the CPI(M), which is in the van of these militant popular struggles of the masses, to isolate it and attack it on the other. It has already set its devilish plans of ejecting the peasantry from the land allotted to them under the U.F. regime and restoring it to the so called legal owners, who in fact are illegal usurpers of these lands. It is busy working out plans to organize disruption and suppression of the trade union movement, in order to undo the numerous gains the working class had scored under the U.F. Government. It is implicating leading workers and cadres of the CPI(M) in false cases, the crassest example being that of the arrests of Comrades Benoy Konar and Gokulananda Roy from Burdwan district, both sitting MLAs, and the issuing of warrants against Subodh Chowdhury and other prominent people's leaders in the State. The ruling Congress party at the Centre and their stooges who shouted the most about the alleged collapse of "law and order" in the State under the U.F. Government are freely abetting and encouraging Congress goondaism and attacks with brickbats and bombs on democratic demonstrations and meetings, organized by the people under the leadership of the CPI(M), to protest against repression and demand a mid-term poll.

The manner in which Governor's rule is dealing with the so-called Naxalite problem in West Bengal, the way in which these activities are magnified and given the widest publicity, and the patronising tone in which their 'heroism and valour' are acclaimed by the bourgeois politicians and the monopolist Press who decry only their violent forms of struggle, are to put it mildly, extremely intriguing. In this connection, the 'Political Commentary' in the monopolist-controlled *Statesman*, of May 1, offers a clue to understand the diabolical line of the bourgeois-landlord Government to this problem of Naxalites' activities. The commentator offers and the editor disseminates a tactic of agent-provocation! Telling the Government that "radical problems (the Naxalites' problem) need radical solutions," the commentator laments that "no

attention is being paid to such an effective cure as the penetration of the Naxalite movement in order to end it from within. Does the Government have the will and the equipment to try such remedies?"

This speaks for itself, comments are superfluous. Events indicate that there are more such tried and tested plotters in the Central Home Department than our hare-brained commentator and his patronising editor, and that some such game is already afoot. In fact, the P.B. has every reason to suspect such a foul political conspiracy behind the attempted assassination of Comrade Jyoti Basu, and the hypocritical concern expressed over it by some ruling class circles in the country. At any rate, it is becoming increasingly evident that the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes are doing everything in their power to create a fertile soil for all sorts of frustration and desperation, the soil for the so-called Naxalite activities on the one hand, while utilizing the very same activities to secure popular sanctions for promulgating repressive legislations such as P.D. Acts, to violently suppress the workers' and peasants' struggles under the pretext of maintaining the law and order.

The last six weeks, since the betrayal by the Bangla Congress leadership and the imposition of President's rule in West Bengal, nakedly reveal how there has been a systematic effort on the part of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces to destroy the gains of the democratic revolutionary movement, secured through immense sacrifices during the last two decades and more.

It is distressing to find that many of the so-called Opposition parties in the State, who have secured their present political status among the people on the basis of their opposition to the class rule of the Congress party, have not only played into the hands of the ruling Indira Congress party in its nefarious conspiracy of undermining the U.F. and its Government but are also turning a blind eye to the counter-revolutionary plot that is being pushed through before their eyes in the State of West Bengal. It is all the more a shame that

the Right Communist Party, which claims to be a working class party and professes Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, has chosen the treacherous path of giving political-ideological leadership to this counter-revolutionary conspiracy of the ruling classes against the common people and their class struggles. Instead of fighting the imposition of Governor's rule and the conspiracies of the bourgeois-landlord classes, the so-called eight-party front, under the inspiration of the Right Communists, is actively engaged in a malicious campaign against the CPI(M), a campaign in which every reactionary scoundrel in the country, and the imperialists abroad, are keenly interested. It is these reactionaries who are extremely jubilant at this campaign. Thus these parties have been unashamedly supporting Governor's rule and opposing a mid-term poll.

The Polit Bureau congratulates the organized forces of the workers, peasants and other middle classes who have been actively protesting and resisting the Governor's rule; demanding the dissolution of the defunct Assembly and the ordering of a mid-term poll. It is happy to note that the people in tens of thousands, in scores of public meetings and rallies, throughout the State, are enthusiastically responding to the call of the West Bengal State Committee of our Party in its campaign against repression and for a mid-term poll, during the last six weeks since the imposition of President's rule.

The Polit Bureau, having heard detailed reports from Comrades E.M.S. Namboodiripad and A.K. Gopalan about the developments in Kerala, such as the confidence motion trick in the Assembly, played by the Mini-Front Government, the two by-elections and the third impending by-election in the Madai constituency, and the political situation developing in the State, has assessed the events and arrived at certain political conclusions.

First of all, the circumstances which prompted the mini-front Government to resort to the confidence motion trick, the dirty deals that were struck behind the scenes between

different groups, parties and individuals of the faction-ridden mini-front and its crisis-ridden Government, the survival of the Government by the mercy of the Syndicate's positive neutrality and by the support of the Indira Congress and a bare majority of eight votes, etc., reveal, that this so-called united front Government headed by the Right Communists is nothing but an anti-Marxist united front, embracing every anti-Communist force not excluding even the Syndicate Congress and the Jana Sangh. Ever-increasing numbers of the people in the State are rapidly realizing that this mini-front Government is neither based on any principle nor based on a democratic programme or class. It is only a creature of the ruling Congress party at the Centre, entirely depending upon it and exclusively serving its reactionary class interests.

The results of the two by-elections go clearly to show that the "Kerala U.F. victory" about which the Right Communist Press is shamelessly bragging is a "victory" of all the other political parties opportunistically ganged up against the CPI(M) and its close allies. It is not a united front of democratic or Left or revolutionary classes and forces, but essentially a "united front" against the Communist forces represented by the CPI(M). The mock fight put up, the fake election campaign conducted and the bankrupt voting secured by the Syndicate and Jana Sangh candidates in the by-elections in Kottarakkara and Nilambur cannot but open the eyes of every honest worker, peasant and democrat in the State, to the fact that the two "victories" shared by the Right Communists and the ruling Congress party were secured with the full support of the Syndicate Congress, Kerala Congress, Muslim League, Jana Sangh and the Catholic Church, in opposition to the CPI(M). The election results also reveal that the CPI(M), despite this formidable ganging up of most of the political parties against it, including the ruling Congress party, has by itself polled more votes than it could ever in the past secure in these two constituencies. For any dispassionate observer, it becomes evident that the

CPI(M), due to its principled role of democratic and revolutionary opposition to the ruling bourgeois-landlord class regime and its selfless and fearless service to the oppressed people, is increasingly getting endeared to the exploited workers, agricultural labourers and toiling peasantry, no matter what the reactionaries rave about and the conspiracies of the ruling classes to isolate it from the people. It is these hostile political parties that are rapidly losing their mass following, and falling into each other's arms, wailing about their future and panicky over the fast growing mass influence of the CPI(M).

In the Madai constituency, these parties have accepted the Syndicate Congress leaders' advice to put up an "Independent" candidate acceptable to all the anti-Marxist parties.

Such is the ignoble end to which the much tom-tommed fight against the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine by the Right Communist Party has now come. They stand exposed as the storm-troopers of the ruling Congress party in its fight against the militant revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants.

The political and physical attacks against the democratic opposition led by the CPI(M) in Kerala and West Bengal are an indication of such an alliance directed against the militant mass movement. In certain other States, too, the call for such an alliance is being openly made, as was done at the Mannargudi Conference of the Indira Congress which was participated in by both Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Congress President Jagjivan Ram.

The P.B. noted with serious concern the brutal police attack against the leaders of the SSP in front of Parliament House on April 6. This attack ended in the death of one of the demonstrators and so barbarous were the attacks on a few SSP MPs that they barely survived them. Though the Prime Minister and the Home Minister apologized to the Lok Sabha for the incident, democratic minded people throughout the country cannot but consider the incident with grave concern, since it shows that some sinister forces have been

working behind the scenes in order to liquidate the forces of opposition to the Central Congress Government. The P.B. is determined to support and mobilize all those forces which are prepared to fight back these dark and sinister forces.

These developments in West Bengal, Kerala, Delhi and other places are increasingly revealing the real class character of the Indira Congress and the Central Government headed by it. The reactionary landlords and monopoly bourgeoisie who are proping up this Government are making the so-called "Socialists" and "progressives" do the same dirty work as they were getting done through the former united Congress Government in suppressing the democratic movements of the working people. These same forces are also making the so-called radical Prime Minister oppose the deletion of the property clause from the fundamental rights chapter of the Constitution and several other suggestions coming from rank and file Congressmen. The way in which such questions as the role of the judiciary in hampering progressive legislations, abolition of privy purses and privileges of the princes and so on, are being dealt with in practice also shows that despite the tall claims made by its leaders, the basic class policies of Indira Congress have now become scarcely distinguishable from those of the Syndicate Congress. The claim of its leaders and the propaganda of their apologists that they are fighting the battle of democracy and progress as against the forces of reaction represented by the Syndicate Congress is thus proving baseless.

The P.B., therefore, considered it extremely important that the CPI(M) should join hands with all the forces of the democratic opposition in carrying on a determined struggle against these anti-democratic policies of the Indira Congress, while continuing to give its support to the fight against the openly reactionary and counter-revolutionary policies of the Syndicate and its allies to set up a nakedly anti-Communist and semi-fascist regime in the country.

The Polit Bureau notes that, despite all the dirty manoeuvres and machinations of the ruling classes and the treachery and betrayal of the Right Communist Party, the people in different

parts of the country, in ever-increasing numbers, are organizing and rising in militant struggles. The heroic struggle of the Rajasthan peasantry and the victories secured by it, the massive peasant and landless labour demonstrations organized in Andhra, Maharashtra, Madras, Karnataka, and other places, demanding radical agrarian reforms and the reversal of the repressive policies, and a series of workers' and middle class employees' struggles in several States go to show that the people are not prepared to tolerate the vile attempts of the big bourgeoisie-landlord classes to shift the burdens of the economic crisis on to their shoulders.

The Polit Bureau also heard the reports from Comrades P. Ramamurti and B.T. Ranadive who attended the trade union leaders' convention at Goa, which met to discuss the disruptive activities of the Dangeite leaders in the AITUC and devise ways to defeat this disruption and their class-collaborationist policies which have led to the betrayal of working class rights and struggles and to defend the struggles and rights of the working class, their unity and their trade unions. The P.B. welcomes the decisions of the Goa T.U. Workers' Convention, and calls upon all Party activists on the T.U. front to strive their utmost to make the proposed all-India T.U. Workers' meet at Calcutta from May 28 to 31, 1970, a grand success.

The Polit Bureau expresses its satisfaction over the Lenin Birth Centenary celebrations organised by different Party units, all over the country. It is particularly gratified at the Centenary Week celebrated by our Party in Calcutta which attracted on an average 20 to 40 thousand people every day, to listen attentively to different aspects of Marxist-Leninist teaching and Lenin's unique contribution to this doctrine. The enthusiasm generated in the public can be gauged by the simple fact that the National Book Agency has recorded the highest sale of nearly Rs.90,000 of Marxist-Leninist literature in this month. The Polit Bureau will strive its utmost to sustain this new thirst and urge generated for the learning of the Marxist-Leninist science among the youth and students.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Resolution on Cambodia*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from April 27 to April 30, adopted the following resolution on the situation in Cambodia :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes the growing danger to freedom and peace in Asia from the U.S. imperialists, who have been directing the spearhead of aggression to Asia and have now stepped up their predatory activities against the Socialist countries and national liberation movements of the continent with the expansion of their aggression from Vietnam and Laos to Cambodia.

While persisting in their fascist war against the people of Vietnam and escalating the armed intervention in Laos, the U.S. imperialists instigated a Right-reactionary coup in Cambodia in an attempt to get that country to give up its policy of neutrality and independence. The people of Cambodia, aware of the threat to their freedom and sovereignty, are fighting back the U.S. aggressors and their puppets. The puppets have unleashed a regime of terror to suppress the people, especially organizing pogroms against the large Vietnamese population in Cambodia, and have appealed to the U.S. imperialists to help them suppress popular resistance. South Vietnamese puppet troops, U.S. war material, advisers, etc., are already in Cambodia. U.S. aircraft are bombing, strafing and dropping toxic chemicals on Cambodia, U.S. troops are using artillery and encroaching on Cambodian territory.

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This coup in Cambodia and the U.S. intervention that has followed are part of the U.S. plan of aggression in Asia, specially in the three Indo-Chinese countries. The aim of the coup is to draw Cambodia into the U.S. camp, turn it into a U.S. military base for expanding and prolonging the war in Indo-China, especially the war against the Vietnamese people. The U.S. imperialists are again trying to push through their pernicious policy of "Asians fight Asians."

The issue in Cambodia is clear — it is a case of naked U.S. aggression. Prince Sihanouk, who alone is recognized as Cambodia's Head of State by Socialist and non-aligned States, in his statement on March 23 has sternly condemned the U.S. imperialist engineered coup and expressed firm determination to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of Cambodia. The people of India are one with the people of Cambodia in their struggle against the U.S. aggressors. The Polit Bureau demands that the Government of India base its policy on Cambodia on unequivocal condemnation of the U.S. aggression and full support to the Cambodian people and that the Government categorically condemn such U.S.-imperialist-inspired moves at the conference being convened by the Indonesian Foreign Minister whose only purpose is to whitewash the U.S. aggression.

CPI(M) Extends Its Base and Activities : Polit Bureau Reviews Political Situation*

Statement issued on June 12, 1970

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) held its meeting for three days on June 10, 11 and 12, 1970. The meeting was attended by all members.

The Polit Bureau briefly reviewed the political situation in the country with special reference to the developments, in West Bengal and Kerala. It noted that in spite of the efforts of bourgeois-landlord parties and those of the Right Communist Party and the slander campaign launched by them through the monopoly Press, our Party with its correct line is making headway and is able to extend its mass base. This is seen in the unprecedented mobilization during the session of the CITU and our success in the Madai by-election in Kerala where our party single-handedly defeated the joint candidate of the Right CP, the Muslim league, the Indira Congress and other parties. The growing influence of the Party is also expressed in the developing mass movements in various parts of the country, the movements of agricultural workers for wages and land, the movements of agricultural workers and peasants against evictions and auction of land, the movements of workers in various industries under the initiative of our Party.

The Polit Bureau condemned the severe repression launched against our Party and the movement led by us in West Bengal.

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Under President's rule, more than 6,500 workers and sympathizers of our Party have been arrested; more than 60 have been killed; and warrants have been issued against 60,000 in connection with framed-up charges. Beating and tortures in the police lock-up have become common. The repression is specially intended to terrorize the agricultural workers and poor peasants in order to help the jotdars to take back the hard-won gains. The P.B. notes that whereas this unbribed police repression has the support of the Congress and Bangla Congress, the attitude and activities of the eight party combination are also providing encouragement to this.

While greeting the workers, agricultural labourers, peasants and other toiling masses for their heroic struggle to defend their interests, it endorsed the seven demands put forward by the West Bengal State Committee to unleash a mass movement and its appeal to forge a broad democratic unity of this basis. The P.B. feels that the immediate dissolution of the Assembly and the fixing of the date for fresh elections have become necessary for the advance of the democratic movement in the State. All parties interested in this must unite to unleash a struggle in order to force the bourgeois-landlord Government to retreat.

The P.B. calls upon the Party units and all democratic organizations in the country to protest against the suppression of democratic rights and liberties in West Bengal. It calls upon them to organize meetings and demonstrations in support of the seven demands of the fighting people of this State and force the Central Government to announce mid-term poll.

The P.B. expressed its satisfaction with the progress of the democratic movements in Kerala, with the growing mass movements of workers and agricultural workers and peasantry which in its turn is intensifying the crisis inside the mini-front ministry. The P.B. denounces the Achutha Menon Ministry for its repression against the agricultural workers and peasants of Kerala and demands the withdrawal of thousands of cases launched against them in connection with the land struggle. The Achutha Menon Ministry survives

only on the support of the Indira Congress and Syndicate Congress and the vested interests of Kerala; it has broken its pledges with the people and has no right to run the administration. The P.B. therefore, demands the dismissal of the Ministry, dissolution of the Assembly, and mid-term elections.

The P.B. took serious note of the constant efforts of the communal organizations like the Jana Sangh, RSS and Shiva Sena to organize communal riots in order to divert the discontent of the masses and disrupt the united mass organizations. It also noted that it is with the connivance of the Congress Governments and police officials that these counter-revolutionary forces are able to unleash their crimes against the minorities. The P.B. demanded firm action against the inciters of the riots as well as the officials responsible. It appeals to the workers, peasants and other toiling people to forge their class unity against the communal frenzy unleashed in various ways. The P.B. condemned the murder of Krishna Desai, Right CP MLA of Bombay, at the hands of Shiva Sena gangsters, greets the working class which came out in strike to protest against it. It congratulates in Bombay unit for its initiative in uniting and mobilizing the workers.

While discussing the problems of mass fronts the P.B. came to the conclusion that in carrying forward the struggle for T.U. unity it had become necessary to denounce the class collaborationist leadership of Dangeites which had refused to enforce democracy in the trade unions, and was taking the path of betrayal of mass struggles. It noted with great satisfaction the response from the working class to make the All-India Trade Union Conference a success. The P.B. welcomed the formation of the CITU and hoped it would carry forward the struggle for T.U. unity by providing effective resistance against the offensive of the capitalist class and by raising the political consciousness of the working class.

In relation to the peasant front, the P.B. took note of the new upsurge in the peasantry, focusing its attentions on the

problems of land and wages. It appreciated the efforts of the units of the All-India Kisan Sabha in Rajasthan, in Punjab, in Haryana and other places to forge united actions with the rival Kisan Sabha and other parties and organizations interested in defending the interests of the peasantry. But it deplored the attitude of the Right CP which on the one hand talks about the country-wide movement for land and on the other hand, through its Ministry in Kerala, unleashes unprecedented repression against the peasant movement. K.T.Jacob, Right CP Revenue Minister in Kerala, openly came out in defence of landlords and the vested interests when he said that "the Government would take strong action against any move to seize land forcibly in the State".

The P.B. condemns the attitude of the DMK Government which, while refusing to solve the land problem in favour of peasants, have threatened to crush any movement for land occupation by means of repression.

The P.B. reviewed the work done by the Party Group in Parliament during the last session. It noted some shortcomings and slackening of discipline. It decided to streamline the work of the Group, worked out new rules, and decided to convene a meeting of the Parliamentary Group before the next session.

The P.B. also reviewed the Agit-Prop work and decided to re-organize it. It decided to set up a separate Agit-Prop department. The P.B. decided to conduct a Central Party School for 15 days in the first half of November and assigned various subjects to its members to prepare a syllabus before October 14. The subjects will include the application of our Programme to the mass movements as well as an outline of the history of the Communist movement in India.

West Bengal : Mass Struggle In July 1970*

Decision of West Bengal State Committee of CPI(M)

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met on June 8 and 9, 1970. The meeting was attended by District Secretaries also and it was presided over by Comrade Kamal Sarkar. The meeting heard reports of the intensive political campaign conducted by the Party since the imposition of President's rule, heard reports about growing people resistance against attacks of vested interests and police, reviewed the results and chalked out future line of struggles.

The Committee noted that the campaign of falsehood and slander launched by the Congress, Bangla Congress, the eight-party combination led by the Right communists, as well as the bourgeois Press, has taken vile and mischievous forms. The Committee, however, noted with great satisfaction that this campaign has miserably failed to mislead the people, rather it has resulted in further isolation of the organizers themselves. The meetings called by these parties have been poorly attended and the attendance has become thinner day by day. The Committee also noted that the large number of meetings and rallies organized by our Party and the Conferences of mass organizations, with which our Party is associated, have been attended: actively and enthusiastically by millions of people. The attendance and determined nature of the meetings, particularly in the districts and rural areas, have been surpassed those of the U.F. period. The

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slogans given by the Party for defence of people's gains, for resistance against attacks of the vested interests and the police and for dissolution of the Assembly and early election have become slogans of the vast masses of the toiling and democratic people.

The Committee noted that the police repression let loose on the people, particularly on our Party and the masses following us, has become wild. The police repression is accompanied by and co-ordinated with goonda attacks launched by Congress anti social elements, jotdars and capitalists. In every districts indiscriminate arrests have taken place on false and one-sided allegations. On an incomplete estimate about 6,572 Party comrades and supporters, including workers, peasants and other sections of the people, have been arrested. It is also reported that the police have involved not less than 60,000 people in various framed-up cases.

Brutal tortures and beatings by the police are taking place. The Committee noted that the police attack is mainly aimed at creating terror among the people, particularly the poor peasants and agricultural labourers in the rural areas, breaking their morale and helping the jotdars to deprive them of their gains. In such a situation the tall talk by the administration about rights of bargadars and about land reform can be nothing else but a hoax to deceive the people and create disruption. It is also reported that the CRP is more and more being used physically to beat and torture the people. Even respected mass leaders and MLAs are not spared. In jails they are being treated as ordinary criminals. The goondas used by the Congress and jotdars or employers are not arrested, on the other hand it is the victims who are arrested. The arrested persons, including leaders, are often refused bail while the jotdars and anti-social elements connected with murders are not arrested and, if arrested, are easily released on bail. This unbridled police attacks is supported by the Congress and the Bangla Congress. The attitude and activities of the eight-party combination are also providing encouragement to such repression.

The Committee noted with great satisfaction that this police repression has failed in its purpose and the people and particularly the poor peasants and agricultural labourers in the rural areas are showing great courage and determination in successfully resisting such repression. Responding to the call of our Party, the peasants are not only resisting the jotdars' attempts to evict them and snatch away the lands, but in some places they are also trying to extend the gains. Encouraging reports have also been received where mischievous jotdars have been forced to surrender to the people. Defeating all attempts to create disruption, the workers, employees, including Government employee, teachers, and students are all leading powerful mass struggles.

The one-day token strike by the workers of all Birla concerns, Sriram group and the contemplated textile workers' strike are also significant pointers. The recent struggle of State Government employees has also been noted. Our Party greets the fighting peasants, workers, Government employees and others for their heroic struggles. The Committee noted that all these mass struggles are being closely linked with the demand for an early election.

All these developments have naturally created desperation and despondency in the Congress, Bangla Congress and the camp led by the Right CP. On the other hand, democratic forces are being consolidated. It is also noted that with the joint declaration of our Party and some other parties the basis for forging a new united platform of struggle is being created.

The Committee discussed thoroughly the present situation. It noted that the ruling classes and their henchmen as well as all reactionary and disruptive forces are mortally afraid of facing the people and instead of bowing down to the will of the people they are opposing on one pretext or another the dissolution of the Assembly and a early election. They want continuation of President's rule which means intensification of police repression and under its cover they still go on conspiring form a mini-front. With the aim of

crushing the people and detaining political leaders and workers the Government is desperately trying to pass the Preventive Detention Act. The people cannot take it lying down. Industrial Security Forces under Central Government is being created. It is the Central Congress Government that are acting as the real organizer of the reactionary attack on democracy and on the people. The Committee also noted, the growing problem of rising prices and food crisis. Hoarders and profiteers are being encouraged.

The Committee fully endorsed the measures taken by the Secretariat and the line of action proposed, by it. It decided to intensify and broaden the mass struggles on the following issues :

1. Defend gains achieved by the peasants during the period of U.F. Government : resist eviction : defend at all costs the khas and benami lands occupied by poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

2. Extend the gains by strengthening the struggle to recover more benami lands; impose ceiling of land on family basis with no exemptions as proposed by the U.F. Government; guarantee tebhaga to the bargadars; fair wage and work to agricultural labourers; adequate relief to distressed people adequate supply of food organize anti-hoarding mass campaigns; extend irrigation facilities and supply seeds and fertilisers at subsidised rate to peasants owning up to five acres; implement without any condition the legal provision to exempt holding up to three acres from rent; take measures against high prices.

3. Immediate assent to T.U. Recognition Bill; unemployment benefit; reopen closed factories; gratuity to all workers; stop retrenchment and lay-offs; an insurance scheme for the employed workers.

4. Implement Pay Commission recommendations in consultation with the Coordination Committee of Government Employees Association and mas organizations of teachers and other employees; stop victimisation of officers and employees.

5. Introduce free education up to class VIII standard. Immediate implementation of the earlier decision regarding use of Nepali language in courts and administrative work in the Darjeeling hill areas and certain other rights of the hill people. Inclusion of Nepali in the English Schedule to the Constitution.

6. Withdraw CRP from West Bengal; scrap P.D. Bill; stop repression; no repression on one-sided allegation of jotdars and the Congress; release all persons arrested who are connected with the Party and mass organizations; stop implementation of Industrial Security Force scheme.

7. Immediate dissolution of the Assembly and declaration of the date for a fresh and early election.

The Committee directed all its units to intensify the struggles of various sections of the people. It apprehends far more serious attacks in the rural areas against peasants and agricultural labourers in the cultivating season. Hence it decided to build up and strengthen peasants' resistance against combined jotdar-police attacks. The Party will intensify its efforts to build peasant unity as well as rural democratic unity at the grass-root level and turn the villages into real fortresses of mass struggles. The fighting peasants have become a powerful contingent of the democratic forces and their struggle has become an integral part of the common democratic struggle. Hence a basis has been created for building broadest democratic unity. The Committee also decided to develop mutual solidarity actions among workers, peasants, employees and other democratic people. It shall fight against any advice of surrender or any trend towards adventurism.

The Committee took note that the struggles of peasants, workers, teachers, employees, students, etc., for defence and extension of their gains have become intimately linked with the common struggle against the P.D. Act., against the CRP, against police repression and for early Assembly election. The people cannot wait for long.

Hence the Committee decided to move towards some form of a direct political struggle in the second fortnight of July

which should include general strike and hartal. The Committee has empowered the Secretariat to hold consultations with all parties and mass organizations which hold similar views and take final decisions. The Committee also decided to spare no efforts to forge and broaden the united platform of struggle.

The Committee also discussed the state of the Party's organization. It noted that the organization at all levels has been more consolidated and strengthened. It decided to take measures further to strengthen the organization to cope with the tasks ahead. As one of the measures the Committee decided to start a campaign to enrol those auxiliary group members who are of more than one year's standing as candidate members of the Party.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Resolution on Cambodia*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) warmly greets the heroic war waged by the Khmer people of Cambodia against the U.S. imperialists who have invaded their country. The Government of Cambodia headed by Prince Sihanouk refused to be blackmailed and intimidated by the threats of the U.S. imperialists and refused to allow Cambodian soil to be used as a base for carrying on their war of aggression in Vietnam.

The U.S. imperialists conspired with traitors and carried out a *coup d'etat* and installed a puppet Government willing to carry out its dictates. When, at the call of Prince Sihanouk, the people of Cambodia rose up against this puppet Government and when the U.S. imperialists found that the puppet Government cannot remain in power in the face of the revolt of the entire people, they have rushed in their armies along with those of their puppets in South Vietnam to fight the people.

The Americans have extended the war to the whole of Indo-China. The P.B. notes, as the joint communique of the leaders of North Vietnam, Pathet Lao, Cambodia and South Vietnamese National Liberation Front shows, that the perfidious attack has further cemented the solidarity of the peoples of these countries, and all attempts of the imperialists to sow dissension among the peoples by rousing chauvinistic passions against each other have been completely foiled.

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The U.S. imperialists, with all their might of arms and money, have been receiving only setback after setback in their six-year old war of aggression against South Vietnam.

This heroic resistance has won for them the admiration and support of all freedom-loving peoples all over the world and the U.S. aggression has been condemned throughout the world. In the United States itself, where the movement for stopping the war in Vietnam was daily gathering momentum, the invasion of Cambodia was greeted with hitherto unprecedented demonstrations of students, and all war resisters. The P.B. sends it greetings to hundreds of thousands of students of the USA who are in the forefront of this struggle.

The heroic resistance of the Khmer people after the *coup d'etat* has clearly demonstrated, as admitted by even U.S. newspapers and others, that it represents nobody in Cambodia — it is a puppet of the USA and has so far existed only with U.S. military support. It has clearly demonstrated that Prince Sihanouk and his Government is the real representative of the people of Cambodia.

This dastardly attack of the U.S. imperialists on Cambodia's independence has provoked world-wide indignation and twenty countries have refused to recognize the puppet regime set up by the USA and declared the Sihanouk Government as the only legal and authoritative Government. The P.B. welcomes the full support assured by People's China in the struggle of Indo-China's peoples against American imperialism.

However, the P.B. expresses disappointment and dismay at the stand of the USSR which while denouncing the *coup d'etat* and U.S. aggression in Cambodia, has not so far severed diplomatic relations with the puppet regime and recognized the Sihanouk Government as the only genuine representative of the Cambodian people. The P.B. is of the opinion that this delay and hesitation on the part of the USSR only emboldens the U.S. aggressors, and displays the disunity among the world anti-imperialist and Socialist forces who should stand united in support of the fighting peoples of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The P.B. wholeheartedly

endorses the appeal of the Premier of North Vietnam asking China and Russia to close their ranks in order to meet the American challenge in Indo-China.

The struggle of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos is a struggle for the independence of not only their countries but a struggle whose success will deliver a smashing blow to the U.S. imperialists' designs of imposing neo-colonial slavery on the entire peoples of Asia and Africa.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance, in our own national interest that the people of India and the Government support this just struggle and help in the speedy defeat of the imperialists.

The P.B. warmly welcomes the delegation of the ministers of the Sihanouk Government who are now in India for talks with the Government of India and wishes them success.

The P.B. urges upon the Government of India that it should immediately accord recognition to the Government of Sihanouk. Any delay in this, any succumbing to the pressures and threats of the U.S. imperialists will compromise the independent status of our country and spell grave danger to our own independence and freedom.

CPI(M) Central Committee Statement on Political Situation*

Statement issued in Calcutta on July 11, 1970

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from July 7 to July 11, 1970, adopted the following Statement on the Political Situation :

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) reviewed the main political developments in the country since its meeting held in February and has come to the conclusion that the reactionary policies, methods and steps of the Indira Gandhi Government which the February resolution of the C.C. had noted have come to the forefront to a greater extent than before.

The February Political Report of the C.C. stated : "The political crisis, which we described in April 1967 as being in its initial stage, has reached another phase, symbolising the split in the ruling Congress party and also the ruling classes into two broad divisions. One wing, which is called the Syndicate, and its allies are pursuing a pronouncedly reactionary political line. This is the line of uniting all the reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces with a view to launching a frontal attack on the lives and liberties of the people, a line of shifting the internal and external policies of the Government further to the Right, and imposing a nakedly dictatorial rule over the country. The rival wing, led by Indira Gandhi, though pursuing the basic path of building capitalism in alliance with landlords and in collaboration with imperialist

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

monopolists, is opposed to the political line of the Syndicate. It upholds Nehru's middle path with some modifications here and there, under the facade of democracy, secularism and Socialism. Neither of these lines offers a solution to the developing economic-political crisis. Both the wings are busy mobilizing the political forces behind their respective lines. While the Syndicate wing is working up an anti-Communist frenzy and demands banning of the CPI(M), the other wing is assiduously working to isolate the CPI(M) from its allies in the U.F.s and encourage the formation of mini-front Governments excluding the CPI(M) and subservient to the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress."

It is precisely in this stage of the political crisis, when the working class and the revolutionary movement it is heading are still not powerful enough to aim at the immediate overthrow of the big bourgeois-landlord rule and the premier bourgeois-landlord ruling party is split into two over the economic-political crisis that the CPI(M) is called to work out its tactical slogans. The choice before it is neither to be indifferent to this split, on the ground that there is nothing fundamentally different between the two political lines, nor rally behind the wing led by Indira Gandhi under the illusion that it represents the non-big bourgeoisie and thus is progressive. Our line should be such that while it sharply and continuously attacks and exposes the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine and all its machinations, frustrating its attempt to take over the Central Government, it, at the same time, strengthens the position of the working class and the democratic movement as against the entire bourgeois-landlord rule led by the big bourgeoisie, no matter whether it is led by the Indira Gandhi wing or the Syndicate wing."

Already before February, when the C.C. made these observations, this game of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its mini-front allies had succeeded in Kerala. The U.F. Government led by the CPI(M) had been toppled and a Congress supported Government formed. That Government had un-

leashed a police raj, attacking hundreds of thousands of agricultural labourers, poor and middle peasants and other sections of the working people. Conspiracies were being hatched for a similar development in West Bengal as well.

Things have become still worse since then. The U.F. Government of West Bengal was toppled in March. Although the objective of forming a mini-front Government as in Kerala has been foiled, the legitimate demand of the people of West Bengal for a mid-term election has been rejected. President's rule has been clamped, followed by a regime of unprecedented terror. The efforts to form a mini-front Government are still continuing.

The last five months have been months of determined and bitter struggle by our Party and the democratic movement under its leadership against the twin menace, namely, the warding off of the threat of take-over of the Central Government by the Syndicate alliance to push through its political line of extreme reaction and the vicious attempts of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government to undermine and disrupt the U.F.s centred round our Party in Kerala and West Bengal in order to reinforce and perpetuate the bankrupt bourgeois-landlord rule, under the hegemony of the ruling Congress.

The C.C. greets the people of West Bengal who have been heroically resisting the police raj that has been established since the imposition of President's rule. The March 17th strike, though opposed by the revisionists, SUC and some other former partners of the U.F. who claim to have a following among the workers and the common people, brought to a complete standstill all industrial and other activity, making the Bengal Bandh a complete success. Never was a political protest strike so vigorously and violently opposed by rival political parties; and perhaps never before was it so successful, despite such opposition. No wonder, the strike took a toll of 35 lives—thanks to the goondas and the police—the highest toll in one single action.

The March 17th strike of West Bengal was the beginning

of a State-wide mass political campaign undertaken by our Party. With the co-operation of five other former partners of the U.F., the Party was able to carry this movement forward and prepare for another general strike in July. The revisionists and other opponents of the mass movement headed by our Party tried to foil this attempt by declaring a parallel general strike on a different date. But, completely rejected as they are by the bulk of the working class, they had to abandon their original plan and give the call for a general strike on the same day. The C.C. greets all Party members and friends of the Party, all the members and friends of the fraternal parties, for the role they played in this glorious movement.

In Kerala, too, the people have been heroically facing the terror regime which was already three months old when the C.C. had its last meeting. Despite the terror unleashed by the Congress-supported mini-front Government, tens of thousands of hutment-dwellers and tenants have asserted their rights; agricultural labourers, in several parts of the State have waged innumerable struggles many of which ended in the winning of demands; industrial labourers, teachers, Government employees, students, and so on, have also braved the police repression and goonda attacks organized by the mini-front parties.

This heroic resistance of the working people dashed the hopes of the oppressors that they can cow the people down. All the three by-elections that were held in April and May showed that the democratic movement led by the CPI(M) had made big advances; despite the unity of the anti-CPI(M) forces in the State, the democratic candidate was able to win the Madai constituency, while the votes polled by the democratic candidates in the other constituencies registered an enormous increase.

It was this heroic resistance of the working people that further intensified the conflict within the ruling coalition, making it impossible for them to continue their Ministry.

The C.C. notes that working class and peasant struggles

have been taking place and Government resorting to repression in certain other States as well. Agrarian struggles in Rajasthan, Punjab, Bihar, Tripura, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Haryana as well as working class strike struggles in various States, invited the wrath of the authorities who resorted to brutal repression. In Neyveli in Tamil Nadu, several workers were massacred.

In dealing with all these mass movements and struggles, as well as in dealing with the two U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, the Central Government headed by Indira Gandhi and State Governments headed by her partymen have shown their real class character. The Governments of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, which are directly under the control of the Indira Gandhi Congress; the Achutha Menon Government of Kerala which cannot last for a single day without the support of the Indira Gandhi Congress; the Governor's rule in West Bengal—all these have resorted to naked repression.

The so-called operations against the Naxalites have become actually cold-blooded murders of people as in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh where scores have been captured and shot after torture and in Punjab where people have been killed in police custody. In Kerala also one such murder has taken place. Also, under the pretext of fighting the Naxalite menace, the State Governments are unleashing widespread repression against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the mass movements led by it, by indiscriminate arrests, foisting of cases, etc.

It is against this background that the refusal of the Central Government to conduct a mid-term election in West Bengal, coupled with its plan of holding the election in Kerala with the minority Achutha Menon Government and its terror regime continuing, should be seen. It becomes clear that, just as for the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, so for the Indira Gandhi Congress, the main enemy to be defeated first, is the democratic movement led by the CPI(M).

For several months after the Congress got split into two,

the Indira Gandhi Congress had been apprehensive that the Syndicate Congress and its Jana Sangh-Swatantra allies might succeed in dislodging it from power at the Centre. Recent developments, however, have made her feel that the danger of her being toppled had receded. The Syndicate confronted by the Indira Gandhi Congress as well as the democratic forces lost much of the influence which it had thought it wielded. The debacle suffered by the Syndicate in several by-elections added to its further discomfiture. Internally, too, Indira Gandhi feels she has consolidated her position and shown her rivals for leadership that she can have her way.

This has emboldened her to turn her broadsides against our Party and do everything to undermine the unity and strength of the democratic movement led by it. Even though still carrying on her fight against the Syndicate, she couples it with a vicious attack against our Party and tries to raise an alternative anti-Communist, anti-democratic alliance. As against the "grand alliance" which the Syndicate Congress wants to forge embracing the Jana Sangh-Swatantra and other reactionary parties (and, if possible, drawing into its fold parties like the SSP and PSP, too), the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi is trying to build an anti-Marxist united front as in Kerala and West Bengal.

The political moves intended to forge such an anti-Marxist front plus the brutal repression unleashed against the democratic movement headed by our Party not only in Kerala and in West Bengal, but wherever our Party is effective in organizing the working people against their class enemies, show that behind the apparently "Leftist" posture taken by the Indira Gandhi Congress is the class reality that the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government are determined to meet the mounting mass struggles with naked repression.

The Indira Gandhi Congress was able to resort to such a policy of forging the anti-Marxist front and pursuing repressive policies against the mounting people's struggles, primarily because the Right Communists played their treacherous role of disrupting the non-Congress U.F.s which they were

forced to join in 1967. No sooner did they find their place in the U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal than they started conspiring not only with certain anti-Marxist elements within the U.F.s, but also with the Congress. The toppling of the two U.F. Governments was followed by the formation of the Congress-supported mini-front Government in Kerala and the attempt at repeating the same in West Bengal. Having formed the mini-front Government in Kerala, they pursued the same policies as the Congress Governments are pursuing in States ruled by them. In West Bengal, too, they are resorting to such policies as will help the Central Congress Government to prolong President's rule and put off the holding of mid-term elections. Meanwhile, they came to understandings with the Indira Gandhi Congress with regard to fighting elections, : from the three by-elections in Kerala in the course of which they supported the Congress candidate in one constituency in return for the support of the Congress for their candidates in the other two, they have now gone forward to the policy of an understanding with the Indira Gandhi Congress in order to fight the forthcoming mid-term election.

Such open collaboration by the Right Communists with the Indira Gandhi Congress is, however, not confined to these two States. In Bihar, they have become part of the ruling alliance headed by an Indira Gandhi Congress Chief Minister. In Punjab, they formed a united front with the Indira Gandhi Congress in a bid to form a new Ministry. In Andhra Pradesh, they are having open electoral alliances with the Indira Gandhi Congress and have secured a seat in the Legislative Council which was allotted to them by the ruling Congress.

They have thus become the most effective and shameless agents of the Indira Gandhi Congress to disrupting the unity of the working people, in transforming the unity of the democratic movement against the vested interests into unity with the reactionaries against the movement and the Party of the working class. Some other parties have also fallen into the net of the Right Communists.

The Naxalites are also playing an extremely provocative and disruptive role. By their concerted propaganda against the working class movement and the CPI(M) and individual terroristic attacks, they are disrupting the rapid growth of the mass movements of all sections of the working people, students and others. These actions of theirs are being taken advantage of by the Congress rulers to intensify the repression against the entire democratic movement and to get more and more repressive powers in their hands.

This disruption of the democratic and mass movements, coming from both the Right Communists and the Naxalites, has to be determinedly fought and defeated.

The C.C. calls upon all the genuine democratic parties, organizations, groups and individuals to resist the anti-people reactionary policies of the Indira Gandhi Congress. It calls on them to develop a broad democratic movement for the ending of repression; for the withdrawal of cases and warrants involving over 50,000 in Kerala, over 60,000 in West Bengal and thousands in Andhra Pradesh; withdrawal of the Preventive Detention Act imposed in several States; withdrawal of the Central Reserve Police posted in a number of States; banning the use of the Army against the democratic mass movements as is being done in West Bengal; the dismissal of the Achutha Menon Ministry in Kerala; ordering of early mid-term elections in Kerala and West Bengal; and other democratic demands.

It appeals to the democratic forces interested in fighting the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine to realize that the course embarked on by the Indira Gandhi Congress would, far from helping the defeat, facilitate the strengthening of those very reactionary forces whose assumption of power they want to prevent. Let them realize that, if the Indira Gandhi Congress leaders succeed in weakening and destroying the democratic movement led by the CPI(M), the beneficiaries of that development will be precisely those reactionary classes and strata against whom the Indira Gandhi Congress claims to be fighting.

While these reactionary aspects of the policies, methods and steps of the Indira Gandhi Government have now come to the forefront, the C.C. notes that the conflicts between the Indira Gandhi Congress and the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine have not been resolved; they are in fact developing. Confronted as they are with the Jana Sangh's vicious campaign for the "Indianisation" of Muslims, the organization of anti-Muslim riots, and so on, realizing that all this will not only worsen the law and order situation, but also undermine the mass basis and electoral position of the Indira Gandhi Congress, the leaders of the Central Government and their AICC had to come out sharply against the Jana Sangh. They issued threats of legal action, banning the RSS and so on. This put the Jana Sangh politically on the defensive and made it difficult for the leaders of the Syndicate Congress to complete their plan of alliance with the Jana Sangh.

The Syndicate is advocating an openly pro-imperialist, anti-Soviet policy, supports U.S. imperialist aggression in Cambodia, South Vietnam and elsewhere and attacks the Government of India's foreign policy from an extremely reactionary angle.

Our Party is no doubt interested in strengthening all secular forces that genuinely fight the anti-Muslim slogans raised and movements organized by Jana Sangh and other Hindu chauvinist organizations. The C.C., however, wants to remind the people who were taken in by the anti-communal propaganda of the Indira Gandhi Congress leaders, that it was with the support of the Indira Gandhi Congress Ministry in Maharashtra that the CIA-financed Shiva Sena intimidates and attacks the Muslims. The recent riots in Bhiwandi and Jalgaon brought out this scandalous story into the open. The connivance of the Indira Congress Ministry was seen in the Chaibasa riots in Bihar. In other States, too, there are many leaders of the Indira Gandhi Congress who are hardly distinguishable from the leaders of the Jana Sangh. Above all, the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Central and State Governments are, in fact,

helping the worst communal elements in the country by turning their fire against that consistent fighter for secularism—the democratic and working class movement, of which the CPI(M) is a leading contingent.

With regard to foreign policy, we would remind all genuine anti-imperialists that, whether it is in the matter of demanding withdrawal of American troops from Indo-China and Korea, or in the matter of giving recognition to and developing relations with the GDR, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, the Democratic Republics of Vietnam and Korea and so on, the Indira Gandhi Government in India is not prepared to fall in line with many other Asian and African countries. Our Party, therefore, considers it to be its responsibility to carry on an uncompromising struggle for a firm anti-imperialist policy.

Finally, the C.C. would warn all the democratic progressive elements in the country against any complacency with regard to the capacity of the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine. Though temporarily rebuffed in the game of parliamentary manoeuvre, they are still trying to forge what is called the “grand alliance”. The threat becomes all the more serious when it is seen that such an alliance is getting all encouragement and support from foreign imperialism, specially U.S. imperialism and its agencies like the CIA. The C.C. appeals to all genuinely democratic forces in the country to be vigilant against this danger, even while fighting the reactionary policies of the Indira Gandhi Congress. It reminds them that this danger cannot be averted without breaking the anti-Marxist united front which the Indira Gandhi Congress is trying to forge with the active assistance of the Right Communists and some other parties. The C.C. appeals to the workers, peasants and other sections of the working people to intensify the struggle against their class enemies and help build democratic unity against bourgeois-landlord rule. The C.C. appeals to the members and followers of these parties to reverse the policies of their leaders and thus play their role to strengthen the democratic movement.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on Kerala*

The following is the text of the resolution on Kerala adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) at its session in Calcutta from July 7 to 11, 1970:

The dissolution of the State Legislature, coupled with the promise to hold a mid-term election in Kerala, is a defeat not only for the Achutha Menon Government and its coalition partners, but their patron, the Central Congress Government headed by Indira Gandhi. For, like the Pattom Thanu Pillai Government of Travancore Cochin in 1954-55, the Achutha Menon Government was the creation of the Congress party.

The vested interests in the State and outside were particular that the Marxist-led U.F. Government should be replaced by a Government which, while using demagogic phraseology to deceive the people, would carry on the policies of the Congress Government. They, therefore, chose the Right Communist Party as the leader of the mini-front formed to topple the Marxist-led U.F. Government and to form the anti-Marxist Government. The very fact that avowed opponents of land reform legislation, the Kerala Congress and the Syndicate Congress, gave their full support to the Achutha Menon Government fully proves the real class character of the so-called "Communist-led" anti-Marxist Government.

As for the Indira Gandhi Congress, its leaders had always been as anxious as any one of the avowedly Right reactionary

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parties like the Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the Syndicate, to see that the Marxist-led democratic Government of Kerala and West Bengal are replaced by Governments headed by the Right Communist Party and the Bangla Congress. That was why the Prime Minister and the Home Minister instructed the agent of the Central Government in Kerala, the Governor of the State, to permit the installation of the Achutha Menon Government although the coalition headed by Achutha Menon could not claim the support of a majority of the legislators. It was this support of the Central Government and its agent in Kerala that facilitated the mini-front's betrayal of the trust reposed in them and their allies of the former non-Congress U.F. by the electorate and to transform themselves from an anti-Congress to an anti-CPI(M) position.

Ever since the mini-front's betrayal of the programme of joint struggle against the Congress—a programme to which they had pledged themselves in 1967—the CPI(M) has been demanding that the mini-front partners should go to the electorate and get its verdict again before forming a Government with Congress support. Neither the mini-front nor its Congress patrons, however, were prepared for this.

The mini-front partners were apprehensive that their attempt before the electorate to justify the betrayal committed by them would, far from helping them to win the elections, result in the desertion of large numbers of their supporters from their respective parties. The Congress, too, was not sure of the outcome of an election in a situation in which the Congress has become not only far more unpopular than at any time before, but has been further weakened by the split that took place in 1969.

All of them, therefore, wanted that the Achutha Menon Government should continue as long as possible. They mobilised their forces to beat back the offensive launched by the democratic Opposition and by the organisations of the working class, peasantry, students and so on, and to protect the Ministry. All the vested interests in the State, and many outside too, came to the rescue of the Congress-supported Ministry; all organs of

the monopoly Press throughout India gave their full support to the Ministry.

It was to cover up this reality that the mini-front and its supporters spread the canard that the Syndicate Congress and other reactionary elements had thrown their weight in favour of the Opposition and against the Ministry. As a matter of fact, however, the leaders of the mini-front did all they can to woo the Syndicate with whose support alone they could initially form and subsequently function the anti-Marxist Government.

This support of the vested interests, however, would not allow the Ministry to carry on for long. For, the mass of the working people were carrying on a determined struggle against the Government which, while verbally talking of land reforms, were attacking the agricultural workers, hutment-dwellers, poor and middle peasants, industrial workers and other sections of the working people who were carrying on struggles for the realisation of their demands. The CPI(M) and other parties and groups of the democratic Opposition were giving full support to these struggles. These parties of the democratic Opposition were doing everything possible to see that the struggles of the working people outside the Legislature were reflected inside it as well. All this, plus the internal contradictions within the ruling coalition itself, created a situation in which the Ministry could not continue for long with the formal majority which it was able to whip up in a few votings in the Legislature. Hence the unseemly haste with which the Ministry adjourned the sitting of the Legislature as soon as the Appropriations Bill was passed; hence, also, its refusal to convene a session of the Legislature after it was thus adjourned.

Even though they were thus able to save themselves from an adverse vote in the Legislature during the last Assembly session, the coalition partners had to face a different situation created by the internal contradictions within the coalition, particularly the contradictions between the ISP and the PSP. This contradiction, as has been admitted by Achutha Menon

himself in his statement announcing the dissolution of the Legislature, created a 'dead-lock' within the coalition. The Ministry, therefore, did not dare face another session of the Legislature which cannot be delayed further than September 24. A mid-term election, therefore, was forced on the Ministry.

But, even when forced to admit the reality and face a mid-term election, these power-hungry politicians wanted to stick to office like leeches as long as possible. Hence the decision that, even while the mid-term election goes on, the Ministry would remain in office. This decision is sought to be justified by the preposterous claim that, though the ISP-PSP tangle has created a deadlock, the Ministry has a majority in the Legislature.

The Central Committee cannot but note that, in initially facilitating the formation and now permitting the continuance of the Achutha Menon Ministry, the Governor of the State has acted as the willing tool of the Central Congress Government. If he had sworn himself to protect and preserve the democratic principles of the Constitution, rather than to protect and preserve the partisan interests of the Central Congress party (to whose leader he owes his appointment), the Governor would have recommended to the President the dismissal of the Ministry whose leader himself admits that, because of a 'deadlock' within the coalition that supports him, he is in no position to carry on with the present Legislature. That he did not do so, but on the other hand, connived at the nefarious game of a coalition Ministry which has lost the confidence of the Legislature, is further confirmation of the fact that the institution of Governors has become a tool in the hands of the Central Congress Government and is being used by the ruling party for its factional intrigues in States where it has lost popular support.

The C.C. is of the view that not only is the Governor's action constitutionally improper but its result, i.e., the continuation of the Achutha Menon Ministry, is politically objectionable. For, it is impossible to have free and fair elections under a Government which was originally formed

and has since been functioning with the declared objective of doing everything, fair or foul, to prevent the CPI(M) from doing its legitimate work. Thousands of cases involving more than 50,000 of the most active members and sympathisers of the CPI(M) have been launched and are still proceeding for no other "crime" than they practised in Kerala what the leading partner of the coalition (the Right Communist Party) is preaching throughout India. The State wide police raj which took several lives and injured and maimed literally thousands of people through lock-up beatings and has made the Achutha Menon Government the most ruthless administration in the history of Kerala; the way in which this police raj was used at the time of the by-election in Madai and is still continuing in that constituency, which had the "audacity" to defeat the candidate supported by the coalition, shows that there cannot be a free and fair election as long as this Ministry and its Home Minister continue in office.

The C.C., therefore, demands that this Ministry should be dismissed if it does not resign on its own. The C.C. also demands that all the cases registered and prosecutions going on in connection with the working class, agrarian and other democratic struggles should be immediately withdrawn, which alone will create a favourable atmosphere for the conduct of free and fair elections.

The C.C. notes that the Kerala State Committee of our Party has voiced these demands and is organising a mass campaign for their realisation. They are so reasonable that the followers of all political parties who are loyal to democratic principles would raise their voice in their favour. The C.C. appeals to the members and followers of all democratic parties throughout India to support these demands.

The C.C. hopes that democratic-minded sections in all political parties as well as unattached individuals would realise that the electoral battle that will be launched in Kerala is a battle of tremendous importance not only for Kerala but for the whole country. For, this election has been forced on the people of Kerala because the Central Congress leadership

wants to undo the result of the Fourth General Elections in that State. The Central Congress leadership has already achieved an initial success in its diabolical game of drawing the Right Communist Party and some of the other constituents of the former non-Congress U.F. into its net and in transforming the former non-Congress U.F. into an anti-Marxist front. The Achutha Menon Government that was formed as a result of this diabolical game is, like the earlier Pattom Thanu Pillai Ministry of 1954-55, a Ministry which is completely dependent on and therefore acts at behests of the Central Congress leadership and Government.

The leaders of the Indira Gandhi Congress, however, are not satisfied by having such a 'non-Congress' Government as their tool. They, on the other hand, want to form a Government of their own, with the Right Communists and other so-called "non-Congress" parties as their junior partners. Knowing full well they can never hope for the return of the "good old days" when the Congress could have its own single party Government, they are now trying to bring into existence a so-called coalition Government dominated by their own party. It is this game of the Indira Gandhi Congress that is facilitated by the anti-Marxist policy pursued by the mini-front, particularly the Right Communist Party which has acted as the ideological-political leader of all those who betrayed, and helped in the toppling of, the Marxist led non-Congress Government.

The Central Committee hopes that the mass of democratic-minded people who are rallied behind the non-Congress parties which initially co-operated with the CPI(M) in forming the non-Congress U.F. in 1967 but subsequently went back on the programme of struggle against the Congress, would seriously ponder over the consequences of the policies which their leaders are pursuing. These policies are, in fact, leading them into the arms of that very Congress against which they have been fighting for so long. The betrayal of the non-Congress U.F. and the toppling of the non-Congress Government have already done immense damage to the cause

of democracy in Kerala and outside. The leaders of these parties propose now to take it to its logical end of facilitating the return of the Congress to power. The C.C., therefore, hopes that the followers of these very parties would put pressure on their leaders and make them repudiate the policy which led to this betrayal.

The C.C. is proud that while many constituents of the former non-Congress U.F. were taken in by the demagogic claims made by the Indira Gandhi Congress and joined its leaders in paving the way for the return of the Indira Gandhi Congress to office, the CPI(M) has had the privilege of holding aloft the banner of struggle against the bourgeois landlord regime represented by the Central Congress leadership. The C.C. wants to assure the people of Kerala that the Party would do its utmost to keep that flag flying.

The C.C. is confident that the people of Kerala will reject the political parties and their leaders who have betrayed their anti-Congress election pledges and who are now conspiring to hand over the State Government to the Congress party and its domination. The deceptive talk of the Right Communists that theirs is only tactics of seat adjustments with the Congress party ruling at the Centre but not an alliance and collaboration with it will not be believed by the people of Kerala.

The C.C. calls upon the workers, peasants and all the democratic forces in Kerala to once again defeat the game of the ruling Congress party to install itself in office in the State, a game that was decisively defeated in the General Elections of 1967. It appeals to them to repose their confidence in the anti-Congress democratic forces headed by the CPI(M) which have been consistently fighting against the bourgeois-landlord regime of the Congress and the political parties and groups which treacherously deserted the people and allied with the Congress party.

The Central Committee is confident that in this battle for defeating the ruling Congress party and its newly allied betrayers of the democratic movement, the CPI(M) and its

allies would receive the support of large sections of the democratic masses who had inflicted a defeat on the Congress party and its allies in the 1967 elections.

The CPI(M) wants to assure all of them that it is willing to forge such electoral fronts with all those parties, groups and individuals who break away from the policy of collaboration with this or that wing of the Congress party. The Party, together with all these friends and allies, hopes to carry forward this struggle, defeat the game of disruptors and pave the way for the formation of a reliable and stable non-Congress democratic Government which will be able to continue the popular revolutionary struggle initiated by the Marxist-led U.F. Government that was formed in 1967 and defend the interests of the common man against the class policies of the Congress.

Reject This Rejection*

Editorial of “People’s Democracy”, July 26, 1970.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, with her newly acquired Home portfolio, made an air dash to Calcutta for a day’s on-the-spot study of the West Bengal situation, accompanied by a retinue of officials from the Home Ministry, including the stalwart Home Secretary, Mr. L.P. Singh. Leaders of several political parties representing the Right Communists, Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc and similar other parties sought and got the Prime Minister’s darshan, though no one knows whether they were specially invited by her or they had gone to see her on the basis of the previous announcement of the Governor that whichever party was anxious to meet her was welcome to do so. But after a day of hectic activity covering interviews with numerous political leaders of parties and confabulations with the Governor and his team of expert advisers, the Prime Minister, probably, had completed her ‘on-the-spot study’ of the West Bengal situation and made the oracular pronouncement that no poll can be held since “normalcy” had not yet returned and the law and order situation was not what it ought to be for the holding of elections. Leaders of political parties who had made representation to her and the bureaucratic officials who briefed her must congratulate themselves for so ably impressing upon her the great dangers inherent in the immediate dissolution of the defunct Legislative Assembly and the ordering of a fresh poll!

This pronouncement of Indira Gandhi has dangerous implications to democracy in our country. It follows from it that it is the

*Editorial of “People’s Democracy”, July 26, 1970.

Prime Minister and the Government of her party at the Centre that can arbitrarily decide when to hold elections in States, whether to hold elections or not, and what the definition of 'normalcy' is. If there is any abnormalcy in the present situation in West Bengal, it is first and foremost the Governor's rule and a suspended Assembly with no prospect of forming a Government of elected representatives. It is under this bureaucratic rule of the Governor and his Advisers that some funny and reprehensible activities of raids on schools, colleges, libraries and examination centres have become a regular pastime of the so-called Naxalites - a phenomenon that was absent during the thirteen-month rule of the U.F. Government, despite the fact that more than a thousand of the Naxalites were released from jail and cases against them were withdrawn on the morrow of the United Front's assumption of office in March 1969. If these activities have come handy for the Government of Indira Gandhi to plead the absence of 'normalcy' and thus deny the popular demand for a fresh poll, then the organisers of these anarchic activities deserve all the blessings of the Central Government and its Governor's agency in the State.

We would like to warn the Central Congress Government that the people of West Bengal have begun to seriously suspect some sort of Government patronage to these activities in order to play up the bogey of violence and seek public sanctions to enact repressive legislations and suppress the popular democratic movement by force. It is scandalous to hold up the Naxalite actions in the State as a reason to deny the holding of elections. A Government constituted of the popularly elected representatives alone can succeed in putting an end to these anarchic activities, by mobilising public opinion and popular support against them.

If there is any other abnormalcy in the State of West Bengal than the recent spurt of Naxalite activities after Governor's rule was imposed, it is entirely the making of the Congress party and the Central Government headed by Indira Gandhi. During the forty months since the Fourth General Elections, two anti-Congress U.F. State Governments were toppled by the conspiracies of the Central Congress

and Government leaders, each time utilising mainly the services of the Bangla Congress chief, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee, who is a proven adept at double-crossing and betrayal of electoral pledges to the people. In these forty months, nearly half the period the State was kept under President's rule which is nothing but Congress party rule from the Centre, after that party was twice defeated and trounced in the State by the electorate. Is it any wonder that the Congress party and the Central Government it controls came into head on clash with the electorate of West Bengal when repeated insults were heaped upon the people by rejecting their verdict with utter contempt? What value can people attach to the pompous declarations of Indira Gandhi about the virtues of democracy and her party's fidelity to it? What sort of democratic values are they, which are intolerant of the U.F. Government's policies which were primarily aimed at the removal of the grievances of the workers, peasants and other oppressed middle classes?

It is high time that the new Congress Mughals at Delhi realise that there have been two successful Statewide protest general strikes and hartals during the last four months, demanding the end of Governor's rule and the holding of a fresh poll to elect a representative Government. There have been hundreds of public meetings in the State during the last four months which millions have attended, demanding the end of police repression and President's rule, the dissolution of the Assembly and the ordering of a fresh election. Today this demand has become the demand of all political parties except the ruling Congress and its stooges in the State. There is no ground on which the Central Congress leaders can refuse to respect this democratic, public opinion except their mortal fear that their party would court a third successive defeat in West Bengal, a defeat that may adversely affect the fortunes of the ruling party in the ensuing fifth general elections throughout the country.

The haste with which the Kerala Assembly was dissolved at a moment's notice on the demand of the Mini-Front Chief Minister who had no majority, and the keeping of the defunct

Assembly suspended in West Bengal without dissolving it cannot be justified except on the shabby ground of partisan interests of the party in power at the Centre. It is a crying shame to continue intrigues with some political parties to install a Congress-inspired and supported anti-Marxist Mini-Front Government in West Bengal, even after the so-called anti-Marxist eight-party alliance had openly rejected it, stating that they cannot be party to any Government which directly or indirectly has to depend upon the support of any wing of the Congress. It is indeed political cheek to tempt the people of West Bengal with promises of additional economic aid for their betterment by a party under whose unbroken rule of two decades, the State and its people have been brought to the present plight of poverty, misery, hunger and unemployment, while ensuring plunderous profits of a handful of monopolists and landlords. Anyway, does Indira Gandhi think that it is the Governor and the bureaucrats who can implement development plans and not a popular Government? The West Bengal people think differently.

We demand an end to all these intrigues of the Central Congress Government to set up a puppet Mini-Front regime in West Bengal, we demand the immediate dissolution of the defunct Assembly and the ordering of a fresh poll. The people of West Bengal can neither be hoodwinked nor subdued under threats. The Great Engels observed, "On the day the thermometer of universal suffrage registers boiling point among the workers, both they and the capitalist will know what to do". Let not our big bourgeois leaders think that they alone have learnt what to do in West Bengal. They are surely mistaken. It takes no time for the working people of West Bengal to draw their own lessons and understand what they have to do, in case the capitalist continue to treat the democratic rights of the people with contempt. Let us hope that all the democratic forces in the country would rise to the occasion and compel the Congress Government to reverse its disastrous course in West Bengal.

Recognize The P.R.G. Here and Now*

This July 20 when the Indian people held Vietnam rallies in many parts of the country on the occasion of the Sixteenth Anniversary of the Geneva Agreements of Indo-China we were fortunate in having in our midst a great representative of the fighting Vietnamese people, the “fire and flower of the Vietnamese Revolution”. Comrade Nguyen Thi Binh.

Sixteen years ago when the Geneva Accords were signed, the U.S. representative at the conference, though he did not sign the Agreements, made a solemn promise on behalf of his country to abide by them. But the imperialist bandits that they are, they had no intention of honouring the Agreements.

The demarcation line at the 17th Parallel was to be a provisional division of the country; within a year the two sides, North and South, were to start talks to hold elections for the reunification of Vietnam. The U.S. imperialists set up their puppet regime in the South, prevented negotiations between the two sides, proclaimed a “Republic” in the south in an attempt to make the division of the country permanent.

The Geneva Agreements forbade the setting up of foreign military bases and induction of foreign troops into either part of the country. Starting with sending military “advisers” and military mission, the U.S. imperialists today have over half a million American troops in South Vietnam. Beginning with

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P.R.G. means ‘Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam’.

sending arms and war equipment, the U.S. imperialists converted the whole of Vietnam into a vast military base of theirs.

The Geneva Agreements prohibited political reprisals against those who had fought the French imperialists. Beginning with reprisals precisely against these heroes of the liberation struggle, the U.S. imperialists soon made the entire people of South Vietnam the target of their attacks.

The atrocities they have committed on the Vietnamese people are beyond description, theirs have been a deliberate plan to wipe out a whole people.

Napalm and chemicals have been freely used to turn fertile green lands into barren deserts to kill men, women and children and everything living. The number of men and women bestially tortured and killed in prisons is legion. In the name of the pacification campaign, tens of thousands of people have been kept in vast prison camps in inhuman conditions. The latest revelation about "tiger cage" prisons where they are left to be eaten alive by tigers let out of their cages and dogs have been used to rape women, is only one in a series of barbarities which put these criminals in the same category as those who were sent to the gallows from Nuremburg.

When all this did not get them the desired results they extended the war first to Laos and then to Cambodia. The perfidy of the U.S. imperialists was complete, the violation of the Geneva Agreements total.

But the U.S. imperialists miscalculated terribly. They were facing a small nation. Their modern war-machine, perfected during decades, they thought could over-run this small nation with the greatest ease.

Yes, Vietnam is a small nation. But where the U.S. imperialists miscalculated was that it is a small nation, but of great people, a people fired with the determination to win their freedom, prepared to make any and every sacrifice to live in a free and united Fatherland, deciding their own destiny. This small nation of great people inspires the peoples of the whole world today. Vietnam is the eternal symbol of national liberation, the glorious symbol of anti-imperialism.

Which person loving freedom will not be thrilled by the saga of their self sacrificing struggle?

Today eighty percent of South Vietnam is under the administrative control of the Provisional Revolutionary Government. Out of the 46 administrative units of South Vietnam the P.R.G. has established its administration in 41. Approximately eleven million of the population live in areas administered by the P.R.G.

Their enemy, the U.S. imperialists and the puppet regime think they hold the major cities, but here also the majority of the population supports the P.R.G.

During the first six months of 1970, the South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces put out of action 230,000 enemy troops including 70,000 U.S. troops shot down and destroyed 4,200 aircraft and shattered 10,000 military vehicles. The "Vietnamization" of the war, the plan make the Vietnamese fight Vietnamese, never got off the ground. The plans for "rural pacification" have met with total defeat, many of these pacification areas themselves being liberated in this period.

In Cambodia, five provinces have been totally liberated by the National United Front. The Lao Patriotic Front has annihilated a large number of enemy forces and consolidated the liberated regions constantly.

The U.S. imperialists desperately expanded the war to the whole of Indo-China with the hope of winning the war. Contrary to their expectations while their forces have been dispersed, the Indo-Chinese peoples' fighting United Front has been consolidated and is dealing death-blows to the imperialists and their puppets.

The South Vietnam National Front for Liberation had won recognition at different levels from 23 countries. Since the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, it has been recognised by 26 countries. The recognition and support given by progressive people throughout the world, the recognition given by the world is greater still.

Even the U.S. imperialists have been forced to retreat from their attitude of treating the NFL and PRG as "non-person".

For sixteen months, the representatives of U.S. imperialism have had to sit at the same table with the representatives of the P.R.G. in the Paris talks.

The Vietnamese people, great as they are, have even at this moment of sure doom for the U.S. imperialist adventure, created conditions for the U.S. to have an honourable way out of the dirty war of aggression. This was the ten-point overall solution of the Vietnam conflict advanced by the South Vietnam NFL as early as in May 1969.

This solution is based of the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people, the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, the main principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements and the practical situation in South Vietnam.

Prompt unconditional and total withdrawal of all U.S. and satellite troops from the soil of South Vietnam and the U.S. renunciation of the Saigon puppet regime, the U.S. imperialists' tool of aggression, so as to help the South Vietnamese people choose their own political regime with the formation of a broad-based provisional coalition Government—these are the two principal issues defined by the NFL in its proposal.

But the U.S. imperialists have never been sincere about finding a peaceful solution, as their record at the Paris talks shows.

If the U.S. imperialists continue the war, there is no doubt that they will have to face humiliating defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese people.

The people of India, no less than people in other parts of the world, have been thrilled by the spectacular victories of the Vietnamese people, we have hailed them as the front rank fighters against U.S. imperialism fighting for defending freedom everywhere in the world, we have always extended our solidarity and support to the heroic Vietnamese people.

But to the shame of our people, to the shame of our people's anti-imperialist traditions, the Government of India

still refuses to recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and allows imperialist stooges to come and address news conferences in the Capital of our country to slander a great people and the greatest of anti-imperialist struggles. The External Affairs Minister of the Government of India does not show even the elementary courtesy of welcoming at the airport the Foreign Minister of the P.R.G. whose record of struggle against imperialism is incomparably superior to that of anyone of the Congress rulers in Delhi. Pressurized by the U.S. imperialists, frightened by their threats, the Government of India brings disgrace to our land and our people.

Let the demand rise ever more loud and strong. Recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam here and now ! Throw out the Saigon puppets' representative from the soil of India ! Raise the status of our diplomatic mission in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam :

If the Vietnamese people can defeat the mightiest imperialism's military prowess, we can certainly defeat the policies of the Government of India.

Statement by P. Sundarayya and A. K. Gopalan*

**Statement dated August 11, 1970
released in New Delhi**

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist), and Comrade A. K. Gopalan, member, Polit Bureau, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and leader of the Parliamentary Group of the CPI(M) issued the following statement in New Delhi on August 11, 1970 :

The Indira Congress came out in the most naked form as the real champion of the vicious landlord-big bourgeois classes and upholder of their class regime when its Parliamentary Board called on its Kerala PCC "to have such adjustments as it thinks fit with the *anti-Marxist* front". All its talk of fighting the Syndicate Congress, Jana Sangh and Swatantra reactionary combination, is only a figleaf to cover up its determined effort to destroy the movements of the fighting people, especially the CPI(M), wherever it occupies an important position, as in Kerala and West Bengal. Today the Indira Congress, with Central Government power in its hands, has mounted a vicious offensive on the Kerala and West Bengal people and uses the CRP and other armed contingents brutally on the fighting masses. Today in Kerala there is no danger of the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combination coming to ministerial power even at the state level, but the reality of the last ten months is that of the brutal regime of the Mini-Front Government backed by the Central Government headed by the Indira Congress. So we call upon

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all democratic masses and forces of Kerala to treat the Indira Congress and its stooges in the anti-Marxist front as the immediate and main enemy, and do everything to inflict a crushing defeat on the Indira Congress in the coming polls and be prepared to continue the struggle, against the Indira-Congress' anti-people regime at the Centre. It is only a defeat in Kerala that make the Indira Congress pause in its mad and headlong rush to attack all the democratic people's movements in Kerala and Bengal and later in other States as well.

Our Party's line is clear : while we will not form any Ministry with any of the three Congresses—Indira, Syndicate or Kerala Congress—and the Muslim League leadership, we, after defeating Indira Congress and its anti-Marxist front combination, will do everything to form a stable Ministry with all democratic forces and groups who are prepared to break away from these four reactionary parties. To make this possible we appeal to the Kerala voters to solidly vote for and return in absolute majority the candidates of the democratic people's front—a front of the CPI(M) and other democratic groups—and in all other constituencies where the candidates of the democratic people's front are not standing, to vote against and defeat the Indira Congress and its anti-Marxist front partners. We are confident that this new anti-people and anti-Marxist front headed by the Indira Congress will never be able to get a majority and form a stable Government in Kerala.

Right Communists: Ruling Congress Pawns to Disrupt Democratic Unity*

P. Sundarayya

As has been their wont for over a decade now, ever since they opted for the politics of shameless class-collaboration, the Right Communists, meeting in their Central Executive Committee in New Delhi from July 20 to 23 have come out with an open, unabashed line of joining hands with the Indira Gandhi in the name of fighting reaction.

If in the earlier days it was in the name of fighting reactionary, communal and separatist forces organized in the DMK, Akali Dal, the Muslim League, Swatantra and Jana Sangh that they rallied behind Jawaharlal Nehru, today it is in the name of fighting the “grand alliance” of the Syndicate, Swatantra and Jana Sangh that they plead for lining up behind Indira Gandhi. In either case, lining up behind one section or another of the bourgeoisie and accepting its leadership has been a consistent line of the Indian Right Communists.

This line is even enshrined in their programme which talks of a National Democratic Front Revolution and State in all of which the working class shares leadership with the bourgeoisie. Though in theory it has been “sharing of leadership”, the practice of the Right Communists has always been to be subservient to the bourgeoisie and accept bourgeois leadership.

The latest resolution of the Right Communist CEC carries forward this line with its talk about “polarization between

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the forces of reaction and of progress" (since the forces of reaction are exclusively represented by the parties working for the "grand alliance", Indira Gandhi and her Congress, are obviously part of the forces of progress) and fervent appeals to the democratic sections of the Indira Gandhi Congress to learn the lessons of history and join hands with "Left and democratic" forces to fight and defeat reaction.

The resolution again puts forward the slogan of a new "Government of Left and democratic unity" at the Centre as an "inseparable" part of "the task of inflicting decisive defeat upon the forces of Right reaction and all the policies it stands for." Even political innocents know that such a Government in today's context, whatever the pompous name given to it, cannot be anything but a coalition as a junior partner with the ruling Congress party at the Centre, under Indira Gandhi's leadership. No amount of clever words or incidental references to the "anti-people policies of the Indira Gandhi Government" can camouflage the infamous class-collaborationist line that the Dangeite resolution puts forward.

It is to cover up the treachery to the working class and toiling people by a party which calls itself a Communist Party, treachery to the democratic movement and the Indian Revolution, that the Right Communists again in this resolution repeat their slanders against the Communist Party of India (Marxist), though life and events have again and again exposed them to be what they are—base slanders against a party which has stood steadfastly by Marxism-Leninism.

The resolution again trots out the slander of the CPI(M)'s "thoroughly unprincipled efforts to pressurize and blackmail the Indira Gandhi Congress into supporting their line in Kerala and West Bengal on the one hand and to make a secret deal with the Syndicate Congress on the other hand (as the CP-Marxist did in the three recent by-elections in Kerala)...". Further, "the latest CP(Marxist) resolution opens the door for the most opportunist deals with the parties of Right reaction."

Editor Bhupesh Gupta of the revisionist mouth piece *New Age* (July 26) spouts the same poison ; "CPM leaders have in their present political statement indulged in a lot of anti-Indira Congress demagoguery while putting out feelers to the Syndicate for a possible opportunistic accord with it" and concludes, "The CPM is moving fast into the hands of the Syndicate and through the Syndicate into that of other Rightist forces."

The Right Communist leaders are incensed because two leaders of the CPI (M) met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to warn her of the dangerous consequences of her policies, specially in relation to the then United Front Government of West Bengal. The note they gave to the Prime Minister was released to the Press and published in full by *People's Democracy*. The Danges and Bhupesh Guptas, in their thoughts already partners in an Indira Gandhi-led coalition, call this "pressure and black mail".

That apart, in Kerala, to which the resolution refers to, what did they do ? Right from the beginning when the Right Communists cooked up their mini-front conspiracy against the E.M.S. Namboodiripad Government and the CPI (M), they did it because they had the fullest backing of both the Indira Gandhi Congress and the Syndicate wing then together in the united Congress.

After this ignoble conspiracy succeeded and the Mini-Front Government was formed, despite the heroic declarations of the Right Communist Chief Minister that he would resign the day it was found that the Ministry could not exist without Congress support, it was clear that the Ministry could not last even for a day, without the votes of the Indira Gandhi Congress and the benevolent neutrality of the Syndicate. Achutha Menon did not resign, he found it easier to change his opinion about the Congress.

But at the time of the no-confidence motion even the Indira Gandhi Congress votes were not sufficient to save his Government as the Syndicate openly announced its decision to vote against the Ministry. Everyone knows which of the

Right Communist leaders spent sleepless nights canvassing the Syndicate leaders in Kerala to get their decision changed. The decision to vote against the Government was changed and the Syndicate members remained neutral. The Right Communists canvassed the Syndicate precisely on the ground of anti-Marxism, that if the Achutha Menon Government was voted out, the alternative would be another CPI(M)-led Government.

Again, in the by-election, the revisionists approached the Syndicate to get its official candidates withdrawn. Though these candidates were not withdrawn and they nominally remained in the field, it is a well-known fact that the Syndicate worked for and gave its votes for the Mini-Front candidates and hence it was that its own candidates lost their security deposits.

What has been the record of this party which today claims to be so puritanical in relation to Right reaction? Immediately after the Fourth General Election, the Right Communists joined the Jana Sangh, Swatantra, the Raja of Ramgarh and Charan Singh to form coalition Governments in Bihar, U.P., Punjab. That they were in the Government when the Ranchi riots took place and Muslims were massacred, and that the Jana Sangh, which had a hand in organising the riots was their coalition partner did not in the least pinch their conscience.

All this while our Party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which was offered Ministership in all these Governments refused to abandon its struggle against the forces of Right reaction and climb into the Ministries on the basis of opportunism.

It is with a record as black as this that the Right Communists talk about the CPI (M) opening the door for the most opportunistic deals with the parties of Right reaction.

Even more laughable is their talk of taking the initiative for building "Left and democratic unity." Laughable, because the fact is, though the wrath of the Right Communists is roused every time it is mentioned, that it is

precisely the Right Communists who are torpedoing democratic unity by rallying behind the Indira Gandhi, wing of the ruling classes.

The united Congress, the person of its President Nijalingappa, had given the call some years ago, openly from the AICC session in Hyderabad, to topple the non-Congress Governments. Since the split in the Congress Indira Gandhi has relentlessly pursued the same policy—her methods are perhaps more subtle—of breaking the CPI(M)-led United Fronts and toppling CPI(M)-led Governments and Right Communists have been her willing pawns in this game.

It was the Right Communists who initiated the conspiracy against the U.F.s and U.F. Governments in Kerala and West Bengal with the fullest backing of the Congress—as revealed later by Congress leaders in Kerala themselves that Right Communists leaders had approached them for help and it had been offered on the condition that the CPI(M) would be kept out of any Government that was formed.

In Kerala in the 1965 mid-term polls, they refused to have a united front with us, the (CPI-M), against the Congress but joined Nanda to denounce us as Chinese agents. They could win only three seats as against 45 by our Party, 36 of the Congress and 24 of the Kerala Congress and created a record in losing deposits. This experience forced them to join the anti-Congress United Front in 1967, and as a result they could win 20 seats against 54 of our Party, in a total U.F. seats of 116, while the Congress won only nine and Kerala Congress five.

But in the United Front Ministry, they joined hands with the Muslim League and the ISP and took up an attitude of struggle against the Centre, under the slogan “agitation and administration cannot go together” and pledged themselves to work within the four corners of the Constitution and the existing judicial set-up.

They built up a mini-front against the CPI(M), conspired with the Congress and Kerala Congress and reached an

agreement to form a mini front Ministry excluding the CPI(M). In October 1969, they joined hands with the Congress and Kerala Congress openly in the Assembly and defeated the U.F. Ministry, forcing Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad to resign, by a vote of 69 to 60, with both the Congress and the pro-Jana Sangh Karnataka Samiti-members supporting them.

Though they are a minority of 53 out of 116 U.F. MLAs in a house of 134, they instead of going to the people and seeking a new verdict, formed a Mini-Front Government taking the Kerala Congress, the landlord-Catholic church backed party, as a participant and with the support of the votes of the Congress both of the Syndicate and Indira Congress groups.

After forming a Government with the support of the Congress, the Right Communist-led mini-front unleashed the worst repression on the toiling people, the agricultural labourers being their special target. Many were murdered in cold blood, thousands were beaten inside police lock-ups and outside, nearly a lakh have been involved in cases. (In West Bengal, the same type of black repression goes on under direct President's rule which the Right Communists want to perpetuate by not pressing for immediate fresh election in the State).

The Right Communists get support from the Indira Gandhi Congress to stay in office and use that position to suppress the toiling people by bayonets and bullets and in the same breath they talk of "taking initiative to build Left and democratic unity".

Now that the elections are approaching in Kerala, the Right Communists are repeatedly declaring that they would ally with the Indira Gandhi Congress to defeat the Marxists. Here is a party which still keeps the signboard of a Communist Party taking up the battered banner, of anti-Communism, the banner of all enemies of the working class to appeal to the bourgeoisie to save it from the wrath of the working people. And they say they want to build "Left and democratic unity"!

Sordid Record In West Bengal

In West Bengal in 1967, they formed a front with the Bangla Congress and Forward Bloc to fight the CPI(M) refusing our just demand for 100 to 110 seats, offering us only 65 seats, but claiming for themselves and the Bangla Congress nearly 120 seats. Thus dividing the anti-Congress democratic vote, they enabled the Congress to win 127 seats, a near majority. Later with 22 defectors from the Bangla Congress, the Congress formed its own stooge Government, disrupting the U.F. Government within nine months.

In the 1969 mid-term elections, the Right Communists and their allies, the Bangla Congress and the Forward Bloc, were forced to concede our due share of 100 seats according to the 1967 election results, but immediately after the mid-term election results came out, they opposed our just demand for Chief Ministership with important portfolios, though we and the Independents backed by us had more than 83 members out of the 218 U.F. members. They strongly advocated that Ajoy Mukherjee should be given the Chief Ministership with the Home and General Administration portfolios. They failed in their conspiracy but continued their efforts to gang up with as many U.F. parties as possible in an anti-CPI(M) front.

Ultimately, when Ajoy Mukherjee, betraying the U.F., resigned on March 16, 1970, breaking the U.F. Government, the Right Communists joined hands with it and opposed the March 17 strike.

Our Party proposed that since the Bangla Congress had defected from the U.F. by its unilateral action, the rest of the constituents with a strength of 183 members should form an alternate Ministry, and our Party should be given the Chief Ministership with the portfolios earlier held by the Bangla Congress being shared by other U.F. parties. It is then that the Right Communists came out with their real slogan that the CPI (M) should give up the Home portfolio and request Ajoy Mukherjee to continue as Chief Minister.

They along with the Congress frantically wrote to the Governor that they would not support a Ministry headed by Jyoti Basu, as the leader of the CPI(M) though the Party was the single largest party in the Assembly.

The Right Communists wants to press on an early election in Kerala in September itself, with a rigged electoral roll and without any time left for campaigning immediately after heavy monsoon rains, on the ground that they cannot support President's rule for even two or three months. But in West Bengal, though there has been President's rule already for full four months with the CRP having a free rein beating up students, workers, and peasants, all the gains of workers, peasants and middle classes and Government employees snatched one after another by the vested interests and by the bureaucrats, nearly 70,000 warrants issued against the peasants cultivating benami lands occupied during the U.F. regime; the Right Communists and their Eight-Party Combine, are not prepared to press for a mid-term poll either in November 1970, as we of the CPI(M) are demanding, or even in February 1971, but are negotiating with the Bangla Congress and the Indira Gandhi Congress, to form a mini-front Government or failing it, at least an electoral common front against the CPI (M). They have refused to support a no-confidence motion against the Indira Government at the Centre condemning her declaration that no mid-term poll would be held till she felt normalcy was established in West Bengal, and her reign of CRP terror!

Apart from their behaviour in Kerala and West Bengal, the Right Communists have had no hesitation to extend their active support to Daroga Rai, the Indira Gandhi Congress leader of Bihar to form a Ministry, or to Charan Singh, the BKD leader whom they themselves characterized as a reactionary landlord to become Chief Minister of U.P. in alliance with the Indira Congress; or to Gurnam Singh, the defecting Akali Chief Minister of Punjab, because he was defecting to the Indira Congress (though now in July, the

Indira Congress has arrived at an understanding with the Sant Akali Party and left the Right Communists and Gurnam Singh in the lurch) They can agree to have all these people as Chief Ministers because they are proteges of the Indira Gandhi Congress but they are opposed to CPI(M) leader Jyoti Basu heading a Ministry.

Opportunism in Bihar

In Bihar, after the mid-term elections, the Indira Gandhi Congress, after much unprincipled manoeuvring, was able to knock together a front and form a Government. The Right Communist Party is a constituent of this ruling front and their whole conduct in this front has been one of unparalleled opportunism. On one occasion they moved an amendment to a Bill before the Assembly to give some benefits to the peasants but they themselves did not vote for their own amendment when they found that it would defeat the Government. More recently, in a meeting of the committee of the ruling front which discussed the Right Communists' "land grab" movement, their representative threatened to walk out of the front if the movement was met with repression. Pat came the reply from some of the Congress leaders, "get out, here, and now". Did they get out? Not they. Their leader later told the Press that he did not remember what exactly was said at the meeting. The Congress wing of the ruling front threatens to unleash repression on a movement which they plan to organize and asks them to get out of the front if they want to organize it. But they carry on in the ruling front as if nothing of this has happened and talk about building "Left and democratic unity". How much more ridiculous can a political party make itself!

In Andhra Pradesh, the Right Communists openly joined hands with Chief Minister Brahmananda Reddy and the ruling Congress in the recent Panchayat and Panchayat Samiti elections and boast about the 700 Panchayats they have won with the support of the Indira Gandhi Congress. In the elections to the Legislative bodies constituencies, the Right Communists

pleaded with Brahmananda Reddy and he allotted to their T.U. leader, K.Nagayya, a seat in Guntur district which they gratefully accepted. Without any compunction they join hands with Brahmananda Reddy and his Home Minister Vengal Rao who are responsible for shooting dead nearly 200 Naxalite leaders and Girijans after they were arrested and tortured. The Right Communists themselves had submitted a memorandum on this inhuman repression but that did not prevent them from joining hands with the perpetrators of the repression. Why? Because they wear the mantle of the Indira Gandhi Congress.

Not long ago, at the height to the separate Telangana agitation, the Right Communists were in the forefront of the demand for the resignation of Brahmananda Reddy from Chief Ministership. Then came the Congress split and Brahmananda Reddy was in Indira Gandhi's camp. Any serious political party would have decided there was something wrong with Indira Gandhi's Congress if it takes in people like Brahmananda Reddy, but not the Right Communists. They changed their attitude to Brahmananda Reddy and withdrew the demand for his resignation.

Even more revealing is what happened at Tejpur in Assam. In the by-election from this constituency to the Assembly, which became prestigious because the Indira Gandhi Congress candidate was to replace Chaliha as Chief Minister if he had to retire because of his bad health, the Right Communists had their candidate. The Syndicate also had its candidate. Indira Gandhi's candidate won, the Right Communists and Syndicate candidates were defeated. After the defeat of their candidate who, according to them, was a Communist candidate, what was the statement the Right C.P. issued? That the by-election result was a victory for the democratic forces because, though their "Communist" candidate had been defeated, the Syndicate had also been defeated and the Indira Gandhi Congress had won.

The catalogue can go on and on but suffice. In every one of these instances the Right Communists have rallied behind

the ruling party against the working people in the name of fighting the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine. And they want to build "Left and democratic unity" to meet the challenge of this reactionary combine.

The policies that are being pursued by Indira Gandhi, specially, in West Bengal, directed against the people as they are, only help to strengthen the monopolists, the vested interests and the forces of reaction represented by the Syndicate, Swatantra and Jana Sangh. For any fight against these forces to be effective, the basic policies of the Indira Gandhi Government themselves have to be fought and defeated.

Lining up behind the Syndicate to fight the Indira Gandhi Congress Government as sections of the SSP leaders are doing or lining up behind the Indira Gandhi Congress in the name of fighting the Syndicate Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine as the Right Communists are doing, both will harm the democratic movement.

Political Line of The CPI(M)

Our Party will carry on a bitter struggle to defend itself and people's movements from the vicious attacks of the Indira Gandhi Congress as well as her mini-front allies. But it will have no truck or alliance with the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine. We will consistently and constantly make every effort to join hands with all the democratic elements in all parties toward off this "grand alliance" menace to Indian democracy.

With Separatist Reaction

The way the Right Communists leaders jump into all sorts of parochial and chauvinist agitations, initiated by different bourgeois-landlord parties and groups, is too well-known to be gone into in detail. Whether it is the Belgaum-Karwar border dispute, or the Assam Oil Refinery demand, or the agitation for a steel plant in the Bastar area in Madhya Pradesh or in Orissa, or the agitations by Telanagna separatists or separate Vidarbha protagonists, or rival claims over the use of the Narmada water,

the Dangeites are always present. All this is inevitable once they have abandoned the proletarian class point of view and the task of unifying the workers, peasants and the common people of different regions speaking of different languages. As general elections come nearer, the anxiety to jump into such agitations become all the more pronounced.

The revisionist leaders of the Right Communist Party having completed their class-collaborationist journey and opted to play the role of political stooges of the ruling Congress and its Government go about spreading the canard among its following that the CPI(M) is getting isolated and they are to be given the credit for accomplishing this task. Of course, they dare not say where, in which class or mass front the CPI(M) has been isolated and they have advanced. They cannot do it because their claims have no basis. If the attempt is to make a demarcation between parties which are lining up either behind the Syndicate combine or the Indira Gandhi Congress on the one hand and the CPI(M) and its allies who independently assert the proletarian political line on the other, and that is dubbed as isolation, the CPI(M) does not mind such 'isolation'.

This Right Communist story of our isolation is not new. They said we were isolated in 1962 during the India-China border conflict; they repeated it on the eve of the Kerala mid-term poll and again, in 1965, during the Indo-Pak war they claimed the same. But, as is evident, these years of our 'isolation' have more and more endeared us to increasing numbers of workers, peasants and other progressive forces giving the jitters to the ruling classes and parties opposing us in the political field. If they are really so sure of the isolation of the CPI(M) from the people, why are the revisionists going begging any and every party for alliances to jointly fight the CPI(M)?

The Lesson They Forget

In their fervent appeal to their progressive Congress friends, the Right Communists in their resolution recall that "It is

the bitter experience of the history of all countries that ultra-reactionary Rightist forces of fascism are able to seize power capitalising on the disarray and disunity among the left and their failure to build a common front against this Right."

In stating this, they are deliberately keeping silent on one big lesson of history, that it was Social Democracy which in Europe spurned the hands of unity which the Communists extended to fight the ultra-reactionary forces of fascism, that it was Social-Democracy which rallied behind one section on the ruling classes to fight the Communists and paved the way for the rise of fascism and its bitter consequences.

Our Right Communists have reasons to be silent. It is precisely this role which Social Democracy played that they are playing now in India and have reiterated as their policy for the future. Their resolution says, "Left and democratic unity cannot be built up and the challenge of reaction and the vested interests cannot be hurled back without a firm and consistent fight to defeat the policies of the CPI (Marxist)"

The circle is complete—lining up behind the ruling party, disruption of united fronts at its bidding and declaration of war on the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Let those who have been following the Right Communist party ponder over where this suicidal line will lead to. With this line no effective fight against reaction is possible, with this line no democratic unity can be built.

The building of democratic unity, if it is to have any meaning, has to begin from West Bengal and Kerala where the democratic forces are the strongest in the country. Democratic unity is already taking shape here but the Right Communist leaders are going all out to disrupt it. If they had not followed the course they pursued in Kerala and West Bengal, the U.F. could be strengthened, the struggle against the Central Government, the bourgeois-landlord regime intensified.

It is the struggle to fulfil the aspirations of our toiling people that has been sabotaged by the Right Communist leaders and leaders of other parties who have walked into the ruling Congress-Right Communist trap. It is now for the ranks and

followers of these parties to reverse the policies of their leaders, break their leaders' unholy alliance with the Indira Gandhi Congress and join hands with the CPI(M) and other genuine democratic forces and thus strengthen the struggle of the working people and democratic forces against the bourgeois-landlord regime headed by Indira Gandhi as well as the dangerous threat posed by the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine.

P. Sundarayya's Statement On Kerala Elections*

Issued in Calcutta on August 17, 1970.

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on August 17, 1970 :

My attention has been drawn to a report in the *Hindusthan Standard* of August 17, 1970, about a Press Conference held by Comrade A. Raghavan, Convenor of the Kerala United Front of which the CPI(M) is a constituent body. There, Comrade A. Raghavan seems to have said : "In the remaining 43 constituencies the Front might support Independent candidates acceptable to the constituent partners. Such Independents, even if they were sponsored by the 'Syndicate Congress' need not be precluded so long as they could achieve their objective of defeating the 'dangerous enemy', the CPI -Congress (R) combine."

Without waiting for the full version of the statement, I want to restate categorically my Party's electoral strategy in Kerala, to avoid any misunderstanding spreading.

Even in the complicated situation of Kerala (where the mini-front partners and the Indira Gandhi Congress have been indulging in a reign of terror against the people and making our Party the main target of their vicious attack, where we call upon all democratic masses and forces in Kerala to treat the Indira Gandhi Congress and her stooges in the anti-Marxist front as the immediate and main enemy

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

and do everything to inflict a crushing defeat on the Indira Congress and her anti-Marxist front in the coming polls), our Party will have no negotiations, no adjustments, with the Syndicate Congress, whether they stand in their own name or as "Independents," or are sponsored by any other constituent of the Front of which we are a constituent. There is no question of our Party extending support to them either openly or clandestinely. In fact, if any other constituent of the Front wants to sponsor and extend its own support to reactionary forces like the Syndicate, Swatantra or Jana Sangh in the name of fighting the Indira Gandhi Congress, it will lead to great strain in the Front itself. Even if today our Front cannot put up candidates in more than 90 seats (as announced by Comrade Raghavan), it is for democratic forces and elements in Kerala not only to return all the Front candidates but to come forward and stand up and defeat in the remaining constituencies both the reactionary gang-ups of the Indira Gandhi Congress and of the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh. There is no question of our Party or Front supporting either of the reactionary combinations, in the name of defeating one or the other.

Issues in the Kerala Election Battle*

The people of Kerala, thanks to the monopoly of the bourgeois-landlord Congress rule in the country, are once again asked, for the eighth time since 1952, to pronounce their political verdict as to who should govern Kerala. The Congress party which has lost almost all the electoral battles fought in the State during the last twenty years, shamelessly refuses to reconcile itself to the democratic verdict of the people. Resorting to the reckless use of the Central State power in its hands, it had denied to the people of Kerala rule by elected representatives for several years, by imposing either President's rule or the rule of minority puppet regimes like the notorious minority PSP Government of Pattom Thanu Pillai, and the treacherous Mini-Front Ministry of Achutha Menon. The ruling Congress leaders, who day in and day out brag of democracy and democratic values have all along demonstrated their utter contempt for every democratic verdict, whenever it went against the bourgeois-landlord classes and their principal representative, the Congress party.

They Will be Punished for Their Crimes

The ruling Congress party has committed uncountable crimes in the unquenchable thirst for retaining its monopoly of power, and Kerala offers an exemplary evidence of those misdeeds. Shameless alliances had been made with arch-reactionary

*Editorial of "People's Democracy", September 6, 1970.

and communal forces like the Catholic hierarchy, the opportunist leadership of the Nair Service Society, Muslim League leaders, the Ezhava communal leadership of the SNDP and so on to fight anti-Communist 'liberation struggles' while all the time prattling about secularism, democracy and Socialism. Political bribery and official patronage had been freely used to purchase the Thanu Pillai-led PSP encouraging it to betray its election pledges and opting to play the role of a Congress stooge.

The Congress Government did not hesitate to arrest and detain almost all the candidates of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in the mid-term elections of 1965, on the trumped-up charge of preparing to organize an armed rebellion so that the elections could be rigged and the Congress secured a safe majority.

For all these crimes the people of Kerala punished the Congress as well as the rebel Kerala Congress in the 1967 general elections reducing them all to a position where they had a bare total of 14 in an Assembly of 133. One would expect the political criminal to learn the lessons from this democratic verdict which literally trounced the Congress party. Instead, another round of conspiracy to topple the U.F. Government was set in motion.

This time a new variety of anti-Communist strategy has been chosen, the strategy of taking the services of the Right Communist stooges who have sold themselves to the Congress party and betrayed their anti-Congress electoral pledges. This shameless party which calls itself a Communist Party utilising the anti-CPI(M) prejudice of some other smaller political parties, led the battle to topple the U.F. Ministry led by the CPI(M), the single biggest party with more than fifty MLAs, and once again handed over control of the State administration to the Congress party which took to back-seat driving from Delhi and open support to the Mini-Front in the Kerala Legislature.

But this unpopular and upstart Mini-Front Government, led by the Dangeites, was able to earn good-conduct certificates

from every reactionary and counter-revolutionary quarter in the country with its police-goonda terror rule. But it went under within a few months under the load of its opportunist and anti-people crimes and dissolved the Legislature and ordered a hurried election in feverish haste so as to capitalise on the anti-CPI(M) hysteria that the bourgeois landlord classes and their monopolist Press had vigorously worked up.

The ruling Congress and its newly-bought Right Communist stooges thought that by their anti-Communist Party of India (Marxist) tactics, they would be able to knock together a formidable anti-Communist front which would enable them to reinstall themselves in office. Bankrupt politicians and stupid theoreticians that the leaders of the ruling Congress party and the Right Communists are, they were sadly mistaken in their calculations—they forgot the fighting history of the Kerala people of the last twenty years and the repeated defeats they have inflicted on the Congress party and its obliging tools from time to time.

Fiasco of All Their Plans

What the ruling bourgeois-landlord Congress party and its Dangeite drummerboys thought were nice and neat anti-CPI(M) plans have ended in fiasco. Instead of forging a 'formidable' anti-CPI(M) front under the leadership of the mini-front stooges, a sharply divided and mutually opposed anti-CPI(M) crowd, a thoroughly emasculated mini-Front and a revolt-ridden ruling Congress party are presenting themselves on the Kerala political scene.

All that is left for the treacherous, class-collaborationist Right Communist Party to rely upon now is the alliance with the arch opportunist Muslim League leadership which according to the same Right Communists, was an extreme Right reactionary force in 1965-66 with which even electoral adjustments against the Congress were completely ruled out.

The second big prop left for the Dangeites is the ruling Congress party which is expected to issue *fatwas* to its following to cast their votes for the micro-front candidates in

the constituencies where the ruling Congress has no candidates, thus repaying the service rendered to the ruling Congress by toppling the U.F. Government and facilitating the partial recovery of the Congress party and its different splinter wings from the devastating rout they suffered in the 1967 polls.

The monopolist-controlled Press and bourgeois-landlord politicians who till yesterday patted Achutha Menon and M. N. Govindan Nair on the back saying, "Hurrah boys, you have done well", are now pitying the plight of this renegade party and forecasting another drubbing for it on the 1965 model.

The spokesmen of the bourgeoisie and their paid pen-pushers have been saying that the present mid-term poll in Kerala would set the pattern for the ensuing general elections of 1972, and they are anxiously awaiting its results. People who knew the politically awakened electorate of Kerala, and understand the horrifying impact of the mini-front's terror rule with the CRP and private goonda battalions, are sure that the treacherous parties of the mini-front and its principal patron, the Indira Gandhi Congress, are bound to get a severe thrashing from the enraged electorate of Kerala. That surely, is the pattern which will be set by the Kerala poll.

The people of Kerala and honest democrats all over the country are well aware of the indisputable truth that it was only during 1957-59 and 1967-69, under the anti-Congress Communist-led Governments that socially and economically progressive legislations were enacted and full civil liberties for the workers, peasants and middle classes were assured and that the best of these democratic revolutionary traditions are, today, carried forward only by the CPI(M) and its close allies.

Strike-Breakers' Combine

Which class-conscious worker and fighting peasant of our country can fail to see the strike-breaker's role of the Dangeites? The police-goonda terror rule of the Achutha

Menon Government in Kerala, where agricultural labourers, poor peasants and other sections of the fighting people, in thousands, were arrested, tortured in lock-ups, subjected to cruel lathi-charges and implicated in false cases, is still fresh in the minds of the State. Who can fail to note the despicable strike-breaking activities of the Dangeites in Durgapur, during the West Bengal State Government employees' strike the all-Bengal primary teachers' struggle and student actions in Calcutta and the rural areas? The right Communists have become political pimps of the Congress Government and go in police jeeps and CRP vans, to point out fighting worker-militants to be arrested, harassed and tortured. Which honest democrat and Socialist in the country does not know that this Dangeite party remains a Communist Party only in name, that in practice it has opted for the role of fifth-column of the bourgeois-landlord Congress party, and is acting as the anti-CPI(M) storm-troopers of the Indira Gandhi Government?

The People's Democratic Front, headed by the CPI(M) in Kerala, is boldly leading democracy's battle in the mid-term poll of Kerala, consistently championing the cause of the workers, peasants and other progressive sections of the people, refusing to be dragged into unprincipled opportunist and class-collaborationist alliances with either the ruling Congress and its minions or the opposition Congress and its allies. A resounding victory for the candidates of the PDF, led by the CPI(M), alone can ensure a progressive, popular, anti-Congress regime in the State and safeguard and take forward the hard-won gains of the revolutionary democratic movement.

We are quite confident that the Congress party which after nearly a quarter of a century of its monopoly rule over the country has miserably failed to solve any single basic problem of our people, has only succeeded in enriching the big landlords, monopolists and their foreign collaborators, will be trounced by the electorate of Kerala.

We are equally confident that treacherous parties like the

Right Communists and the Muslim League who betrayed all their anti-Congress election pledges of 1967 will receive a fitting reply by the people and shown their proper place in these elections.

Equally confident are we that the extreme reactionary platform set up by the opposition Congress and Kerala Congress will not deceive any democrat, and the people will contemptuously reject this platform of moribund reaction and counter-revolution.

Progressive forces all over the country are eagerly looking to the Kerala people's lead and anxiously waiting for the pattern they set. The fighting people of Kerala will not disappoint their brethren all over the country, they will set the only correct pattern of routing the ruling Congress and its mini-front minions whose objective in the electoral fight is nothing but to defeat the PDF and roll back the wheels of history in Kerala. This must and will be foiled by the people, they are aware that this anti-Communist game of the ruling Congress is the prelude to the attack on democracy on all the fronts to safe guard the crisis-ridden regime of the bourgeois-landlord classes.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement On Kerala Election*

**Statement issued in Calcutta
on September 23, 1970.**

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from September 21 to 24, issued the following statement on the Kerala mid-term elections on September 23 :

The results of the Kerala mid-term elections which have given a majority of seats in the Assembly to the ruling Congress and the mini-front alliance, reducing the big strength of anti-Congress democratic forces in the dissolved Assembly, are causing concern and anxiety to the fighting and progressive sections of the people, who have been looking upon Kerala and West Bengal with hopes as the advanced outposts of anti-Congress democratic forces. This victory secured by the conspiracy of the ruling Congress and the treachery of the mini-front led by the Right Communist Party is certainly a temporary set-back to the democratic and revolutionary forces which have been carrying on a battle to isolate and defeat the Congress, the party of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. It puts the Congress in an advantageous position and provides a democratic face to the repression it has launched in defence of the vested interests.

The securing of this three-member majority in the new Assembly is being advertised as a grand victory to Indira Gandhi Congress and its so-called democratic Socialism. The

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, September 27, 1970. Also published in the compilation of CPI (M) Documents from February 1969 to April 1971

Right Communist leaders and others who opportunistically ganged up with them are joining their voice with the reactionary monopolist-controlled Press to create an impression that the CPI(M) and the anti-Congress democratic forces headed by it have been given a good drubbing with a view to sow demoralisation and new dangerous illusions in the ruling Indira Congress among the people. This is being done at a time when the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes are preparing for new attacks on the people's livelihood and liberties with the active assistance of certain other political parties and groups such as the treacherous Right Communist Party and opportunist leadership of the Muslim League, etc. Nothing will be more suicidal for the class and mass movement than to succumb to this false and misleading propaganda and miss to note the solid gains registered by the democratic movement in the course of the struggle against the Congress Government and its exploiting class rule.

When people fasten their attention on the number of seats secured by our Party and its alliance, when they compare the former strength of 49 seats with the present one of 32 for the CPI(M) and its independents, they naturally draw the simple conclusion that our Party has lost ground. When the results are compared with expectations of easy majority, the despondency grows still further.

The Indira Congress, the bourgeois Press, the Right Communist leaders — all are combining to screen the basic peculiarity of the present election as compared with the 1967 elections which gave a thumping victory to the democratic forces and along with them to the CPI(M) in Kerala. In 1967, our Party had succeeded in forging a powerful common front against the Congress. The Right Communists and the RSP who had betrayed the front in 1965 and who were routed in that election were compelled to join this front in Kerala. Thus in Kerala an all-in united front against the Congress on a common programme had been formed. The 1967 elections reduced the Congress representation to a mere nine though the vote polled by the Congress was as much as

35 per cent. In 1957, the then united Communist Party defeated the Congress taking advantage of three-cornered fight. In 1960, the Congress forged a front with the PSP and the Muslim League against our Party and drastically reduced our representation though our voting strength had increased to 43 per cent.

The victory of the democratic forces and our Party in Kerala always depends on forging a democratic anti-Congress front, on isolating the Congress from the democratic combinations. The Congress, unable to face the verdict of the people on its own, unable to defeat the democratic forces in open confrontation resorted to under-hand methods. It conspired with the mini-front headed by the Right Communists to sow deep division among the partners of the United Front forged in 1967, to break it and stage a come-back.

In the present election, the Congress and its allies attempted to isolate our Party from all democratic parties. But notwithstanding the treachery of the Right Communists these efforts failed and an electoral front confronting the Congress and its allies emerged with our participation. In this confrontation the main brunt of fighting the Congress was naturally borne by our Party.

While the ruling classes represented by the Congress did their best to isolate the advanced democratic forces, they could not prevent a split in their own ranks, with the Syndicate and Kerala Congress fighting on their own platform. All the parties of the vested interests would have been completely routed had not the Right Communists and its mini-front partners combined in a reactionary alliance with the Congress.

It should be noted that despite this split between Kerala Congress-Syndicate and the Indira Congress which certainly helped the democratic forces, efforts were made to present a joint front against us extending from the Right Communists-Indira Congress to the Kerala Congress-Syndicate combine. Some candidates were withdrawn at the eleventh hour to ensure our defeat through the combined strength of their voting.

Against this bloc of Congress, Right Communists, PSP,

RSP and Muslim League, victory could be secured only if our alliance had in many places an absolute majority. Our Party had never claimed that we and our front allies could muster in the majority of the constituencies 51 per cent of the vote. If such was the situation, there was little hope for Congress conspiracies and opportunist defections of parties to the Congress.

Notwithstanding the majority of seats secured by the treacherous combination, the election results show how powerful has been the response of the masses to our call, to our line of fighting the bourgeois-landlord Congress, the line of uniting the democratic forces. It has revealed how an increasingly large number of masses correctly understand our Party's line of struggle against the Centre, of combining administration with struggle, of unleashing and organizing the toilers' struggle in defence of their interests. The class-conscious workers and peasants and enlightened voters of Kerala deserve thanks for responding in this splendid manner to the call of the Party and the P.B. greets them for their splendid response.

The electoral front in which our Party is participating — of CPI(M), SSP, ISP, KSP, KTP and independents — has secured 28.27 lakh votes in 123 constituencies and together with their vote in the other ten constituencies (which can be estimated at about two lakhs), the front polled 30 lakhs. In 1967, our Party along with our present front allies secured only 21 lakhs. Now, notwithstanding the defection of the Muslim League, the Right Communists and RSP, our alliance has gained an additional nine lakh votes. This is how the Right Communists-Indira Congress plans to isolate us from the people have succeeded! The percentage of our Front's total vote has increased from 33 per cent in 1967 to 40 per cent in 1970.

The combined vote of the treacherous mini-front with the aid of the Congress is only 17 lakhs, while the vote of our electoral front is 30 lakhs. The combined votes of Congress and the mini-front parties is only 32 lakhs compared with ours of 30 lakhs.

The total number of seats secured by our Party and its sponsored independents is 32 and its vote is 50 per cent more than that of the Congress. Our Front allies along with one more U.F. independent won 14 seats. Our Party has once again emerged as the single biggest political force in the State.

Fighting against the Congress-Right Communists-League bloc, our party could muster such huge gains because it continuously championed the interests of the masses, heroically led the struggles of the agricultural workers, factory workers, oppressed peasants, teachers and State Government employees. Hundreds of our comrades have been the victims of police torture and terror. Many have lost their lives. Men, women and children have gone through a fiery ordeal. It is because of all this that our Party could secure a 43 per cent increase in votes despite the defection of the Right Communists and Muslim League, a voting almost equal to the combined vote of the Congress and the mini-front. But for the continuous struggle of the masses, such a big mass shift could not have been countered.

Democratic opinion all over India must fully realize the great meaning of the class battle imposed on the people of Kerala through the formation of the joint reactionary front of the Congress with the Right C.P.-led mini-front. The Congress could be fought only by united democratic movement and routed. Desertions and treachery in the ranks of the democratic forces only bring the Congress to power. That is why our Party has been continuously working for united front of all democratic parties to defeat the Congress. In mass struggles, in elections, we have directed our main fire against the Congress, the party of capitalists and landlords and tried to unify the exploited masses against it.

This reaped tremendous benefit for the popular movement especially in Kerala and West Bengal where alternative policies began to emerge, providing an alternative to Congress policies all over India. It tremendously quickened the pace of the mass movement, rousing hitherto dormant sections and taking

the mass struggle to a new high level. This frightened not only the Congress but also the leaders of the Right C.P., the Muslim League and others who disrupted the joint front and thereby revealed their affiliations with landlord or capitalist interests or their petty-bourgeois fear of the masses and anti-Communist prejudices.

To cover their betrayal they have been raising the false cry of CPI(M) bossism. Their real objection is to our Party's insistence on struggle, on loyalty to the pledges given to the masses, which was described as bossism and to hoodwink their followers they circulated the worst slanders against our Party. Apart from this, can any democratic party justify its going over to the class enemy and its party under the plea that another is bossing?

The Right Communist Party, drawing inspiration and succour from international revisionism has been the spearhead of the conspiracy for betrayal. Deciding every step in collusion with the Indira Congress, praised by the kept Press of the bourgeoisie, and egged on in its unscrupulous course by its mentors, the Right Communists have won as their betrayal a status subsidiary to the Congress. They have made the Congress the biggest party in the coalition — compared with whom they have only half the number of seats. They have helped the Congress to defeat some of our candidates. But such has been their plight that notwithstanding Congress help they have secured less number of seats. As for the seats secured, the Right Communist Party has been reduced from 20 (when it was in alliance with us) to 16 in alliance with the Congress; the Muslim League has been reduced from 14 to 12; the total seats of the mini-front which at the time of the formation of the mini-front was 53, have now been reduced to 37. And the Congress seats have been increased from 9 to 32 and Kerala Congress from 5 to 13. Such has been the grand record of treachery of the anti-CPI(M) line of the Right Communists. They have revealed themselves as the open agents of the Congress, out to attack the advanced democratic movement.

The meaning of this treachery for all India must be understood. The masses turning away from the Congress can be growingly rallied by the united democratic forces and the Congress can be routed or curbed in several States. The Congress sees its doom approaching. It is therefore, seeking the help of traitors to divert the attention of the masses, to utilize their power at the Centre to attack the democratic forces and secure a victory for itself. The Congress realizes that by itself it is getting too weak to withstand the onslaught of the masses. The Right Communist leaders have become an open and unashamed agency to stabilize the weakening power of the Congress.

But the masses are moving forward, foiling all the dreams of the Congress-Right Communists that this new pattern of treachery will produce stable results anywhere. Unable to face the policy issues squarely the alliance circulated slanderous propaganda against us attributing Naxalite activities to us and frightened a section of property holders; repression was also pressed into service to secure victory. The victory however is bound to be a short-lived victory. Notwithstanding bribery and corruption from the Centre, the basic problems of Kerala will require an answer and that will not be forthcoming from either the Congress or the Congress-mini-front combine.

But the people of Kerala and the people of India must take the challenge of the new pattern seriously. It is a pattern mostly meant for Indira Gandhi Congress to secure victory at the next polls. Once that democratic facade is secured, with the aid of the treacherous parties, the way will be open for large-scale repression against the people and unabashed police rule as in West Bengal. Durgapur will not remain an exception but will become the rule. Already new draconian legislation for curbing the workers' rights is on the anvil to meet the exigencies of the crisis. The so-called new pattern is a cover for a police rule embellished by Right Communist justification and support.

The P.B. while congratulating the people of Kerala on

their splendid confrontation, thanking the lakhs who have voted for us, calls upon them to be vigilant and strengthen their unity. It calls upon the people of Kerala to realize the great danger created by the advance of the mini-front-Congress combination. The joint efforts of the masses of all parties are required to stem the danger arising from direct or indirect Congress rule. The tables can be turned by the united front of the fighting masses of Kerala against the attacks of the vested interests. The masses, whichever party they follow, will soon be under the direct attack of the police. They all must unite and resist together the attacks of the Congress and its allies. Our Party pledges itself to fight for the unity of the people. It realizes that the treacherous leaders of many parties still continue to confuse their following and that their alliance with the Congress is not yet understood in all its implications. Our Party will make every effort to forge an irresistible united front against the Congress and its tools.

The CPI(M) is confident that popular forces would surely succeed in defeating the ruling Congress and the opportunist fronts it is forging, when its class rule, under the impact of the deepening economic-political crisis, is on the decline. The people and their united struggles, through the conscious efforts of the CPI(M) and its close anti-Congress democratic allies, shall surely succeed in exposing the treacherous policies of the Right Communists and other political parties that are ganging up with the ruling Congress and blow up these anti-people fronts. These efforts of the ruling class to forge such fronts are nothing but like a sinking man catching a straw.

The experience of Kerala calls upon anti-Congress democratic parties not to allow any fissure in the democratic movement and to support our Party's line of combining all the democratic forces against the Congress which is heading to set up police rule all over India, beating down the democratic revolutionary movements with violence and police terror, as it had already resorted to in Bengal and Kerala.

CPI(M) Kerala State Secretariat's Warning*

They will Launch More Severe Attacks on the People of Kerala

The Secretariat of the Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on September 19, 1970 :

The Secretariat thanks the voters of Kerala for having given 28,23,027 votes to the 123 candidates belonging to or supported by the CPI(M), SSP, KSP, KTP, ISP, and independents.

In 1967, when we contested the elections in alliance with the Right Communist party, the Muslim League and the RSP, we got 21,06,046 votes. We have thus received 7,16,981 more votes now than we received when we contested the elections in alliance with those parties three and a half years ago.

On the contrary, compared to 1967, the votes of the Indira Gandhi Congress and the seats of the Right Communists and Muslim League have been reduced.

In 1967, the undivided Congress got 22,25,025 votes. In the present election, however, the Indira Gandhi Congress received only 14,48,137, a little more than half the votes they secured in 1967.

Out of the eight lakh votes thus lost by the Congress, other parties of their alliance got some votes : the vote of the Right Communist party increased from 5,38,004 to 6,72,804; of the Muslim League, from 4,24,159 to 5,96,278; of the RSP, from 1,70,498 to 2,90,890; and of the PSP, from

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13,991 to 1,82,860. The votes polled by the mini front Indira Gandhi Congress combine did thus decrease from 33,71,667 in 1967 to 31,90,975 now. The votes polled by these five parties is less by two lakhs.

Those who compare this reduction of two lakhs in their votes with the increase in our votes by 7,16,981, will see that, due to the anti-Marxist policy of the mini front inaugurated on October 24, 1969, their mass following has been reduced; on the contrary, our following has increased.

As for the seats secured, the Right Communist Party has been reduced from 20 to 16 and the Muslim League from 14 to 12. The total seats of the mini-front which at the time of the formation of mini-front was 53, have now been reduced to 37.

The mini-front has thus helped to increase the seats of the Indira Gandhi Congress even though in the process, their own seats have been reduced. They are now going forward and trying their best to put the Indira Gandhi Congress in office.

They are now discussing the composition of the Ministry which will be formed in a few days—whether it should be a Congress mini-front Ministry, or it should be mini-front Ministry supported by the Congress, or it should be a Congress Ministry supported by the mini-front. It is, however, clear that the content of the Ministry will be the same, whichever of the three alternatives is accepted.

As was made clear by Indira Gandhi and Jagjivan Ram, the ministry that will be formed in a few days will be the result of an “understanding reached by the Congress and other parties who have accepted the Congress programme.” It means that they are trying to resurrect the same Congress regime against which we, including the Right Communists RSP, PSP have been fighting for the last 20 years, the same Congress party which was routed in the 1967 elections.

This election has also exposed in its true colour the claim of the Right Communists and the RSP who have been tomtomming that “they are joining the progressive Indira

Gandhi Congress" to defeat the "reactionary Syndicate". For, with the declared objective of "defeating the Marxists" and "to ensure the success of democratic candidates", they tried their best to see that some candidates are withdrawn from some constituencies. And they succeed in this in such constituencies as Puthupally and Shertallai. It was to cover up this that they talked of the 'Marxist-Syndicate alliance'.

Furthermore, the statement issued by K. K. Viswanathan, KPCC president, after the current elections makes a request to the Syndicate and Kerala Congress to join the Indira Gandhi Congress fold. It is in the background of such efforts being made to unite the Syndicate and the Indira Gandhi Congress in the name of anti-Marxism, that the Right Communists, the RSP and the PSP are going to participate in a ministry which is either under the control of the Indira Gandhi Congress or in which the Indira Gandhi Congress is a participant.

The Secretariat wants to warn the people that, in line with the traditions of the Congress and parties allying with the Congress, the new ministry will launch severe attacks against the mass movement and give it the cover of anti-Marxism. The Secretariat wishes to assure the people that it will be with them in their resistance to these attacks and with this purpose, it will work as an opposition in the Assembly.

The invalidation by the Court of some clauses of the Land Reforms Act has created a situation of grave danger facing the peasantry and we assure them that we will join all other democratic forces inside as well as outside the legislature for necessary legislations to save the peasants from this danger.

The vested interests in the rural areas are striving their utmost to deprive the hutment dwellers, tenants and agricultural labourers of the benefits accruing to them from the Land Reforms Act. We assure them that we would do all that is within our power to defeat these efforts of the vested interests.

Policies that are being pursued in the name of "increasing

agricultural production" and "green revolution" are such as help big landlords to garner huge profits while they harass the agricultural labourers. We would strive to unite all working peasantry against these policies and for this purpose, try to bring about amicable settlement of all disputes between agricultural labourers and middle peasants.

Talking about "crisis in industry", the capitalists are resorting to retrenchment and wage-cuts. The workers are, therefore, bound to wage struggles against these attacks as well as for the realization of their immediate demands. We make it clear that we would adopt such an approach as will help the fighting workers and their organizations.

The unemployed, the teachers, the Government employees, and other sections of the middle class employees are facing several difficult problems. Policies pursued by the Congress Government help the intensification, rather than the solution of these problems; it is to these Congress policies that "non-Congress parties" like the Right Communists, the RSP and the PSP are extending their support. All these sections of the people, therefore, will have to carry on an energetic fight against the policies that will be pursued by the new Kerala government. They may rest assured that we would stand with them in these struggles.

Small-scale entrepreneurs and traders, all sections of the peasants other than very rich land-owners and other small and medium property holders have to face the policies of the Central Congress Government which are detrimental to them. The new Kerala Government to be formed with the support or participation of the Congress will, therefore, be such as help a handful of big landowners and monopolists to secure all the assistance and concessions that are legitimately due to the small property owners. These small property holders, therefore, can rest assured that we will be with them in their struggle against these policies of the Government.

Kerala is a State which is being discriminated against in several respects including industrial development. The local Congress itself has very often been reluctantly forced to join

the protest registered by other parties against this discrimination. Local Congressmen, however, have never been prepared to do anything effective in resisting the policies which are detrimental to the best interests of Kerala. The main slogan of Congress leaders during the recent election has been "give your votes to those who do not countenance the anti-Centre struggle." It is under the control or with the participation of such a Congress that the new Kerala Government will be formed. Discrimination against Kerala, therefore, will undoubtedly continue. The Secretariat wants to make it clear that we will take our share in the struggle against this.

In short, the policies pursued by the Congress and parties which are collaborating with it will further intensify, rather than help solution of, every problem faced by every section of the people in Kerala separately and by the people of Kerala as a whole. The overwhelming majority of the people of Kerala will, therefore, be forced to rally themselves against the new Government to be formed with the participation or under the control of the Congress. The Secretariat assures the people that our party will strive to bring all these struggles to success; it will be with this objective that our party will function within the legislature as an Opposition.

The Secretariat is sure that not only the voters who voted for us and the parties and individuals who stand with us, not only the active workers who made it possible for us to win such a large number of votes, but even those who voted and worked against us, would co-operate with us in these struggles. For, the new Kerala Government to be formed either with the support or participated in by the Congress will be pursuing policies which are detrimental to the interests of the masses who have been rallied within the Indira Gandhi Congress Front and the Syndicate Front. All these people will be obliged — tomorrow, if not today — to fight the policies pursued by the new Government. The people may rest assured that our party would exert all its powers to unite all these sections of the people and forge a real anti-Congress Democratic Front.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on Kerala Election and Political Situation*

**Adopted in New Delhi Meeting,
October 7-11, 1970**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which met in New Delhi from October 7 to 11 adopted the following resolution on the Kerala election and the political situation.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) heartily congratulates the three million voters of Kerala who reposed their confidence in the CPI(M) and its allies and pledges to carry forward the struggle against the bourgeois-landlord regime of the Congress party to ever new heights. It compliments its Kerala State unit for carving out such a proud place for the Party among the people, through its selfless work and sacrifice in leading mighty class and mass struggles. The Central Committee further notes with satisfaction that this great advance has been registered, overcoming the disastrous effects of the Right-revisionist and Left-adventurist disruption of the Communist movement on the one hand, and against the combined onslaught of the Congress Government and its stooges on the other.

The results of the mid-term elections in Kerala contrary to the false and mischievous propaganda of the ruling Congress party and its mini-front allies, conclusively prove that the CPI (M), far from being isolated from the people, has emerged as the single biggest political force in the State,

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enjoying the confidence of ever-increasing sections of the workers, peasants and other democratic classes. The 30 per cent of the votes polled and 32 seats won by the CPI(M) and its Independents, in the teeth of the combined opposition of the ruling classes and their servitors go to demonstrate how the political line of the CPI(M) has scored tremendous successes.

The simple fact that the CPI(M) which, placed in a comparatively more favourable position during the successive elections of 1965 and 1970 could not secure more than 23 per cent of the total votes polled, and has now secured 30 per cent of the votes against a united anti-Communist opposition, shows the solid gains registered by the Party. In short the CPI(M), today, on its own, has acquired as big a mass base in Kerala as the once-united Communist Party had during the election of 1960 which came in the wake of the notorious anti-Communist "liberation struggle" headed by the Congress party and its Central Government. The fact that the CPI(M) and its allies have scored 40 per cent of the votes polled, and secured 49 seats in the Legislature, frustrating the foul efforts of the class enemies to completely isolate and smash the Communist Party of India (Marxist), confirms the correctness of its political line.

The CPI(M) rejects the Right Communists' slander, peddled by the entire bourgeois Press, that it is allying with the Syndicate reaction, and warns all the democratic and progressive forces that this slander is deliberately coined and wilfully spread to cover up their own nefarious tactics of uniting with the ruling Congress and its Government, betraying the anti-Congress forces and the pledges given to them for years together. There are in fact a number of cases where either the Syndicate candidate withdrew in favour of the Indicate-mini-front candidate or the Indicate-mini-front candidate withdrew in favour of the Kerala Congress candidate in order that their common enemy, the candidate of the CPI(M) or its allies, is defeated. Furthermore, in Pattambi where Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad was opposed by the

Right Communist candidate, and in some other constituencies, the Jana Sangh gave its full support to the Congress-mini-front candidate against the Marxists.

It should be noted that this election took place against the background of certain very significant political developments in the country which show (1) that the crisis which has engulfed the bourgeois-landlord regime is ever deepening, (2) that the various parties representing the ruling classes are trying to devise ways and means of resolving that crisis at the expense of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people and (3) that certain bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties in the traditional non-Congress democratic movement headed by the Right Communist Party, are helping the ruling classes in their attempt to save their regime.

The mid-term elections that took place in four States in early 1969, particularly the election in West Bengal, showed that the rapid fall in the popularity of the ruling party, evident in the Fourth General Elections, could not be reversed. Both the sections of the Congress leadership had realized that they could not stem the tide of growing anti-Congress forces and continue their one-party monopoly rule and that a coalition with other parties was a necessity. They felt the need to meet the mounting wave of popular protest against the regime which assumed the political form of non-Congress united fronts, particularly those of Kerala and West Bengal, by a coalition of forces which represent the ruling classes.

This realization however did not unite them. The differences over the question of coalition not only further intensified the inner-party crisis in the ruling Congress, but actually ended in a big split of the party into two in mid-1969.

The Syndicate wing was advocating an avowedly reactionary line of uniting with parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra with a view to launching a frontal attack on the lives and liberties of the people, a line of shifting the internal and external policies of the Government further to the Right. The Indira Gandhi wing, opposed to this reactionary

alliance and its political line, sought to bolster the tottering rule of the Congress by seeking the support of some democratic parties. To this end, it sought to give a Left image to its policies by sponsoring such measures as nationalization of banks and advocating speedy land reforms. As pointed out by our Party, this was also a tactic of breaking the growing unity of democratic forces and isolating the revolutionary movement headed by the CPI(M).

Subsequent events have proved the correctness of this understanding. The Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress, behind the cover of these radical slogans, however, has been hatching plans to undermine their adversary, i.e., the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) and other parties, above all, the two State Governments of Kerala and West Bengal headed by these radical democratic forces. It was at the very time when the CPI(M) and its allies were doing everything to beat back the offensive of the Syndicate Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, to help the election of Sri V. V. Giri as the President of the Indian Union, to defend the nationalization of 14 major banks and so on that they were hatching these conspiracies.

The Indicate Congress was able to hatch this conspiracy against the CPI(M) and other radical political forces precisely because the revisionists and some other pro-landlord-bourgeois elements were as apprehensive of the growth of the militant democratic movement in the country as the avowed representatives of the ruling classes themselves.

It is useful to note in this connection that, as early as in the mid-fifties, a section within the Communist and Socialist movement had set before themselves and before the country the perspective of collaboration between themselves and the then united ruling Congress party. The notorious deal struck between the leadership of the then PSP and the Congress in Travancore-Cochin in 1954 was the first straw in the wind, the first indication that as elsewhere in the world, Social Democracy in India was prepared to help the ruling classes out of the crisis.

This was followed by the open advocacy of a programme of "National Democratic Front including the Congress and Communist Party, leading to the formation of a coalition Government " by a section of the leaders of the then undivided Communist Party of India. This, too, was the first indication that a section within the Communist movement had started on the road of collaboration with the ruling classes in saving their regime from the ever-deepening crisis engulfing them. It was this section of the leadership of the undivided CPI that subsequently transformed itself into the present Right C.P. They, however, could not have their way at that time because, due to the overwhelming strength of the Congress party it was not prepared to have a coalition and therefore even some of the revisionist leaders did not consider it practical to pursue that line. A section of the then undivided CPI leadership, however, persisted in the advocacy of the line of collaboration with the Congress and forced a split in the Communist movement.

It was therefore with the greatest reluctance, that after the crushing defeat suffered by them in the 1965 mid-term election in Kerala, the revisionists thought it advisable to don the garb of anti-Congressism and to join the CPI (M) and other democratic forces in 1967-69 in forming non-Congress Governments. Even after adopting this policy, however, they persisted in their anti-Marxism and conspired with the anti-Marxists within these united fronts, as well as with the Congress, in order to weaken and "isolate" the CPI(M) within these united fronts. They therefore saw in the Indira Gandhi Congress's search for "allies" in the anti-Marxist "Left", a golden opportunity to continue to advocate and practise their policy of collaborating with the ruling Congress party and fighting the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) and its allies.

The character of this new alliance was seen in the nature of the regime established by the mini-front in Kerala which, as is well known, could not remain for a single day without the direct and open support of the Congress. It was seen also in the

Presidential rule established in West Bengal with the direct and open support of the revisionists and their allies in the Eight-Party combination and the Bangla Congress.

The very formation of the mini-front Government in Kerala and the establishment of President's rule in West Bengal were accompanied by a violent police-goonda offensive against the people. The landlord-capitalist classes who could not have their way when the CPI(M) Ministers were refusing to put the coercive State apparatus at their disposal, now have the administration at their beck and call. The firings, lathi charges, lock-up tortures, prosecutions and security proceedings, etc., all of which were intended to crush the agrarian, working class and other people's struggles in these two States after the formation of the mini-front Government in Kerala and the Presidential regime in West Bengal – go to show that the revisionists have become shameless agents of the ruling class in using the State machinery against the working people. It is therefore not surprising that the entire bourgeois Press which was hysterical in its attack on the first Communist-led Ministry in Kerala (1957-59), as well as on the 1967-69 United Front Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, paid glowing tributes to the "efficiency" with which the Right Communist-led Government of Kerala in 1969-70 maintained "law and order". It is equally significant that one of the promises made by the leaders of the mini-front on the eve of the recent mid-term election was "a firm policy of preserving law and order".

Having thus proved their bonafides before the ruling classes the Right Communists became the reliable ally of the ruling Congress in its twin aim of projecting a "Leftist" image before the people and wielding the big stick against radical democratic forces. It was clear to Smt. Gandhi that the advancing tide of the militant mass movement which was getting politically crystallized in the united front formed in Kerala, West Bengal and certain regions in other parts of the country, could be arrested only if the ruling Congress got effective help from the revisionists and such other apparently Leftist elements as the PSP, RSP and so on.

The mid-term election in Kerala was a test for this line of collaboration between the Indicate Congress on the one hand and the Right Communists and other 'Left' parties on the other. And the result has proved that this line has produced better results for the ruling classes than the one advocated by the Syndicate Congress and its allies. For combined as it was with one more measure of implementing the long delayed Ten Point Programme (abolition of the privileges and privy purses of the former princes), the alliance forged by the Indicate Congress in Kerala with three "Left" parties (the Right CP, RSP and PSP) enabled it to pose before the people as a "progressive force". This naturally had considerable mass appeal and therefore enabled the Indicate Congress to secure the big bulk of the votes which used to be rallied behind the undivided Congress. One of the causes that enabled Indira Gandhi to mobilize the bulk of the Congress votes behind her was the fact that she was able to rally behind her the bulk of the vested interests in Kerala who were facing a formidable challenge from the revolutionary democratic movement headed by the CPI(M).

Coupled as this rally of the Congress votes behind the Indicate Congress was with the pooling of the votes which could be mobilized by the constituents of the mini-front, the Congress was able to increase the number of seats won by it from 5 in the old Assembly to 32 now. The mini-front too, gained out of this alliance in the sense that two of the 4 parties who, on their own cannot expect to get a single seat (PSP and RSP) were able to get as many seats as they had in the Assembly that was dissolved; the Right C.P. which had its seats reduced from 20 to 16 can also console itself with the fact that it would have lost all 16 seats had it not had the support of the Indicate and the Muslim League; as for the fourth (Muslim League), it is true that on its own, it may expect to get only about half a dozen seats, but it has been able to raise it to 12 (although this is 2 less than the 14 which it could secure in 1967).

The result of the election therefore can well provide

satisfaction for both the Indicate and the mini-front, particularly since the total number of seats secured by them all has enabled them to form a new Government. It is therefore understandable that all of them consider the result extremely satisfactory and that they should start talking of Kerala having set "a new pattern" for the rest of the country.

The "new pattern" set by the Indicate Congress and its mini-front allies in Kerala, however, has not prevented the further erosion of the popular influence and prestige of the Congress. For, despite the fact that in terms of the legislative strength of the Indicate Congress separately as well as of the coalition between the Indicate and the mini-front that have won the election, the popular vote polled by the Indicate Congress and its allies has fallen. The combined vote of the Indicate Congress, Right C.P., RSP, PSP and Muslim League was 49 per cent in 1965, 54 per cent in 1967, and 42 per cent in 1970. On the other hand, the combined total of the votes secured by the CPI (M), SSP, KTP, KSP and ISP was 34 per cent in 1965, 35 per cent in 1967 and 40 per cent in 1970 respectively. There is thus a fall of the vote secured by the Indicate combination between 1965 and 1970, while the votes secured by the CPI(M) and its allies registered a growth from 1965 to 1967 as well as from 1967 to 1970.

An equally important fact to be noted in this connection is that the "new pattern" set by the Indicate and its allies is riddled with internal contradictions. The very fact that the Indicate with its 32-member representation in the legislature is keeping out of the Ministry and allowing a 37-member mini-front to run the Government, with the leader of the 16-member strong Right C.P. heading the Government, shows that it is not easy to form and function a Government of coalition with such disparate elements as are included in the mini-front and Indicate Congress. The deep division between the all India and Kerala units of the RSP on the question of joining the Ministry also underlines the difficulties involved in the formation of such a coalition. The problem that will arise in consequence of these internal contradictions will of

course be sought to be resolved, since every one of these parties is interested in preventing the radical forces represented by the CPI (M) from advancing further and winning victories in the future. The very attempt at solving them would, however, give rise to new problems since there are innumerable contradictions among the various forces that constitute the mini-front-Indicate combination.

The biggest of these contradictions is the way in which Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her colleagues of the Indicate Congress are trying to use the "spectacular victory" they secured in Kerala to further strengthen themselves throughout the country. However much the Right Communists might wish that their collaboration with the Indicate Congress begun in Kerala would extend itself to West Bengal and other States and ultimately to the centre, Indira Gandhi considers the essence of the "new pattern" to consist in the emergence of her party as the biggest party in every State and in the Centre which therefore can dominate over its smaller "allies".

In Kerala itself, it is clear, the Right Communists are in the leadership of the Government only on sufferance. Even this much of elbow-room will not be allowed to the Right Communists in other States. For the only consideration on which "allies" will be chosen and positions given in the alliance will be the extent to which a particular arrangement will help the Indicate Congress to dominate over its "allies".

This was clearly seen in Uttar Pradesh. In relation to Charan Singh, the Indicate Congress showed in the beginning the same spirit of apparent "self-abnegation" as was shown in relation to the Right Communist Party in Kerala. This, however, was only a stepping stone for the subsequent entry of the Indicate Congress into the Ministry, followed by the final act of throwing Charan Singh out. There is no reason to think that better consideration will be shown to the Right Communist Party in Kerala or other "allies" that will be found in any other State. The essence of the "new pattern" as envisaged by the Indicate Congress is thus its own domination.

This, however, will release forces of resistance to the intrigues resorted to by the leaders of the Indicate Congress. The brazen manner in which the offices of the State Governor and the President of the Indian Union were misused by the Central Government in the party interests of the Indicate Congress in U. P., has already evoked protest from certain elements which it was the intention of the Indicate Congress to rally round it in its so-called "struggle against Right reaction and Left adventurism", parties like the PSP and DMK. It speaks volumes for the degradation of the Right C. P. that it alone of all parties in the country has taken a stand of support to the actions of the Governor and President.

The high-handed action of the Central Government in Uttar Pradesh has brought into the open the attempt made by the Indicate Congress to ride roughshod over all the opposition elements and in the process, to violate the democratic rights of the elected legislature to decide who should hold the reins of administration in a particular State.

This of course is not the first time that the Central Government has used its own authority, as well as the office of the State Governors, to dismiss Governments which it does not like and to institute President's Rule. The notorious Central intervention in Kerala in 1959 and similar interventions in West Bengal and some States in 1967-69 showed the callous attitude adopted by the ruling Party at the Centre towards the principle of State autonomy and the rights of the legislature. The high-handedness of the Central Government, however, is no more confined to action against State Governments headed by the Communists, but has now developed into an all-out attack against the democratic rights of the legislature and State's autonomy itself. That is why almost all other democratic parties except the Right Communist Party have joined hands in raising their voice of protest against Central action in U.P.

The effort of the Indicate Congress to set a "new pattern" which will enable it to rally the Right Communist Party and some other "Left" parties to strengthen itself, carries with it

a number of contradictions which would further accentuate the crisis of the bourgeois-landlord regime. The more "spectacular" the victory won by the Indicate in collaboration with the Right Communist and other "Left" parties, the deeper the contradictions among the various sections and groups of the ruling classes themselves. At the same time, the deeper the contradictions within the ruling classes and the more intense the crisis of the regime, the sharper will be the attack launched by the ruling party and its allies on the radical democratic movement represented by the CPI(M) and its allies and the more shameless will be the Right Communist defence of the regime.

Indicative of this latter fact is the disgraceful manner in which the National Council of the Right Communist Party in its latest political resolution has called for a fight to the finish against the CPI(M) as the essential pre-requisite for building what it calls "the unity of Left and democratic forces". Reading through those paragraphs of the resolution which deal with the allegedly "terroristic" activities of the CPI(M) in West Bengal, one is reminded of the notorious Nanda White Paper of January 1965 issued in justification of the country-wide arrests and detentions of the leading members of the CPI(M). That White Paper, it will be recalled, was based on the lies and slanders invented by the leaders of the Right Communist Party on the eve of, and immediately after, the break between the revisionists and Marxists in the Indian Communist movement. Having thus played the role of the star-prosecution witnesses in the frame-up against the CPI(M) in 1964-65, it appears that the Right Communists want to repeat the performance again. They have thus become the real shocktroopers of the ruling Congress party in its policy of so-called simultaneous fight against Right reaction and Left extremism which in reality boils down to a verbal fight against Right reaction while directing frontal attacks against the advanced democratic movement led by the CPI(M).

It is not possible here to expose the innumerable lies and

slanders with which the Central leadership of the Right Communist Party has packed its recent resolutions on the Kerala election and on the political situation in the country. While reserving a full and detailed exposure of these lies and slanders for a subsequent occasion, it is necessary to draw attention to the basic line running like a red thread through these resolutions. That line is collaboration with the bourgeois-landlord regime in order to try to destroy the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M). It is worthy to note that the very political resolution which calls for "unity" with the Indicate Congress in order to "isolate" and destroy the CPI(M), catalogues a series of pro-landlord and pro-monopolist policies pursued by that very Indicate Congress which goes to show that this party is the most determined champion of the interests of the landlords and the monopoly bourgeoisie. Having made such a formal denunciation of the policies of the ruling party, however, the Right Communist National Council shamelessly defends the anti-democratic actions of that very Government in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. It echoes the voice of the Central Government that President's rule has to continue in West Bengal till such time as "law and order" as envisaged by the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes is re-established. As for Uttar Pradesh, there again the Right Communist Party has proved to be His Master's Voice in defending the universally-denounced imposition of President's rule.

Note cannot but be taken of the role played by international revisionism in emboldening the revisionists in our country to adopt such a shameless policy of defending the bourgeois-landlord regime and in launching violent attacks on the radical democratic forces in the country. Those who began with public denunciation of the CPI(M) as "a group which split the Indian Communist movement at the dictates of the Chinese C.P.", have now ended with lauding the shameless intrigues of the Indicate Congress for maintaining itself in power as a "heroic struggle of the progressive Congress against Right reaction". It is from this laudation of the Indicate Congress

as a "progressive" political party and the denunciation of those who fight against that Congress as "sectarian and adventurers" that they have come to the position of characterizing the Right Communist betrayal of the radical democratic movement as an instance of "creative Marxism".

The Central Committee is distressed to note that certain circles in the international Communist movement are advertising this "victory" of the Indira Gandhi Congress-mini-front combine against the CPI(M) and its democratic allies as a victory for democracy and progress in India. It is strange and monstrous that open collaboration and unity of the Right Communists with a bourgeois-landlord party and its Government, which has misruled the country for a quarter of a century and landed it in the present mess of economic-political crisis, is not seen as the grossest betrayal of the people and outright treachery to the cause of Marxism-Leninism. It is a shame that this is the contribution to the cause of Indian revolution and the working class of India by such international circles.

In spite of all this, the CPI(M) has thus been able to withstand the assault against it, precisely because it stood on the firm ground of the rapidly developing mass movement without being deflected from the correct path of uniting all sections of the democratic movement, with building the unity of the working class and peasantry as the core of the unity of the democratic forces. The CPI(M) is determined to pursue this path and, in the process, to fight all forms of revisionism, whether of the Right or the "Left" type.

The 30 lakh votes secured by the CPI(M) and its allies (as opposed to just over 40 lakhs secured by all the bourgeois, petty bourgeois and landlord groups together) strengthens the confidence that the path chosen by the CPI(M) is correct. All the more remarkable is this heavy vote in favour of the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) in view of the fact that all the odds were against it. The Indicate Congress and its mini-front allies saw to it that the

election was conducted at the most inconvenient time and under the most difficult circumstances. The choosing of the season in which the bulk of the working people cannot participate in political activity and the rushing of the election without sufficient time for the rectification of the mistakes in the electoral roll made it difficult for the radical democratic parties and groups to get their real mass influence adequately reflected in the size of the popular vote.

The Syndicate alliance which, some sixteen months ago, had embarked on its grandiose plan of taking over the reins of the Central Government and implementing its line of abject surrender to the internal reaction and foreign monopolists, has received a number of setbacks and has been thrown on the defensive. However, it would be wrong on the part of democratic forces to underestimate the danger represented by it. The democratic movement must therefore continue to exercise its vigilance against it.

The Indicate Congress and its political line, no doubt, have scored some initial success for the ruling party. A careful analysis and examination of the developments during the last one year, reveal how shaky and short-lived are these successes of the Indira Congress and its allies. Events have begun to show that the Indira Congress and its Government are no less trustworthy defenders of the monopolists and big landlords, and that they do not hesitate to suppress the class and mass struggles of the people with an iron hand. The free use made of the Central Reserve Police through the Achutha Menon Government in Kerala and direct President's Rule in West Bengal and the arrests, lathi-charges, shootings and torture in jails and police custody which are practised on a mass scale, are speedily shattering all such new illusions. The repressive measures, used by several State Governments led by the Indira Gandhi Congress against the struggling workers, peasants, middle class employees, students and others, are on the increase, and they are wanting to arm themselves with still more draconic laws and powers to beat down the fighting people. The deepening crisis and the rising curve of

mass struggles are speedily unmasking the democratic and Socialist facade of the Indira Congress, making it increasingly difficult for its servitors to freely sell Indira Gandhi's "new radicalism" to the people.

The CPI(M) is aware that it was under the impact of the developing economic-political crisis that not only the ruling Congress party was split into two, but several other political parties, too, faced disunity, disintegration and splits among them. It is again under the same impact that the new alliances sponsored or forged by the bourgeois-landlord parties are coming up against innumerable hurdles and obstacles, leading to new splits. The Indicate's alliances with Charan Singh's B K D, Gurnam Singh's rebel Akalis, Badal's Akali Dal and the mini-front's short-lived alliance with the Kerala Congress, ISP, etc., go to demonstrate how shaky, unstable and short-lived these opportunist alliances are, and how these anti-democratic and anti-CPI (M) conspiracies are sure to flounder under the impact of the crisis and ever-surging mass struggles on numerous economic and political issues. For that matter, the Kerala experience shows not only the momentary success of Indira Congress and its political strategy to rally behind itself several traditionally anti-Congress parties and groups, it also shows how unstable and vulnerable it is, and how it has failed to completely isolate the CPI(M) and smash it as it had dreamed.

The CPI(M), conscious of the new possibilities opened up before the democratic and revolutionary movement for rapid advance, and not for a moment forgetting the new dangers posed by the ruling classes and their new conspiracies and attacks on the growing mass movements, pledges to carry forward the struggle for democracy and Socialism with renewed determination and steadfastness.

The CPI (M) assures the three million voters of Kerala who solidly voted for the Party and its allies that it will serve them with still more determination.

The CPI (M) appeals to all democratic parties and groups to realize the menace posed by the Syndicate alliance on the

one hand and Indicate alliance on the other, to the genuine democratic and Socialist movement in our country and come forward to unitedly fight against this twin menace. The CPI(M) is confident that the ranks and followers of certain democratic parties whose leaders are taking them to either the Syndicate or Indicate camp will awaken to the new dangers facing the common people and do everything in their power to reverse the disastrous course taken by their leaders.

CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution on U.P.*

**Adopted in New Delhi Meeting,
October 7-11, 1980**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the highly arbitrary methods and utterly undemocratic course adopted by the Government of Indira Gandhi in the crisis that has developed in the State of U.P. Unashamedly discarding all the provisions of the Constitution and conventions of parliamentary democracy, it has recklessly utilized the offices of the State's Governor and the President of the Republic to rubber stamp its decision for partisan political advantage. The clumsy haste with which the Chief Minister was dismissed and President's rule was imposed on the eve of the meeting of the Legislative Assembly speaks volumes for the contempt it displays for constitutional proprieties and the norms of parliamentary democracy. This step of the ruling Congress Government has so shocked the conscience of every democratic and self-respecting party and individual in the country that it was universally criticised and denounced with the solitary exception of the Right Communist Party and its accomplices. The Central Committee notes with indignation that this is not the first time that the Congress Government headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi has used the office of the Governors, violated all norms and conventions of parliamentary democracy and discarded constitutional provisions in order to suit the partisan interests of the Congress party.

Contemptuously ignoring the widespread resentment and

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protest, the Government of Indira Gandhi, through its agency of President's rule, is going about issuing ordinances and promulgating Presidential Orders in U.P. all with the aim of harnessing support for its own party. If these dangerously dictatorial trends are not decisively opposed, resisted and defeated in time, they are sure to develop as a serious imminent threat to the democratic rights and liberties of the people, making a mockery of the Constitution and parliamentary democracy in the country. Further, the brazen manner in which the Central Government has interfered and dismissed the Charan Singh Ministry preventing the duly convened meeting of the State's Legislature, is a grave warning for all those who are interested in the defence of States' autonomy and its further advancement. In short, it is nothing short of treating the States as pawns in the ruling Congress' power struggle at the Centre. It is a blatant subversion of States' limited autonomy, bringing to ridicule and contempt the representative institutions at all levels.

The Congress Party of Smt. Indira Gandhi entered into an opportunist alliance with the avowedly reactionary Charan Singh in order to sneak into power in U.P. but within a brief period discarded him unceremoniously as impediments were created in the fulfilment of this objective. At no stage were any principles involved. The Central Committee of the CPI(M) while not holding any brief for the notorious Charan Singh and his utterly opportunistic alliances, demands that the Central Government should reverse its disastrous course in U.P. and the arbitrarily imposed President's rule and allow the Legislature to assemble to freely settle the question as to which party or parties command its confidence. It appeals to all democratic parties and individuals to raise their powerful protest against this misdeed of the Central Government, and come forward in defence of democracy and its norms and standards.

End This Terror Regime

**Editorial of "People's Democracy",
November 15, 1970.**

It is by now full eight months since the Indira Gandhi Government succeeded in imposing President's rule in West Bengal, thanks to the treachery and renegacy of Bangla Congress leader, Ajoy Mukherjee, who, conspiring with the ruling Congress Party at the Centre, brought about the downfall of the U.F. Ministry by his resignation as Chief Minister.

The most vicious propaganda carried on against the U.F. Government and the systematic lies spread by the bourgeois Press and the vested interests about the so-called threat to 'law and order' under U.F. regime are still fresh in the minds of the public. Restoration of 'law and order' was the major battle-cry of the Congress Central Government against the U.F. Government and its major component the CPI(M), and it was on this ostensible plea that President's rule was foisted on the State. The likes of the heinous crimes, ghastly murders and political gangsterism of these eight months has never been witnessed in any comparable period during the last twenty three years since Independence. None else than the Central Congress Government and its reactionary policies, and the Central Home Department which is in direct charge of the administrative wing of the law and order situation in the State are so wholly responsible for this black record.

It was the ruling Congress Party, trounced by the electorate both in the 1967 and 1969 elections, that projected the political line of organizing and encouraging the so-called

inter-party clashes which, in essence, were nothing but planned incitement of violence against the struggling workers, peasants and middle class employees, using every heinous device and exploiting all the anti-social elements.

It was none but the Central Congress Government with its diabolical class policy of defending the hated landlordism and stemming the tide of the peasant struggle for land, which engineered the defections of certain obliging parties as the Bangla Congress and the Right C.P. to bring about the fall of the U.F. Government, which alone had popular sanctions and could grapple with all the difficult problems, including the problem of so-called law and order, created and nourished into a monster by the long years of Congress misrule and its bankrupt path of capitalist development.

Who does not now realize that the Central Home Department has embarked upon the fascist technique of utilizing the so-called Naxalite activities as a smokescreen for its fiendish plans of building a police State in West Bengal ? Which intelligent student of politics can fail to note that the Government on the one hand is organizing planned infiltration of thousands of notorious anti-social elements into the Naxalites and on the other is shooting down some of them while in custody or when they overstep the imposed limits? Who can fail to see the diabolical game of the Congress Government of engineering murderous attacks by the so-called Naxalites on the cadres and leaders of the CPI(M), and then portraying them as 'armed' clashes between the Naxalites and CPI(M) to seek support for the imposition of the Preventive Detention Act and other draconian laws ?

The experience of the last eight months of President's rule in the State amply demonstrates the truth that what the Indira Gandhi Government is interested in West Bengal is not the genuine restoration of law and order, but in creating lawlessness, anarchy and disorder so as to use it as a plea for the perpetuation of President's rule and denial of a democratically elected Government to the people, and for imposing police and military rule on the State of West Bengal in

order to violently crush the democratic revolutionary movement of the people. This, surely, is the perilous path to dictatorial rule and not, as the Indira Gandhi Government demagogically claims, to the defence of democracy, secularism and progress against the alleged extreme reaction and counter-revolution of the Syndicate alliance.

The new repressive police powers sanctioned by the Governor's regime, the parade of the CRP and other armed wings of the State with rifles and bayonets pointed at the people, the imposition of Section 144 and curfew in many areas for months together, the arrests and shootings, etc., have not helped to enhance public morale and self-confidence in the people, but has, on the contrary, given courage and confidence to the anti-social elements to indulge with impunity in ghastly crimes. The steady rise and increase of these crimes from month to month since the Governor's regime was set up, stands as proof positive of this phenomenon.

The traditions of the people of Calcutta, as everyone knows, were such that there was instantaneous and spontaneous revulsion and resistance to any anti-social activity of murderous attacks on innocent men and women, boys and girls in trams, buses and public places. Now, thanks to Indira Gandhi and her direct handling of the Home portfolio, it is not the lawless anti-social elements and gangsters that are cowed down and put on the run, it is the public that is being terrified from offering self-defence against these mounting goonda attacks on schools and colleges, on offices and homes, and on men and women, because all attempts at public resistance are ruthlessly suppressed by the police assuring the anti-social gangs of complete safety. It has come to the point where for the police regime in the State, every crime of these anti-social gangs is welcome as long as it is directed against the CPI(M), its T.U., kisan, youth, student and women functionaries. Such is the moral and political code and conduct of the custodians of law and order under President's rule !

In broad daylight, on the open railway station platform in

Patna a dastardly attempt on the life of Comrade Jyoti Basu was made some seven months ago, but the culprits are still untraced and are at large. Comrade Jeevan Maity, a veteran seventy-year-old revolutionary, was waylaid and stabbed in Howrah. He succumbed to his injuries after a fortnight but nothing serious was done to trace the culprits and their network. More than a dozen leading cadres of our Party in Hooghly, 24 Paraganas, Nadia and other districts were assassinated during the last four months and the assassins are freely roaming about. Two of the leaders of the jute workers were murdered but nothing effective has been done so far to unearth the criminals. Comrade Parul Bose, a Mahila Samiti leader, was stabbed in a girls' school in the midst of teachers and girl students by a gang of twenty goondas, though the highest police officials had been informed of the plan of a murderous attack on her three days before the attack was made. Some weeks ago, one of the Calcutta District Secretariat members of our Party, Comrade Alok Majumdar, was stabbed while alighting from a tram. Nothing was done to track down the criminals. The Mayor of Calcutta was attacked in a similar manner and the comrade accompanying him was stabbed and seriously injured. Such incidents can be multiplied in any number. They are not made on comrades belonging to our Party alone, many non-party people have been victims of these attacks. Can one in any sense believe that all these atrocities continue to mount in this manner without some sort of political complicity and connivance of the authorities concerned ?

The impression that is sought be created is that all this is part of the strife between the so-called Naxalites and the CPI(M), that the two are liquidating each other. After directing and inspiring the notorious anti-social ruffians against the CPI(M), such an impression is sought to be created to divert and mislead public opinion from the real issue at stake—which is that the democratic revolutionary movement of the workers, peasants and the oppressed middle classes is being brutally attacked by the bourgeois-landlord Congress

Government. The ruling Congress finds no other way of perpetuating its class rule in West Bengal than by the cruel suppression and disruption of CPI(M) and its allies, no matter what bestial methods are used and what fascist technique is employed.

The Congress Government is fully aware and the people also know it well that ever since the Naxalites came on the scene in 1967, the CPI(M) has been fighting them politically and has at the same time condemned the Congress Governments's practice of cold-blooded murder of Naxalties; it is well known that all cases pending against them were withdrawn and more than a thousand of them released from jails in March-April 1969 when the second U.F. Government took over the State administration in West Bengal. It is also a widely known fact that this policy of our Party, politically dealing with the Naxalites was always opposed by the Bangla Congress and the ruling Congress Government which have been advocating police terror measures to suppress and destroy them. Strangely enough, the Bangla Congress leadership now finds an ally in the Naxalite wing and is happy that the Naxalites are doing a part of the dirty job for it with their criminal attacks on the CPI(M) activists. Note also should be taken that the Naxalite attacks on the T.U. kisan, youth and student workers of the CPI(M) aquired the present proportions only after President's rule was established and the State police administration went directly under the 'able' stewardship of L.P. Singh, the Home Secretary of the Central Government, who has acquired a name for his "American efficiency" on the model of the CIA in suppressing the democratic and revolutionary parties and movements.

What new political reasons have arisen for the Naxalites to make the CPI(M) the main target of their violence and murders, when the CPI(M) has also been made the principal object of attack by the bourgeois-landlord Congress Government and its stooges after the dismissal of the U.F. Government and the imposition of President's rule and establishment of police raj in West Bengal ? No one with a modicum

of political sense can escape the conclusion that what is now being advertised as Naxalite anarchy and violence under the eight-month-old advisers' regime is no longer the old Naxalite movement directed against landlordism and the State's repressive force to defend itself. It has acquired a qualitatively new character after the Governor's regime was set up. A greater part of the recruits to it today come from the underworld who know nothing of Marxism-Leninism or Mao's teachings, but take their directives from their paymasters and direct their murderous assaults on the CPI(M), its offices and its activists. To put it bluntly, in its fight against the democratic movement and the CPI(M) in West Bengal, the so-called Naxalites' force has for the politically bankrupt Congress regime become one of its key wings, along with the police, CRP, Border Security Force and some stooge political parties.

The latest spurt in these murderous activities of the so-called Naxalites, when viewed against Chief Adviser B. B. Ghosh's statement that he was more concerned with the 'law and order' situation in the agrarian and industrial sectors and not worried over the other assaults and killings by the Naxalites, shows that there is a definite plan of encouraging these attacks on the CPI(M) as a diversionary measure on the eve of the harvesting season during which the peasants' crops are sought to be illegally and forcibly harvested by the jotdars and their henchmen.

It is all the more monstrous that parties such as the Right C.P., Forward Bloc and SUC not only refuse to realize the menace thus developing to the democratic and revolutionary movement in West Bengal from the bourgeois-landlord classes and the Central Congress Government, but they also stoop to the use of these same anti-social elements in their struggle against the CPI(M), either absorbing them into their own organizations or giving protection to them while proclaiming their determination to fight the CPI(M) as their principal political enemy.

The CPI(M), quite conscious of these diabolical plans of

the class enemies and the threats they pose to the movement, is striving its utmost to fight this new menace, exposing its treacherous counter-revolutionary character and defending itself against the murderous attacks directed against it. It calls upon the workers, peasants, urban middle classes and all the progressive sections of the people in West Bengal to awaken to these new conspiracies of the Congress Government and its agents, and to come forward determinedly against these gangster political methods of the powers-that-be, and build a powerful mass movement to end President's rule and to hold mid-term elections to usher in a democratically elected popular Government which alone can ensure orderly progress and advance of the people of West Bengal. The CPI(M) also appeals to all the democratic and progressive political parties all over the country to rise to the occasion and protest against the cruel machinations of the ruling Congress Government to drown the popular movement in blood. It warns the Central Congress Government against these heinous tactics chosen by it and makes it clear that such a course destroys democracy in the country and paves the road to fascism and reaction unless the people come forward to defeat these treacherous tactics.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on November 7, 1970 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly condemns the Central Government's economic policies which are leading to an alarming situation

The heavy dependence on foreign loans, the huge debt payments, the effects of fall-off in foreign aid, and of the enforced devaluation—all have not only brought the economy to a perilous situation, but have revealed how it is at the mercy of foreign bankers and monopolists. The growing necessity of larger exports to keep the economy running, the difficulties it is meeting in Western markets and the necessity of subsidising them—all emphasize the same phenomenon of dependence.

The heavy debt payments grew from 365 million dollars in 1965-67 to 509 million in 1969-70. In the last two years, this has mounted to nearly 50 per cent of the total aid—thus outlining the rake's progress.

In spite of the advertised economic recovery, the country is still entangled in economic difficulties. The recession, which Government apologists had wished away by verbal solutions and propaganda, is still in our midst. Factories are closed; lock-outs are declared and thousands have been thrown

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

out of employment. The lock-outs last several months and a callous Government which is quick to intervene in strikes to crush the workers' resistance, looks on quietly during lock-outs when the employers seek to starve the workers into submission.

Under the present dispensation, the country cannot use its full industrial capacity. It is known that a large number of engineering factories can use only from 40 to 60 per cent of their capacity. The iron and steel industry had an unutilized capacity of 20 per cent in August 1970. The steel tube industry production in 1969 was only 47 per cent of its capacity. Under-utilization in the fertilizer industry was 49 per cent in 1969-70, though the government stresses the growing need of fertilizers and even imports them. Utilization in wagons industry is to the extent of only 40 per cent.

Registered urban unemployment has now reached the figure of nearly four million which is obviously an underestimation. The backlog of total unemployment by 1969 was 12.6 million according to the calculations of an official committee. In three years alone the number of unemployed has increased by 30 per cent or by three million according to these conservative figures. The real unemployment exceeds these figures, but they show how rapidly unemployment is growing.

The same official figures show that every year new entrants to the labour market force amount to more than 4.5 million.

As against this vast flood of rising unemployment the Indira Gandhi Congress government makes a flamboyant promise of finding new jobs for five lakhs. This is adding insult to injury. It is besides nothing but an election stunt to promise that every house will have at least one earner earning not less than Rs 100 per month.

Apart from this election stunt, the Indira Gandhi Congress Government seems to have no programme, except one of undermining the standard of living of the people. The Government has failed to hold the price-line and an inflationary rise in prices is depreciating the hard-earned earnings of the

industrial workers and employees. The wholesale price index has risen from 177.3 to 182.7 between October 1969 and October 1970. In 1969-70, prices registered an increase of 3.7 over and above the 12 to 14 per cent increase registered in the previous years. In the last six months, they increased further from five to six per cent.

Notwithstanding the increase in foodgrains production, foodgrains prices continue to be higher than in 1968-69 and 1969-70. Between June last year and this year, the index for food articles also rose from 198.6 to 205.4 and industrial raw materials rose from 182.9 to 201.3. Between December 1969 and July 1970, the all-India consumers' price index number for industrial workers rose by 6.3 per cent; for agricultural workers it rose by 7.2 per cent.

The inability of the Government to control prices directly follows from its policy of exploiting the people through inflation and deficit financing. The budget had provided for deficit financing of Rs. 225 crores. In 1969-70, money supply increased by 9.6 per cent while production registered year, the money supply has again increased by three per cent.

No wonder exports are again falling or failing to register the minimum improvement required to keep the economy going. The past few months have seen a slowing down of the rate of exports and revealed the incapacity of our economy to sustain a seven per cent growth which is considered the minimum necessary to keep the economy going. Notwithstanding subsidies and several other measures to encourage the exporters, our goods are meeting with stronger resistance in Western controlled markets, some of which are affected by their own recession. The export earnings are unable to finance imports because a large part stands mortgaged for the payments of foreign debts. Besides devaluation has made the imports costlier and imposed unnecessary burdens on the industries.

The much advertised rise in the foreign exchange reserves conceals the fact that part of it is due to falling imports

caused by recessionary conditions in India. Part of course is due to fall in imports of foodgrains and other reasons, like import substitution. Besides, part of the fall in imports is compulsory—foreign credit no longer being available to purchase requirement necessary for our industries. The cry of shortage of imported intermediary goods and raw materials, etc., is a comment on India's inability to finance the imports necessary for her industries without borrowings from abroad. Official reports indicate that the demand for imports will have to be heavy if the economy is to pick up and progress.

The worsening of the economic conditions is evoking strong protests and mass actions. Belatedly the Central Government had to sanction interim relief—a paltry sum—which has led to further indignation among the employees. The State government employees and teachers all have been forced to demand further rise in dearness allowance and pay scales.

The working class had been one of the worst sufferers, with prolonged lock-outs, retrenchment and closures. This year adequate bonus has been denied to lakhs of workers who have protested through strike actions.

Indira Gandhi's promises to the peasantry of speedy land reform have ended in dust ; the Chief Minister's Conference convened by her virtually repudiated all intentions to embark upon any radical land measures. The Patna session of her party also showed that the peasant will be treated with only verbal flourishes and nothing else.

In this background, the discontent of the people is rising rapidly. Instead of meeting the just demands of the people, fulfilling the promises made, Indira Gandhi's government has started intensifying the repression against the masses.

All the State Governments are using increased violence against popular movements. The DMK Government represses the striking workers of Tamil Nadu, Indira Gandhi's Naik Government in Maharashtra orders the police to lathi-charge textile workers of Bombay, the Achutha Menon Government of Kerala takes police measures against the agricultural

labourers and students in Kerala and the Bihar Government and Rajasthan Government suppress the peasants' struggles in their States. All the State Governments are using the police on a much bigger scale to stifle the discontent of the masses.

The Indira Gandhi Government sought to advertise bank nationalization as a great step forward. What are the results? She had to agree to award full compensation to the bankers. And the nationalized banks have not resulted in affecting the stranglehold of monopolists over our economy; nor have they stopped giving a major part of the credit to these same monopolists. The hopes of the small man raised sky-high by interested propaganda has been dashed to the ground.

The Central Government with its profuse promises of Socialism, its de-recognition of princes, is forging new measures to attack the working class strikes and choke all independent trade union movement. Its proposal for an Industrial Relations Commission, armed with full power of arbitration, and accompanied by banning of worker's strikes, is one of the atrocious measures it is placing to fulfil its promises of Socialism. Besides, it has already imposed the Central Industrial Security Force on the workers. It is an agency armed with arbitrary powers to suppress the workers. The Essential Services Act is repeatedly employed to ban strikes; army personnel are also used to break strikes.

Its performance towards the masses is becoming more and more atrocious, revealing its face as a ferocious defender of capitalist-landlord interests. Under President's rule in West Bengal, it despatched 25,000 armed police including the notorious CRP, to crush the strike of 60,000 Durgapur workers protesting against the arrest of their leaders. Laying siege to the town, the CRP stopped food and milk supplies, raided workers' quarters, beat and tortured workers, assaulted their wives to break the strike.

The Durgapur attack constitutes one of the most shameful events in recent Indian history showing how the ruling classes are ready to smother all principles of democracy and the Constitution to put down the just struggle of the masses.

But then the vile misdeeds of the Indira Gandhi Government have converted the whole of West Bengal into a prison of democracy, a graveyard of all democratic liberties of the people. Confronted by an organized movement of workers, peasants, employees, school teachers, the Indira Gandhi Government under President's rule has resorted to direct police rule to suppress all protests. Section 144 is proclaimed over large areas of West Bengal and the right to hold public meeting has been done away with. Proclamation of curfew is becoming a routine affair. Warrants have been issued against more than 70,000 persons, leaders and active workers of the CPI(M), trade unions, Kisan Sabha and student movements. More than 7,000 leaders and active workers of the mass movements are already under arrest. Prominent leaders and ex-MLAs are arrested on fabricated charges of murder and bail is refused to them. Their families are also put in jail.

No less has been the oppression directed against the peasant masses. The efforts under President's rule to evict the peasants from occupied land have been defeated. But the peasants had to fight the landlords' goondas, and brave police repression. Warrants have been issued against the leaders of the peasants.

Today, again, the police and the landlords are threatening the peasants to deprive them of their crops. Hundreds of armed policemen are already ready to launch an attack and the valiant peasants will have again to foil their efforts. The teachers, State Government employees and other sections all have felt the lash of uninhibited repression under President's rule.

In order to hunt down the democratic movement led by our Party, the only challenge to the Congress rule, the police, under the guidance of the Central Home Ministry, headed by Indira Gandhi, is conniving and encouraging murderous goonda attacks by Naxalites and by other anti-social gangs organized by sections of the Forward Bloc and SUC against the leaders of the trade union and kisan movement and against the leading cadres of our Party, and the democratic movement. More than a hundred of our best comrades have died

in either police firing or killings by these gangsters who are also actively helped by the local police. The bourgeois Press is suppressing the story of murders and even encouraging the Naxalites by describing them as revolutionaries. These elements every day seek to create new records in their cowardly attacks. This week they attempted to murder Mrs. K.G. Bose. Only a few days ago, they made an attempt on the life of Prasanta Sur, Mayor of Calcutta, evoking abhorrence from all quarters. Yet the adviser, B.B. Ghosh, says that law and order is under control as there are no gheraos or mass clashes in rural areas, thus letting the cat out of the bag that he and his ilk are conniving at these murderous attacks on the mass leaders as a means to suppress mass movements.

By using the anti-social elements, who have donned the garb of Naxalites, the authorities have joined hands with the underworld to beat down the mass movement. Using their murderous campaign, and their few assaults on policemen, the authorities have already armed themselves with extraordinary powers, revived the Terrorist Suppression Act and secured powers for indiscriminate shooting. All these extra powers are used to suppress the people in the name of fighting the Naxalites. Taking advantage of the diversions created by the Naxalites, the authorities are demanding the enactment of the Preventive Detention Act which has been denounced by the people for years. The aim is to secure power to suppress the Opposition parties, clear the ground for a safe election. The Indira Gandhi Congress having lost its credentials with the people, and afraid of meeting the democratic forces in an electoral battle, seeks to crush us before approaching the people.

The excuse that the Preventive Detention Act is needed to suppress the Naxalites is a fraudulent excuse. It is considered necessary to suppress the democratic movement.

Afraid of the opposition in Parliament the Indira Gandhi Government was hesitant to sponsor the Preventive Detention Act. But now assured by the reactionary alliance of Jana Sangh, Syndicate and Swatantra—an alliance which she is

pledged to fight—the Indira Gandhi Government is confident of carrying it through despite the opposition of the democratic parties. The reactionary alliance wishes nothing more than suppression of popular and democratic movement and Indira Gandhi is just helping them to undermine the democratic freedom of the people. The Bangla Congress and its leaders, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and Sushil Dhara, are actively canvassing support to all these atrocious measures of the Indira Gandhi Congress Government. The Right Communists have, in effect, called for more repression against the CPI(M) in their resolutions and Press.

The P.B. strongly protests against the proposal to enact the Preventive Detention Act for West Bengal.

The P.B. of the CPI(M) warns the country that what is being done by the Indira Gandhi Congress in West Bengal will have the gravest consequences on the future of our people and our country. Here is an open and frontal attack against democracy in the most shameless and naked manner. It is screened from the public eye because of the approval it gets from the treacherous Right C.P. leaders and some sections of the leaders of the Forward Bloc, the SUC and others. They conceal the Indira Gandhi Government's brutal attack on the people, often join with the police, as in Durgapur, and prevent the people from learning the truth. They are siding and abetting the Indira Gandhi Government to destroy democratic liberties and lay the foundation of a police State.

The P.B. further warns the people of India against the emergence of the Naxalite cult and asks them to understand its full import. The Naxalites are mainly attacking the active members of the trade unions and kisan movement and the members of our Party; they have given a political screen to the city's underworld and they are acting with the connivance of the police against the main effective political opponents of the Indira Gandhi Congress. The assassin's knife has secured the protection of the police rifle against the mass movement. Can any democratic party fail to observe

this outrage? Yet the Right Communist Party, the Bangla Congress and some leaders of other parties screen this heinous act of the authorities and egg them on to attack us further.

This development is fraught with the gravest consequences. Internationally such use of the underworld has been made by the rising forces of fascism which sought to smash all democratic movements. That Indira Gandhi, claiming to fight the reactionary policies of the Syndicate, is using these methods only reveals how her Government acts as the instrument of the big capitalists and is prepared to tread underfoot every principle of democracy.

The P.B. further brings to the notice of the people of India that there are reliable reports that the agents of the CIA—the American Central Intelligence Agency of espionage and international counter-revolution, are taking a hand in this gangster warfare. It has started intervening in India, its only object being to crush the democratic movement and enslave India with the help of certain reactionary politicians in the Syndicate-Jana Sangh camp. Indira Gandhi's present policy in West Bengal is laying the foundations of this final treachery.

The attack in West Bengal is a part of the attack on democracy in India. Despite the treachery of the Bangla Congress, the Right C.P. and some leaders of the Forward Bloc, SUC and others, this attack has to be rebuffed. It is besides an attack on the future of our country, launched through the Naxalites. All parties who flinch from resisting its attack will be guilty of treachery to the cause of Indian freedom and people. The P.B. appeals to the people all over India to realise how democracy is being butchered in West Bengal, how open murders are organized and sanctioned under Indira Gandhi's President's rule and to raise their protest against it.

The P.B. congratulates the fighting people of West Bengal on their courageous fight against great odds. It fully supports the peasants in their determination to protect the gains achieved

under the U.F. Ministry and calls upon all the democratic forces of West Bengal, especially the working class, to help the peasantry in its just fight. It congratulates the working class on its united fight to protect its gains. It lends its full support to the jute workers' decision to launch a struggle in December and it is confident that the struggle will not only secure the demands of the jute workers but also give an impetus to the democratic movement to end President's rule.

The P.B. calls upon all sections of the people of West Bengal to raise their protest against the growing gangsterism, with the help of the police against the CIA agents and unite irrespective of their political differences to beat off the assault on the people. The united voice of the people must demand withdrawal of the CRP, withdrawal of all repressive measures, end of President's rule and mid-term elections so that people's sovereignty can be fully asserted. Unity of all democratic forces will definitely be able to chase away the CRP, silence the Naxalites and rout the Indira Gandhi Congress and its allies at the polls.

Police Attacks in Kerala*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on November 5, 1970 :

Like all Congress supported State Governments, the new Government in Kerala is launching violent police attacks on the CPI(M) and the mass organizations fighting against the landlords and other vested interests.

Even before the Ministry took office, some successful candidates of the Indicate Congress used the occasion of their "victory celebrations" to "assure" their supporters that the CPI(M) would be dealt with "firmly". No wonder, therefore, that a local Sub Inspector made a wanton attack on the respected leader of the CPI(M), Comrade P. Gangadharan, a former MLA and a candidate in the recent mid-term election.

Hardly had a week passed after the assumption of office by the Ministry when an outrageous lathi-charge was made on the agricultural labourers in Kuttanad area. Reports of this attack roused such public indignation that the Government was obliged to order a public enquiry into it.

The farcical nature of this enquiry can be seen from the fact that, within a few days, lathi-charges as serious as in the Kuttanad area were made on students in Alleppey and Kozhikode. Here, too, public indignation was so widespread that the Government had to order an enquiry.

Opposition parties and sections within the ruling coalition

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itself were naturally concerned at the way in which people fighting for their legitimate rights are subjected to wanton police attacks and then enquiries are formally made without suspending officers and men who resort to such wanton attacks. The MLAs belonging both to the Opposition and some constituents of the ruling coalition, therefore, gave notice of adjournment motions to discuss the serious question of police attacks on the people.

The Government, however, refused to give any opportunity for the Assembly to discuss this very serious question. Outraged at this denial of the legitimate rights of the Legislative Assembly, the entire Opposition walked out of the House, while some members of the ruling coalition themselves gave expression to their indignation at the police behaviour.

The P.B is confident that all democratic groups and individuals in Kerala, including those within the ruling coalition, will join in a united movement against these police attacks.

Naxalism and Its Metamorphosis*

M. Basavapunnaiah

More than three and a half years ago, hardly two months after the first anti-Congress United Front Government was installed in West Bengal, the so-called slogan of people's war of liberation was raised by a group of kisan activists working among the tribal peasantry in the Naxalbari area in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Calling themselves "Communist revolutionaries" and adherents to the "thought of Mao Tse-tung", staging a revolt against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and its political line of participating in the functioning of the non-Congress U.F. Government in the state, denouncing the Party as 'neo-revisionist' and renegade to the cause of revolution, they declared that they had started a peasant guerrilla war to set up rural 'liberation bases' and organize a 'people's liberation army'. They refused to represent the grievances and demands of the tribal peasantry to the new U.F. State Government and flatly turned down the offer of the U.F. State Government to do everything in its power to redress the grievances of the peasants and meet their demands, openly declaring that their struggle was not aimed at winning this or that partial demand of the tribal peasantry but was aimed at organizing and leading a peasant war of liberation.

To back up this Left adventurist tactics of instant armed guerrilla warfare, they put forth the Left infantile political thesis that India had become a U.S. neo-colony and the Indian

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Government a U.S. stooge; that conditions had become rotten ripe for an armed revolution and the people were fed up with all other forms of struggle; that some dare-devil armed attacks by some dare-devil heroes and groups on landlords and people's oppressors would inspire the peasant masses for armed uprising; that in the 'new epoch' and according to the new 'thought' of Mao the peasants from the rural areas are destined to liberate the working class and cities and peasant nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America are destined to liberate the countries of Western Europe and North America and their working class; and that a revolutionary party is not necessary to lead a revolution since it is the armed revolutionary struggle that throws up a revolutionary party etc., etc.

Thanks to the barrage of propaganda of the Chinese Communist Party and Government through their Press and Radio, the ultra-revolutionary and Left infantile thesis and actions of the Naxalites acquired a certain amount of 'revolutionary aroma' and was able to ensnare a number of militant students, youth and petty-bourgeois intellectuals into this 'revolutionary romanticism'.

Diversiory Attack

The big bourgeois Press and its hired pen pushers were very quick in seizing this opportunity to condemn the 'violence' and 'anarchy', tarring it all as crimes of the Communists on the one hand, and on the other, showering hypocritical praise on the Naxalite adventurers that they were "brilliant gems" among the students and youth, that their heroism, valour and self-sacrificing spirit were putting Marxist Communists to shame, and that they were genuinely and truly inspired by the ideas of emancipating the poor, though somewhat misguided in their belief in violence, etc.—all this with the deliberate aim of disrupting the gathering forces of the CPI(M) and engineering a diversory attack on the growing revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants..

The CPI(M) had even then realized that this was a

dangerous anti-Marxist and anti-Communist trend, that it was Left infantilism, adventurism and petty-bourgeois revolutionism, that its reading of the Indian situation as a mature revolutionary situation and ripe for armed revolution was totally erroneous, that enemy agents, including some suspected agents of the Central Intelligence Agency of U.S. imperialism, had entrenched themselves at certain levels of the Naxalites' organization, and the Party ordered immediate exposure and expulsion of these elements from the Party no matter what posts they occupied at different levels of the Party. It warned the workers and peasants that this was an anarchist, terrorist, counter-revolutionary force, no matter what honest, revolutionary and good motives might have prompted some of them to embark on this perilous path. It patiently argued with all those who were amenable to argument and discussion, assisting them to turn to the right path, the path of Marxism-Leninism and the political ideological and programmatic line of the CPI(M).

Right Communist Hypocrisy

The Right Communist reptiles utilized this opportunity to venomously attack the CPI(M), slanderously charging the Party with Naxalites' programme and policy, while making hypocritical appeals and approaches to the Naxalites, saying that they were, after all, misled by the CPI(M) which betrayed them when they insisted on implementing the accepted policy of the Party! There were any number of statements in the Right Communist Press, shedding crocodile tears for their sacrifices and sufferings and simultaneously offering patronising criticism. The Right Communists even went to the extent of forming defence committees for those alleged to be involved in the police station raid cases in Kerala. Here the diabolical aims of the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes and the Right Communist renegades—the aim of disrupting and destroying the CPI(M)—are one, and they, in fact, acted in perfect unison. All this is a matter of recorded history, which need no elaborate discussion. However, it is

necessary to find out where this Naxalite line has led those "Communist revolutionaries", whether towards revolution and revolutionary movement or to arch-reaction and counter-revolution.

A look at the latest phase of the so-called Naxalites and their activities would convince every honest man and woman that all their tall talk of peasant guerilla war, agrarian revolution, people's war, etc., was a hoax, and bomb attacks on schools, colleges and libraries, killing of students, youth, kisan and trade union workers of other political parties, the cadres of the CPI(M) in particular, the assassination of policemen and civilian officials, and the organizing of individual murders on the bidding of some interested persons or parties have become their routine activity.

Unable to either rouse the workers and peasants or to attract honest men and women to these unsocial, terrorist activities, the Naxalites had opened their doors to all sorts of lumpen elements and anti-social gangs in towns and cities who were recruited *en masse* on the ground that these forces alone could be freely employed for the type of anarchic activities they had been planning and executing. Is it any wonder that it is a god-sent opportunity for the powers that be and other anti-Communist foreign agencies like the CIA to infiltrate the movement with their agents, and channelise these anti-social activities into so-called inter-party clashes and thus undermine all the democratic opposition parties, in particular the CPI(M) which happens to be the strongest? Such fiendish tactics are neither new to the bourgeois-landlord classes nor are our ruling classes any exception to resorting to such tactics. Some extracts from an article by Paul Lafargue, the French proletarian leader and the son-in-law of Karl Marx, describing the vile tactics of the French bourgeoisie of those days, which we reproduce elsewhere in the issue of *People's Democracy*, would throw enough light on the subject. In fact, such cruel tactics have become an integral part of the bourgeois arsenal, in our times, to fight the Communist and revolutionary opposition.

The anarchist and terrorist activities, of the so-called Naxalites, instead of rousing mass hatred and anger against the exploiting and oppressive social order as they are proclaiming, roused disgust among the public, providing the golden opportunities to the vested interests to parade as the champions of law and order and the protectors of peace and tranquility of the citizens, while denouncing every peasant and worker struggle as endangering "law and order". In fact, this is what is happening in West Bengal today, as seen in the lawless murders and the imposition of the P.D. Act by the Government.

The Naxalite theoreticians, three and a half years ago, were describing the situation in India as a *revolutionary situation* in which all other forms of struggle gave place to armed struggle. Though between 1968 and 1970, the bourgeoisie had ordered mid-term elections in as many as six States in India and 70 to 80 per cent of the people took part in voting, they were blindly repeating the slogan of boycott of the election form of struggle and replacing it with armed form of struggle! Revolutionary honesty, if it is still there in these leaders of Naxalism, demands that they should admit their criminal political folly and revert to the path of sanity.

Nothing to Do with Mass Struggles

Who does not know that during the last fortytwo months, these anarchic and terrorist activities of the Naxalites had nothing whatsoever to do with mass peasant struggles except in the cases of Naxalbari and later in Srikakulam where sections of the tribal peasantry were involved? Was it not a political crime on the part of these Naxalite leaders to deliberately mislead these isolated pockets of few thousand tribal peasants, cut off from the wider peasant masses and their democratic revolutionary movement, into the so-called armed liberation war against the State and get them cruelly crushed and annihilated? Was it not sheer madness to tomtom the Srikakulam pocket as India's 'Yenan' and what not? What else are the so-called Naxalite activities in Kerala and other

places except anarchic and terroristic raids in Robin Hood style? The childish toying with the armed revolution and people's war minus people, leads nowhere except to the sad and disastrous consequences they have now led the Naxalites in India. The surest way of discrediting the concepts of people's war and armed revolution is to reduce them to their absurdity, and that is what the Naxalites are now busy doing.

Some of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals who had been acting as the apologists of Naxalite theories and activities and were slanderously attacking the CPI(M) for not following the "creative Marxism of the present epoch" and abandoning the 'Marxism-Leninism of the present era' do not yet realize that what they were doing was positive disservice to the cause of Marxism and revolution, in the name of high-sounding revolutionary phrases. These forces, instead of helping the misguided student and youth enthusiasts to correct their Left adventurist and infantile political thinking, were constantly egging them on to pursue the suicidal path, while safely sitting on the sidelines in their comfortable offices and houses. The political and moral support rendered by these middle class arm-chair politicians has misled the Naxalites into foolishly believing that their political-ideological line has got mass sanctions, thus tenaciously persisting in their political gamble.

International Phenomenon

While we direct our sharp criticism and determined opposition to the Naxalite philosophy, politics and practice, we are quite aware of the fact that this ultra-Leftist and adventurist school of thought is not an isolated Indian phenomenon, and it has been an international phenomenon, raising its head in a big way, during the last four to five years. As Lenin very aptly described it, revisionism, both the Right and Left varieties, is an international phenomenon in the modern working class movement, that these two demons are not antipodes but twins, and the emergence of these evils cannot be "attributed to mistakes of

individuals or groups, nor to the influence of national peculiarities and traditions", but have to be traced to the socio-economic conditions of capitalism and the bourgeois pressure on the working class. However, the mass discontent and frustration that provide fertile soil for these ultra-Left trends and the sympathetic echo found in certain circles among the middle classes do not obviate the truth that they are incorrect, unscientific and harmful in the extreme to the revolutionary working class movement. It would be a serious crime on the the part of any genuine Marxist-Leninist Party not to expose and fight this ultra-Left menace on the pretext that several of these "ultras" are "well-motivated and well-intentioned self-sacrificing" men and women or that their dare-devil actions in the name of revolution are evoking sympathy and applause in certain circles of the frustrated middle class. Such opportunist considerations compromise Marxist-Leninist principles and, in the final analysis, harms the cause of Communism enormously.

A glance at the fortytwo months of experience of the Naxalite movement in India would glaringly reveal how this alien Marxist trend was fully exploited by the bourgeois-landlord Government and by other anti-Communist bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties in their struggle against the CPI(M) and the revolutionary movement in our country. If Right Communist renegades are fully used by the ruling classes and their stooges, the Left adventurist Naxalism was equally utilized to discredit the Communists and disrupt the proletarian revolutionary movement That these two anti-Marxist trends, from two opposite ends, have helped the bourgeois-landlord Congress Government in the midst of an economic-political crisis in which it is caught, is a matter of proven history in India. The simple fact that the reactionary ruling classes choose the CPI(M) as their principal target of attack and concentrate their main fire on it since it is carrying on a principled and uncompromising struggle against these alien Marxist forces, speaks enough

about where they locate the main danger for their exploiting class rule.

Cold-Blooded Murders

Be it noted here that the "democratic and free Press" of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois classes in our country which was liberal in paying big compliments to the Naxalites' brilliancy and self-sacrificing revolutionism does not have a word of protest when scores of these militant student and youth in Andhra, Punjab, West Bengal and other places are cruelly shot down in police custody, trotting out stories that they were all shot dead in armed encounters which never took place. How absurd it is that not one was wounded and captured in these so-called encounters but all got killed. This does not disturb the conscience of the 'enlightened' editors and their 'educated' columnists! It, of course, does not disturb them since their fiendish tactic was to shoot down and massacre a few hundreds, if they over-step the set limits, and utilise them to the maximum to disrupt the CPI(M) and divert the revolutionary movement into dissipating channels. It does not really disturb the ruling classes since these anarchic and terroristic activities come handy for them to parade as the ardent champions of "law and order, peace and tranquillity for the citizens" while maligning all workers' and peasants' struggles as engendering lawlessness and disorder, and on that pretext demand empowering of the Government with ever-increasing draconic laws of fascist repression and suppression of the masses.

The gangster methods and individual or squad terroristic actions, instead of rousing the masses against the oppressive and exploiting social order, as the Naxalite pipe-dreamers were broadcasting, were inviting deep resentment and hatred from the common people and the democratic public. The situation thus created is coming handy only to the bourgeois-landlord Government to denounce every workers' and peasants' struggle as endangering "law and order", and to parade as the sole champions of law and order and peace

and tranquillity of the citizen. Thus in the final analysis, it is the loudest counter-revolutionary shouters about "law and order", the stoutest defenders of the oppressive bourgeois-landlord order that gain by these infantile terroristic actions, but not the forces that stand for a revolutionary change of the present hated social order.

Real Face of Their Service

The bankrupt Naxalite thesis that "repression invokes resistance, and to invoke resistance invites repression" is causing immense damage to the cause of our people, and its poisonous fruits are already being tasted by the democratic revolutionary movement in West Bengal, the Government finding excuses to empower itself with more and more draconic laws of oppression and suppression. The latest fascist orders to the police to shoot at sight would have brought the entire people of Calcutta into the streets to protest and fight back, but these anarchic and terroristic murders and attacks of the Naxalites are providing an alibi to the Government, throwing the people into a helpless, defensive mood. Such is the yeoman's service rendered to the counter-revolution by the "Communist revolutionaries" of Naxalite fame!

The two States of Andhra Pradesh under Sri Brahmananda Reddy rule and West Bengal under President's rule during the last eight months, both under the "Left and Progressive" Congress rule of Indira Gandhi, offer us striking example in this regard, where lawless murders of people by the police are perpetrated, all in the holy name of maintaining law and order. Not even post-mortem on the dead bodies is done nor are the dead bodies delivered to their next kith and kin! A set communique is issued that in an armed encounter, so and so are shot dead and Mao literature are found in the kits captured from the dead! Such are the Gandhian methods of Congress Government's violence to put down Naxalite violence! Smt. Indira Gandhi might retort with the remarks that this method of "liquidating" Communists is not new to her regime and even during her father's time the same was done

to hundreds of Communists in Andhra and Telangana during the years 1948-51, during the Telangana peasant's struggle!

They Want Indonesia Re-Enacted

To what monstrous, levels of violence, murder, cruelty and bloodshed the decent bourgeois-landlord classes and their Governments have degenerated can be gauged from the overt and covert suggestions, frequently made by several anti-Communist scoundrels, that some sort of "Indonesian solution", i.e., massacre of a million unarmed workers and peasants, men, women and children, is the only surest way of eliminating the "Communist menace" in India. Not a word of protest was uttered against the most barbarous regime of General Suharto, before whose ghastly and atrocious crimes and cruelties, the misdeeds and massacres of General Franco, Mussolini, Hitler, U.S. imperialists in Vietnam and even those of nomad chiefs of Chengiz Khan and Mohammed Ghaznavi pale into insignificance. On the other hand, they shamelessly justify them on the spurious plea that the armed battalion under General Untung's leadership had murdered some military generals with the alleged complicity and connivance of the Indonesian Communist Party. Our 'peace-loving and non-aligned' Indian Government was quick enough to declare 'bhai-bhai' relations with another 'peace-loving and non-aligned' Indonesian government of Suharto which was guilty of a genocide unparalleled in the history of the twentieth century by any Government in any country. Such are the class morality and ethics of the capitalists and landlords of our time, and such is the true meaning of culture, peace, law and orderly progress of humanity.

A revolutionary who does not understand this brutal and fiendish nature of the class enemy he is fighting, is indeed a poor revolutionary. Our 'Communist revolutionaries' who have come to be popularly called Naxalites and later formed into what is known as the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), but have subsequently been atomised into a number of sects and sub-sects in each State, have had no real understanding

of what revolution is, what Marxism-Leninism is, what the Indian political situation is and what a revolutionary should be like. Experience of the last forty-two months confirms every syllable of this statement of ours.

Do the honest and genuine among the so-called Naxalites and their different sects demonstrate their revolutionism and revolutionary honesty by frankly admitting the fiasco of their false theories and practice, and openly discard them? Or with false petty-bourgeois prestige and lacking moral-political courage to admit own mistakes, persist in their pernicious course of providing grist to the mill of reaction and counter-revolution? These are questions that await immediate answers.

The Diabolical Aims of Congress Rulers*

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement of November 27, 1970

Text of the statement by the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued in Calcutta on November 27, 1970:

The Government of Indira Gandhi, in its unconcealed thirst for one-party monopoly rule over the Indian Union and all its constituent States, has not only been denying the people of West Bengal a democratically elected and representative Government in the State but has also succeeded in imposing the hated Preventive Detention law (with a different name—the Prevention of Violent Activities Act) with the diabolical aim of beating down the democratic and revolutionary opposition parties in the State under the spurious plea of curbing the so-called Naxalite violence and maintaining law and order.

It is a shame that during the last fortyfour months since the Fourth General Elections in which the ruling Congress party had lost its majority in the State Legislature of West Bengal, President's rule was foisted on the people for full twentytwo months and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had declared that "there could be no elections in West Bengal until normalcy was fully restored and there was possibility of holding fair and free elections without fear of the voters being terrorized." It is clear that the twentytwo months of

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bureaucratic President's rule has done everything in its power to aggravate the so-called law and order situation in the State—facts of life and experience speak more eloquently than all the false and demagogic claims and propaganda of Central Congress Government. In the face of these realities it is shocking to hear from the Minister of State for Home, K. C. Pant, that “an elected Government by itself does not ensure that there will be no violence or lawlessness”. Then does this wiseacre dare say that denial of a democratically elected Government and the rule of the Governors with the CRP, Border Security Force, and other armed police violence and brutal repression ensure peace and progress and law and order in the State?

The entire problem of the prevailing law and order situation is nothing but the creation of bourgeois-landlord Congress misrule during the last quarter of a century, and it is mischievously misleading to trace it one day to the UF Government's police policy, another day to the CPI(M), a third day to the so-called Naxalites, and a fourth day plead that it is due to the absence of an oppressive preventive detention law. It is elementary knowledge to any intelligent student of politics that this so-called law and order problem has two distinct aspects, namely, the oppressive and miserable socio-economic conditions that provide fertile soil for a spurt in all sorts of heinous crimes including dacoities and murders and the other is the cruel attempt on the part of the powers-that-be under the false cry of maintaining law and order, to crush all democratic, and revolutionary opposition forces which fight for a new, just and democratic social order against the existing unjust social order and its oppressive law.

In the present case of West Bengal, both these aspects which are due to the Congress Government's anti-people policies are being mixed up, the main culprit trying to escape by making others the scapegoat and leading the country step by step towards a regular police State by enacting and implementing more and more draconian laws and denying

democratic rights and liberties of the people. This, surely, is a road to the murder of democracy and democratic institutions in the country, for ushering in dictatorial and fascist methods of governance, notwithstanding the demagogic claims of championing democracy, secularism and Socialism by the ruling Congress leaders.

The strange and monstrous part of the story is that the ruling Congress party and the Government led by Indira Gandhi, which assume the deceptive posture of fighting extreme Right reactionary forces in the country such as the Syndicate Congress, Swatantra and Jan Sangh, have sought the wholehearted co-operation and support of these very same dark forces of extreme reaction to enact this law, and in the teeth of opposition by the non-Congress democratic parties in the State without exception, as well as by such all-India parties as the CPI(M), Right Communist Party, SSP, RSP, etc. Is it not patently clear that it is principally aimed at zealously safeguarding and defending such law and order which the monopolists, big landlords and their stooges are fanatically clamouring for?

This Prevention of Violent Activities Act and the handing over of other high-handed powers to the police and the CRP to shoot at sight is a victory for the bureaucratic and dictatorial Governor's regime in West Bengal, and there are firm grounds to believe that some of the violent crimes, under the name of Naxalite terrorism, are deliberately engineered by some dark forces in order to expedite the enacting of this draconic law. This detested law is primarily aimed against all the anti-Congress democratic parties and first and foremost, against the CPI(M). This is one more retrograde step in the series initiated since 1967-68 by the Central Congress Government to reverse the democratic gains made by the people after the devastating defeats inflicted on the Congress monopoly rule in the 1967 elections. No false pretexts such as Naxalite violence can hide the ugly truth that the Congress Government has kept the hated Preventive Detention law on the Statute Book all the time since the year

1947, until it found itself lacking majority support in Parliament. Nobody has forgotten the fact that the Congress Government which imposed the Defence of India Rules on the pretext of the Chinese threat in the year 1962, shamelessly perpetuated it for full five years until it found it impossible to continue it, in 1967, even though the so-called Chinese threat had disappeared as early as November-December 1962 and this dark Act was cruelly utilized against the CPI(M) for shutting its cadres and leaders, over a thousand, behind prison bars for more than two years between 1962 and 1966.

Now it is patently evident that this law is enforced in West Bengal with a view to suppressing the democratic opposition to the ruling Congress party which has lost its majority among the people of the State, and which is resorting to every dirty device to somehow stage a comeback to the helm of the State administration, at least in the general elections of 1972, since it is aware that it will be trounced by the electorate if a mid-term poll is held now. Such are the vile and cruel tactics of the Government of Indira Gandhi, and these are bound to come up against the massive resistance of the democratic forces in West Bengal, who will fight and defeat it.

It is really cheek on the part of the Prime Minister to tell the Indian public that twenty million voters of West Bengal are being terrorized to vote for this or that political party out of fear. If there is one party, utilizing the State power of the police and military, trying to terrorize the voters to vote for its party, it is none else than the ruling Congress party. Similarly, it is atrocious on her part to tell the world that the so-called Naxalite violence and terror in the State does not permit the holding of mid-term elections, as every sensible man and woman knows that these Naxalite activities, including the police-engineered ones, do not exist except in twenty to thirty constituencies out of a total of two hundred and eighty in the State, and that, too, in stray pockets and due to police complicity and their utter inefficiency. If this is the vicious logic of the Indira Gandhi Government to deny

democratic elections and a democratically elected Government to the people, then her Government will be able to successfully create such situations in whichever State it wants and dispense with democratic elections. It is a highly objectionable and very dangerous argument of the Central Congress Government to do away with democracy.

To add insult to injury, Union Minister, K. C. Pant, "adroitly" asks the members of the CPI(M) in Parliament to declare that they eschew violence. It is ridiculous on his part to raise such a cynically false and hypocritical demand since he is aware that the CPI(M) has neither arms nor armies under its command even to defend itself against the murderous attacks of violence unleashed against its Party members and cadres by the vested interests, let alone using violence on them. All that the CPI(M) declares is nothing except the truth that the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes have an enormous machinery of organized violence at their disposal, they are not hesitating to drown the people in brutal violence and bloodshed when their exploiting interests are challenged, that they nowhere in history have accepted the democratic verdict of the people without recourse to use of violence in defence of their class rule, and that the people have a right to use counter-violence to defend their democratic rights and gains against the undemocratic minority and its brutal violence. It also has, time and again, declared that it strives to achieve the social revolution by peaceful means, since it is most advantageous to the people, and the possibility or otherwise of achieving it, primarily, depends on the ruling classes and their attitude, as they are always the first to resort to violence to suppress the people's revolutionary forces. If what our shrewd and eloquent K. C. Pant wants from us is to abandon the statement of this historical truth, then he is demanding what cannot be conceded by any political party, including the one he belongs to, which has been proclaiming adherence to Gandhism and Gandhi's non-violent methods of struggle for independence against the British imperialist rule. But it is outright slander to accuse

the CPI(M) of violence, and under that cover use violence to deny democratic elections and democratic rights of the people. Already several thousands of kisan, trade union and youth and student workers are either put behind the prison bars or have arrest warrants against them. Not satisfied with this, the President's rule is now all out for repression with the PVA Act in its hand.

The CPI(M) is confident that this anti-democratic and repressive law will be opposed, resisted and finally defeated by the united forces of democratic opposition, even though the CPI(M) will have, initially, to bear the brunt of this repressive measure and its dastardly use. It appeals to all the democratic political parties and the workers and peasant masses in the country to awaken to this dangerous onslaught on the people and their civil liberties, and come forward to do everything in their power to beat back the offensive of the vested interests.

CPI(M) Warns Kerala Government on Police Policy*

The State Conference of CPI(M) workers in Kerala, meeting in Tellicherry, on the second day on December 4, adopted a resolution warning the Mini Front-Congress Government that the people would be forced to retaliate if it continued to pursue its present police policy.

The text of the resolution reads:

The police policy of the Kerala Government of which the Right Communist Party, Muslim League and RSP are the main partners with the backing of the ruling Congress, is aimed at suppressing the toiling people and helping the vested interests.

The substance of the Achutha Menon-Mohammed Koya police policy is to harm in all possible ways the democratic opposition including the Communist Party of India (Marxist). This policy was inaugurated on the very day they assumed office with Congress support after stabbing the United Front in the back in October last. This same policy which resulted in police firings, lath-charges, lock up tortures and the killings of over forty persons, is being continued by them after the mid-term elections.

The moment it was known that the Mini-Front and the Congress had won a slender majority, the police, inspired and backed by them, began their attacks. The lathi-charge on the plantation workers of Ambalamukal and the police manhandling of Comrade P. Gangadharan when he went to

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intervene in an agricultural labour dispute took place around the time of the formation of the second Achutha Menon Government.

Kumarakam-Alleppey Incident

After the swearing in of the Ministry, the first act was the brutal lathi-charge on the agricultural workers of Kumarakam. After this lathi-charge which even the ruling parties had to protest, the agricultural workers of Tiruvalla were assaulted by the police.

Even before the echoes of the Kumarakam and Tiruvalla lathi-charges had died down, indiscriminate lathi-charges were made on the students of Ambalapuzha and Kozhikode.

The rape of five agricultural worker women by a group of policemen took place in the dark regime of the Menon-Koya Government. When serious charges of rape are raised against policemen, any Government would immediately suspend those involved and order an enquiry. But the present Ministers who have lost even the elementary sense of justice conducted only a farce of an enquiry by the RDO.

Anti-Socials on the Rampage

The Government which uses the worst repression on the legitimate struggles, of the workers, peasants and students does not lift even its little finger to control the anti-social elements and goondas rallied under the banner of the ruling parties. Innumerable reports are being received of these anti-social elements taking the law into their hands in various parts of the State and going on the rampage against the workers and peasants and the parties of the opposition.

Six hundred and seventytwo agricultural worker families of Karanhiyoor in Trichur district have been forced to flee their homes and wander in various parts of the State because of the landlord, police repression there. The police have set up a reign of terror there, they have been destroying the homes of the agricultural workers, beaten up men and women who were sleeping under their roofs and launched over a

dozen cases against the agricultural workers to help the land-owners.

Rowdyism in Mayanoor

In Mayanoor in the Chelakkara constituency of Trichur district a police camp was opened in the name of the Kongad incident (in which a landlord was murdered) and under the advice of the Congress and the Right Communists the police took away Comrades P. M. Raman and P. M. Janardanan, Party members and trade union workers, who had nothing to do with the Kongad incident and inhumanly tortured them. Women have been taken by the police, beaten and raped. This camp had to be removed later but now again on the demand of Indicate Congress MLAs, police stations are being opened in places like Elanad.

The workers of the Victory Saw Mill in Pullur in Trichur district have been in a struggle for five months against retrenchment. The police here are helping the owner to work with blacklegs and the workers resisting it are beaten and false cases instituted against them.

Goondaism in Sivapuram

The incident in Sivapuram near Kuthuparamba a few weeks ago has to be specially noted. A League goonda who attempted to dishonour a girl student was arrested but some Leaguers forcibly freed him from the custody of the police. The police had seized illegal guns and other lethal weapons from some Leaguers which the people had pointed out to them, but this case has been suppressed and the arms were given back. The attempt of the police was to arrest those who were victims of the Leaguers' attacks instead of the goondas. The Sub-Inspector of Kuthuparamba has been transferred on the basis of a complaint by League leaders that he was proceeding against the criminals.

This week, with the support of the authorities, Right Communist-Indicate goondas burnt down the office of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kappil near Vandoor in

Malappuram district. The Government has not yet made any serious effort to trace the criminals.

Ever since the election result was announced, it has become the practice of the landowners in Cheriyaakavu in Palluruthy constituency to attack hutment-dwellers, agricultural workers and CPI(M) cadres on the roads and in their homes. The police are not taking any action against the goondas who are making these attacks but are, on the other hand, involving the workers in false cases and organizing a hunt for them.

Many such instances can be cited. On the one side police repression on the struggles of the peasants, workers, agricultural workers, and students, and on the other the goonda raj of the ruling parties and the vested interests—this is where the present police policy has taken the State.

This Conference calls on the mass organizations, democratic parties and Party units to raise their strong voice of protest against this. It reminds the Government that if the situation continues like this, the people will be forced to retaliate.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau Statement on Privy Purse Judgement*

Issued in Calcutta on December 15, 1970.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on December 15, 1970 :

The Supreme Court majority judgement on the privy purses and privileges of the former princes and the derecognition order runs directly against the current of democratic expectations and demands.

It, however, need not cause any surprise to those who have noted the trend of some of the recent judgements. Whatever may be the strict letter of the law according to the jurists, the sovereign people of India have decided to end the manifest inequality in the shape of privileges and purses of the former ex-princes most of whom had secured their princely States by selling their people to the foreign masters.

The judgement only shows the necessity of reorganizing the Supreme Court and bringing it in tune with the needs of the people. The supremacy of the people and their elected representatives must be asserted over every organ of the State, including the Supreme Court.

The Government should not be allowed to take cover under the majority judgement and must be compelled to proceed with the legislation abolishing the privy purses and other privileges. The people and their representatives must have the final say on the question of this feudal anachronism.

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

CPI(M) Central Committee's Resolution on Electoral Strategy in 1971 Elections*

Some comrades raised the objections to the election strategy suggested by the Polit Bureau that — the Indicate combine joined by the Right Communists and PSP, DMK, etc., on the one hand and Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine joined by the SSP are confronting each other in the general elections. We consider both to be reactionary combines, out to perpetuate the rule of Big Business and the landlords and mount offensives on the toiling masses of India. Our Party will have no alliance or adjustment with either of the combinations or their constituent parties.

We tried our best to preserve and develop united democratic fronts of all democratic parties, groups and individuals against the bourgeois-landlord rule of the Congress comprising of the CPI(Marxist), Right Communists, SSP, PSP, RSP, FB and other "Socialist" groups, DMK, Bangla Congress and other breakaway parties, against the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi and Congress(O), Swatantra, Jana Sangh.

In spite of our best efforts, today these democratic united fronts have been betrayed with the growing class struggles of the masses by these parties, preventing electoral confrontation taking place.

In this electoral battle, we have to fight against the Indicate combination, as well as the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combination. We have to expose and fight the Right

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

Communists, PSP and others for joining with the Indira combination, and also SSP which has joined the Jana Sangh-Syndicate combination. As long as these parties continue to have common candidates with either the Indira Congress combination or the Syndicate-Jana Sangh combination or electoral pacts based on political support to one or the other combination, we attack their line as a line of disruption of the common front against capitalists and landlords and appeal to their followers to reject the line and maintain the unity of the democratic forces. We welcome and do everything to see that any section, group or individual break-away from these reactionary combinations and we are prepared to support or join hands with those who take a clear stand against both the combinations, and we will have adjustments with them.

Right Communists : Taking their betrayal in Kerala, West Bengal, their National Council resolution of October attacking the CPI(M) as their main enemy, and calling for alliance with the Indira Congress against us, their agreement and grouping with the Indira Congress in all the States, unless they give up all these openly, there is no question of adjustment with the Right Communists in any State. We cannot afford any State unit of our Party to have its own political adjustments with this all-India party when in pursuance of their policy, they have mounted a murderous assault on our cadre and Party in Kerala and West Bengal, to further their own front with the Indira Congress.

The Right Communists, because they are being rebuffed by the Indira Congress and seats are not conceded to them as they demanded, are trying to seek our support in certain areas and States, in the name of mutual adjustment:

- (i) as bargain pressure point on the Indira Congress,
- (ii) to cover up their own betrayal by tom-tomming that they have adjustments with and support of the CPI(M) in their "policy of fighting the reactionaries" in the Congress, while continuing their alliance and adjustments with the "progressives" in the Congress.

In Andhra Pradesh, we propose to contest seven seats—Miryalagudam, Khammam, Gudivada, Narsapur, Guntur and Bhadrachallam and Bandar. If we cannot fight even the last two or one of the last two, because of financial or cadre and organisational deficiency, we can leave them uncontested. If the Right Communists want to contest these seats, let them, but no question or talk of mutual adjustment or support. If they do not contest us in our seats it is good. We may try to do it through intermediaries; we can go as far as avoiding contests if such an arrangement is favourable to us. But this cannot involve any obligation on our part to support them; nor relaxation of our fight against their opportunist line where we are contesting the election, as long as they continue their present all-India policies of alliance with or support to the Indira Congress and fight against the CPI(M) in Kerala and West Bengal.

Every unit in every part of India has to carry this exposure of and fight the Right Communists.

The same applies to Rajasthan, where we avoid contest with them in Alwar, and see that they do not contest Ganganagar, but no question of mutual adjustment and support.

Now some exceptional cases are raised by certain CCMs. Can we support Dange or any other Right Communist or any other comparable democratic candidate against the Shiva Sena? We can and must do, as we did it in the Parel by-election in supporting Krishna Desai's widow. We tender our bona fides by appealing to our masses, to vote for so and so against the Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine. How much we can really work in that constituency depends upon the needs of our own Party, in other constituencies, for which the necessary cadre would be taken and others will work and try to forge links with ranks and masses of the Right Communists, etc., to wean them over to our Party, while exposing the Right Communists' all-India policy; yet to defeat Shiva Sena, we are extending our support.

These exceptional cases cannot be the general formula. Wherever such need arises, permission of P.B. member available or P.B. Centre is to be got.

Nor is it our job to necessarily extend our support to one or the other candidate and choose who is better. We may have to make it clear to the voters in quite some cases, when we cannot put our own candidates, as we are a small force or for financial or organisational reasons, that the candidates contesting are such as to none of whom we can extend support.

We do not go out of our way to put up candidates beyond the capacity of political, organisational or financial capacities, only to defeat the Right Communist candidates, but wherever to consolidate our own mass bases, we set up our candidates one of the results may be the defeat of the Right Communist candidate, but we cannot help it. We are under no obligation to make them win, by asking our supporters to vote for them, even in those areas where we are not contesting.

Regarding SSP : The SSP had been fighting and murdering our cadre in West Bengal. The SSP in Bihar and U.P. not only earlier but even now has joined with the Jana Sangh-Swatantra-Syndicate group and formed the SVD Ministry. It has now openly joined the Jana Sangh-Syndicate combine in which the Swatantra would also most likely adhere on an all-India scale, and is fighting Parliament elections with a declaration that they would have a common list throughout the country, one candidate in one constituency and for a front in Parliament with the Jana Sangh, Syndicate, Swatantra etc. This is an entirely new political situation, and we cannot continue to wink at it and continue to have mutual adjustments at State and local levels with the SSP.

Whatever the SSP had been doing in West Bengal, Bihar and U.P. we had maintained good relations in Kerala with SSP unit. We are anxious to continue the same friendly and close relations with the local SSP unit and would like the SSP unit at least in Kerala to be with us. But this becomes an impossibility with their all-India leadership openly joining with the Jana Sangh-Syndicate gang-up. An understanding with the SSP unit of Kerala can be thought of if the unit declares publicly that it is opposed to both the combinations

and will fight them in the elections and would jointly work with the CPI(M) and other democratic forces in Kerala, to fight both of these reactionary combinations and defeat the candidates set up by these combinations and for the victory of the candidates of the CPI(M) and other democratic forces with whom the SSP unit of Kerala has a joint front in the elections. In such a case, there can be adjustment of seats with the SSP, conceding one either to them or to their independent.

In Rajasthan also, we can try to see that the SSP does not contest our seats and if possible, support us in Ganganagar and Kotah, provided we are free to attack their all-India policies of joining the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and Syndicate and provided we are under no obligation to extend our support to the SSP in those constituencies where they are in league with Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine.

These principles apply to all the States.

The DMK: What some comrades fail to see is the new situation that we are confronted with by the DMK joining hands with the Indira Congress for all-India parliamentary elections, and for Tamil Nadu State Assembly elections.

When a bourgeois democratic party or a "Socialist" party joins a party of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords either in the Indicate Congress or the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra grouping, when that issue is being fought as a concrete election battle for Parliament and for the State Assembly and there is a bid for power, it is our job to expose and fight this reactionary combination, alliance or adjustment.

Secondly, the DMK is a ruling party in Tamilnadu State for the last four years, has adopted many anti-people policies, and now seeks the verdict of the people for the continuation of their rule, for another period of five years, and that, too, in alliance with or in cooperation with the big bourgeois-landlord party, the Indira Congress. If in these elections, we do not fight against the DMK then against whom is our Party to fight? Is it only against the Syndicate-Swatantra in Tamilnadu? As such, there can be no adjustment with the

DMK combination nor with Syndicate-Swatantra combination of Kamaraj-Rajaji.

We have to go on our own independent strength, appealing to sections and ranks of the DMK and of other democratic parties, who have joined with these combinations, to break away with their leadership's policies, and join hands with us, both in the electoral battle now and in future mass movements.

In 1962, the then CEC rightly criticised the Tamilnadu unit, for making the DMK as one of its main opponents on par with the Congress, instead of concentrating on the fight against the Congress, the ruling party.

In 1967, we joined hands with the DMK to fight the Congress—the then united ruling Congress party, both at the state and Parliament level. The DMK conceded almost all the seats that we demanded, except in Kanyakumari where both of us came to an agreement that we could fight the Swatantra and they, the DMK could support in those constituencies the Swatantra, without affecting the agreement in the rest of Tamilnadu.

Now in 1971, the DMK has joined with the Indira Congress, one of the big bourgeois-landlord parties, for both state and Parliamentary elections. Of course, it says it is fighting the Syndicate and Swatantra. But it is not fighting the Indicate, the ruling party at Delhi and is actively backing it. As such, we have no other way except to fight the DMK both at the Parliament level as well as State Assembly level, unless the DMK reverses its policies and fights both the Indicate and Syndicate combinations in cooperation with us.

Any so-called adjustments in some constituencies, that we are free to oppose the Indicate combination while DMK is free to support them, while we are asked to support the DMK wherever we are not putting up our own candidates is no adjustment but surrendering to the DMK policies of supporting the Indira Congress.

Not fighting the DMK would only enable the Kamaraj-Syndicate group to channelise all the discontent of the

masses against the DMK's anti-people policies, to his party's benefit.

Even now, if any local unit of the DMK or a section of the DMK breaks with their leadership, and joins hands with us in fighting the Indicate and Syndicate combinations, certainly we can have adjustments with such break-away groups; but where are those possibilities? Try by all means for such break-up of the DMK.

If in Dindigul, the municipal electoral agreement arrived with the local unit of the DMK could not be maintained and the DMK leadership had seen to it that their local unit breaks that agreement and makes it fall in line, to work for the seven-party municipal front of DMK, Indira Congress and the Right Communists, we do not see how any break-away group is a possibility just now in Tamilnadu.

We have to fight that combination as well. We contest all the Parliamentary seats where we are strong, like Madurai, Coimbatore, Nagapattinam, Mayavaram and as many basic Assembly seats under these Parliamentary constituencies as possible and necessary plus all other Assembly constituencies, two or three in the respective districts according to our political strength, organisational capacity and financial resources. It is not our job to go on contesting every Parliament seat merely because we can poll 30 to 40,000 votes, or merely because we are contesting one or two Assembly seats in a particular Parliamentary constituency, just to say that in no place we allowed our voters to go to the Syndicate combination.

If the Syndicate does not contest in certain Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies for their own reasons, we cannot help if our Indicate enemies slander us. We must contest as many Parliament and Assembly seats as are politically, organisationally and financially feasible for us, without giving any scope for people gaining an impression that we are backing the Syndicate-Jana Sangh combine.

Election Manifesto of CPI(M) for 1971*

Brothers and Sisters,

The Prime Minister has plunged the country into a fresh parliamentary election. The people are called upon to give their verdict on the policies of the ruling party, and opine on the claims of various parties.

The Prime Minister claims to have ordered the election out of high motives :

“In the present situation, we feel that we cannot go ahead with our proclaimed programme and keep our pledges to the people... Power in a democracy resides with the people. That is why we have decided to go to our people and seek a fresh mandate from them.”

None will be gullible as to be deceived by this democratic pose, this stance of fighting the reactionary vested interests.

The real reason behind this manoeuvre is the realization that after another year, it might become impossible for the Congress(R) to secure a favourable verdict from the electorate.

For is it not a fact that the Gandhi government is ready with proposals to impose a fresh load of taxation to the tune of Rs 300 to Rs. 400 crores on the morrow of the elections? Is it not a fact that fresh repressive legislation is on the anvil, waiting to be passed after the elections?

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

The Congress(R) seeks to get into the saddle again before the people realize the character of the new offensive planned by its Government.

Fight the Two Combines

In this election, two combines are in the main facing each other, and people are being asked to vote for the one or the other. The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine represents a reactionary combination which openly announces its reactionary aims to defend the vested interests. It is a combine which has declared itself unashamedly to be an instrument of Big Business, big landlords, monopolists all of whom demand a growing attack on the standard of living of the people and a further shift to the Right in the domestic and foreign policies of the country.

This combine, the sworn enemy of the working class and the democratic movement, conceals its anti-democratic character by nationalist phrases, is deeply anti-working class and anti-Communist and demands that the country's foreign policy be taken towards more and more subservience to American imperialism.

Deeply hostile to the countries of Socialism, deeply hostile to the great anti-imperialist movement of our time, and inimical towards the great struggle of the people of Vietnam, the combine stands for more facilities for foreign capital which means more concessions to exploit the people of India. It is this combine that today presents itself as the main opponent of the Indira Gandhi Government in the elections, seeking to capitalize the discontent against the Congress(R) rule. This alternative is nothing but the unashamed rule of the capitalists and landlords of India, the rule against which the people of India have been fighting.

The other combine led by Indira Gandhi poses to fight against the reactionary alliance of the Syndicate and the Jana Sangh in the elections. However, it pursues the same class aims and stands for strengthening the rule of the monopolists and the landlords. Notwithstanding its refusal

to join hands with frankly communal organizations like the Jana Sangh and its opposition to the Swatantra party and its attacks against the Syndicate, its policies are governed by the interests of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords.

The split in the Congress which was presented as one over basic policies has now revealed itself to be two tactics of the same class – tactics of how to rule over the masses in the present period of economic crisis.

It is these two combinations equally hostile to the masses, equally determined to maintain the rule of the monopolists and the landlords that are claiming the votes in the present election.

The masses are being told either to vote for those who shamelessly declare themselves to be the representatives of the capitalists, landlords and princes or to vote for those who are discreet enough to conceal their affiliations but serve the same masters.

Disruption of Popular Unity

In this election, besides the main forces of the people that confronted the united Congress in 1967 and 1969, the forces of the democratic anti-Congress front stand disrupted, divided and paralysed.

The SSP leaders, disrupting the ranks of the democratic people, have openly thrown their lot with the Syndicate-Jana Sangh alliance. In the name of fighting the Indira Congress, of “Indira Hatao”, they are joining hands with those who serve the enemies of the people, the same class masters whom the Indira Congress serves.

The Right Communist Party, along with some other parties like the PSP, have joined the bandwagon of the Indira Congress in the name of strengthening the fight against the Syndicate alliance.

The Right Communist leaders have thus thrown in their lot with the party of the capitalists and landlords, the enemies of the people.

Calling themselves Communists, utilising the name of

Communism to cheat their followers, the Right C.P. leaders are shepherding their followers into the enemy camp, disrupting the unity of the democratic forces and betraying the masses.

Our Party's Stand

Our Party remaining true to the interests of the masses and the aims and objectives of the democratic and Socialist movement, denounces both the combinations as reactionary, as instruments of the rule of the capitalists and the landlords in this country.

Our Party calls upon the electors to cast their votes against both these combinations because both are the enemies of the people.

Our Party calls upon the people to cast their votes for all those who like our Party take their stand against both these combinations, and are determined to save the democratic movement against onslaughts from both these sides.

To vote for either of the combinations is to vote for a bureaucratic police State with the people shorn of all powers and all rights. That is why it is absolutely essential to rebuff both these combinations in the coming elections, to increase the strength of the democratic forces in Parliament.

The Record of Congress Achievements

In the last four years of Congress rule, India has seen one of the worst economic crises, throwing thousands of people out of employment.

That factories started closing down one after another offers a bizarre comment on Congress planning which was securing one success after another according to its advocates.

Four years of Indira Gandhi's Prime Ministerial rule has heaped misery on the people.

These years have seen one of the worst economic crises, bringing unemployment, misery and destitution to the urban and rural masses.

So wonderful has been industrial growth during these

years that employment in mines, factories and plantations has gone down. Even today scores of engineering factories remain closed; nearly fifty textile mills have been closed down for months, throwing thousands out of work. Avenues for middle class employment are rapidly shrinking.

The Government of India with its Socialist professions is sponsoring the introduction of automation which will work havoc with the jobs of middle class employees.

In the name of modernizing industry, the Government of India has placed huge funds at the disposal of big capitalists, like the jute magnates to reduce jobs and intensify the exploitation of the workers.

The grand achievements of Congress rule are seen in the rising figure of unemployment. Urban registered unemployment has risen to nearly four million in spite of the fact that only thirty or forty per cent of the unemployed are registered.

The number of educated unemployed is 15.26 lakhs at the end of December 1969. The number of unemployed engineers is 61,000.

The number of total unemployed, conservatively estimated, is 12 million.

Each year of Indira's rule since the last election has added more than a million to the ranks of the unemployed.

This is the real face of Indira's Socialism praised by the Right C.P. lackeys.

Indira Gandhi's promise of five lakhs of new jobs every year, with each job-holder earning not less than Rs.100 per month is just an election stunt, and callous mocking at the people.

Notwithstanding the expenditure of thousands of crores of rupees of Congress plans, the people of India are living on the border of starvation.

The Condition of the People

The policy of inflation deliberately pursued to rob the people of their earnings, the high prices accompanying this policy and the ever rising cost of living index have been

continuously lowering the real earnings of the Central and State Government employees, school teachers, professors and the working class. It has been one systematic assault on the standard of living of these classes, an assault without which the Government cannot keep its mixed economy running. While the masses of the people are being driven to destitution, the monopolists, big capitalists have not only been increasing their monstrous profits, but have been getting greater and greater control over the lives and the economic well-being of the people. The so-called anti-monopolists Act of the Indian Government is just a delaying measure to throw dust into the eyes of the people while in reality new licences are being granted to the monopolists and new excuses are being advanced to expand their operation. These monopolists aided by Government price regulations continue to loot the people, demand high prices for their goods and demand suppression of all resistance to their policies.

The vast masses of our people working in rural areas have been cheated, defrauded and robbed.

The Green Revolution which has been paraded with so much fanfare has benefitted only a small section of the rural elite.

For the people as a whole, food prices, continue to remain high forcing them to live on starvation diet. Official statistics show that per capita availability of cereals came down from 14.03 ounces to 13.80 ounces in 1969.

And in the rural areas who have been the real beneficiaries of this advertised munificence? Not the poor peasant, not the agricultural worker, not the tenant or the sharecropper.

Big farmers, landlords with large tracts of land have made the greatest absolute and relative gains, partly by mechanizing farm operations to take up double, multiple cropping etc.

The hold of the wealthy over the small farmers has increased.

Once again the exploiters have benefitted at the expense of the exploited.

So widespread has been the destitution during the last decade that compared to 52 per cent of the rural population

in 1960-61, 70 per cent of the population in 1967-68 was found to be at poverty level. Today 80 per cent of the rural population lives below minimum nutritional standards.

Land concentration continues as before with 76 per cent of the rural households owning only 19 per cent of the cropped area.

Rack-renting, usury, mass evictions, low wages, these are the gifts of Congress rule to the tenants, poor peasants and agricultural workers. The minimum wage legislation has remained a hoax under the Congress rule.

Foreign Debts

Worse still is the fact that the Indian people are rapidly losing their claim to consume what they produce and are forced to allot a greater and greater share of their wealth to satisfy the demands of their foreign creditors. India's foreign debt running into more than Rs.7,000 crores has become such a heavy burden that the Government was forced to demand re-schedule of the payments and now nearly 30 to 40 per cent of fresh loans have to be sequestered for paying old debts. The exports of India are virtually mortgaged to this payment of old debts and the paucity of foreign exchange, the cry for more and more exports is nothing but an expression of the growing dependence on the economy of foreign loans.

Thanks to this, India is forced to export her goods to U.S. satellites like South Vietnam, South Korea, etc. Thanks to this, she has growingly mortgaged her exports to meet her dollar needs which means the demands of dollar domination. Day by day, the Indian economy is being cornered by foreign creditors and India is getting deeper and deeper into the clutches of foreign shylocks.

Under Indira's rule, India's foreign creditors are demanding that India should further open her doors to private foreign capital. The Indira Gandhi Government has already made one concession after another to this demand. The resistance of the foreign oil companies to Government proposals in relation to prices of crude, their violation of the labour laws

in this country — all this points out that the Indira Government is failing to counter foreign pressure.

The performance of Indira Gandhi, after she parted company with the Syndicate leaders, has not improved. On the other hand, the same old policy of relying on the monopolists, of placating the foreign capitalists is being pursued.

By pushing through the measure for nationalization of big banks Indira Gandhi pretended to strike a new path. By raising the demands for the abolition of Privy Purses of the princes, she again tried to achieve the same thing.

The Right C.P. servitors joined the chorus of hangers-on and began to create illusions about Socialist advance.

But there was no change of outlook or policy in regard to basic issues.

Besides, the Indira Gandhi Government after the Supreme Court verdict meekly submitted to the order for full compensation to the bankers.

The nationalization of banks has not resulted in relaxing the stranglehold of the monopolists over our economy; nor have they stopped giving a major part of their credit to them.

The hopes of the small man raised sky-high by interested propagandists have been dashed to the ground.

After lot of hesitation, bargaining, the Indira Government found courage to tackle the Privy Purses issue. But all the while every effort was made to reach a compromise with the princes on the basis of compensation extending over years. Notwithstanding the derecognition of princes, efforts at compromise continued till the end.

On the morrow of the Bombay session of the Indira Congress, mouthing anti-monopolist phrases, Indira Gandhi's Government gave a new licence to the Birla monopolists and continues to favour them. The Tatas have also been permitted to extend their operation.

Under the guise of removing the red-tape, a new licensing procedure has been announced which also facilitates the advance of the monopolists.

The Indira Congress Government attempts to conceal its

concessions to the monopolists and foreign capitalists under the pretext of promotion of exports.

Under the same pretext foreign capital is being permitted in consumers' goods industries and other sections from which hitherto it has been banned.

And now the foreign oil companies are blackmailing it to raise the price of imported crude and the Government is succumbing to it.

Indira Gandhi's promises to the peasantry of speedy land reforms have ended in dust; the mass of peasants continue to be rackrented and evicted. The agricultural workers continue to be pauperised.

The Chief Ministers' Conference convened by her virtually repudiated all intentions to embark upon radical land measures and set their face against reduction in land ceilings.

The Patna session of her party also showed that the peasant would be treated with only verbal flourishes and nothing else. A radical redistribution of land cannot be achieved under the Indira regime. Most of the Chief Ministers belonging to her party are themselves big landlords, bitter enemies of the peasantry.

Taxation Robbery

The Indira Government has intensified the robbery of the people through taxation.

Between 1968-69 and 1970-71, the tax revenue collected by her Government rose from Rs.2,510 crores to Rs.3,137 crores — by 24 per cent.

During these three years alone, the Government added more than Rs.600 crores to the taxation burden.

Union excise duties rose from Rs.1,344 crores to Rs.1,689 crores. Excise duty on food and beverages rose from Rs.96 crores to Rs.125 crores; excise on tobacco rose from Rs.183 crores to Rs.214 crores; on vegetable oils from Rs.10 crores to Rs.13 crores.

The taxation forms more than 20 to 40 per cent of the prices of certain commodities. The peasant, the worker, the

middle classes — all are ground down by this monstrous load of taxation, and the Indira Congress plans a further increase of Rs.400 crores immediately after the elections.

While the taxation on the common man increases, the rich are allowed many concessions in recent years. Above all, they are allowed to evade taxes to the tune of hundreds of crores of rupees. The big capitalists not only evade income-tax; they evade sales and excise taxes; they do not pay electricity charges and defraud the State of hundreds of crores of rupees. But the State machinery does not move against them.

With people starving, with the Central Government employees denied adequate interim relief under the plea of lack of funds, the Government goes on spending Rs.1,000 crores on defence callously. This monstrous defence expenditure has no justification. The need for it arises only because of the wrong foreign policies pursued by the bourgeois-landlord Government.

Nothing can reveal better the bankruptcy of Indira Congress policies more than the fate of the Fourth Plan.

The plan was doomed before it was ushered into existence. Two years of the Plan have passed, and yet the Government dares not bring it up for discussion before Parliament.

All its assumptions regarding foreign aid, internal finance, export targets, and objectives have gone away and the Plan is in a complete mess. The growth rate under it is one of the lowest on record.

Twenty years of this bankrupt planning has not solved the problem of backward areas. Industry continues to be concentrated in certain areas, according to the dictates of profiteers and monopolists. The backward regions, the tribal areas remain rooted in the past, denied even the minimum progress in education, employment or industry.

Fleeing of the People

Among the monstrous devices the Congress Governments have invented to fleece the people, rising prices and inflation occupy a place of high importance.

Successive Congress Governments under various Finance Ministers have used the device with devastating effect.

Indira Gandhi and her Government threaten to surpass all previous Governments in this respect. This year itself the total deficit financing has reached the colossal proportion of Rs.600 crores, leading to a continuous spurt in prices.

Thanks to this, the index of prices has been rising. The cost of living index has reached a new high depreciating wages, defrauding the people and saving wealth for the capitalists and landlords and taxes for their Government.

This monstrous rise in prices which continues despite the much advertised rise in foodgrains production is an integral part of the Indira Government's policy to lower consumption and encourage "capital formation", i.e., transfer wealth to the upper classes.

All sections of the people, except the topmost, are victims of this policy. Everyone is defrauded to satisfy the demand of Indira's planning which helps the monopolists.

The misery, destitution and suffering caused by this monstrous device, this systematic and open robbery of the people, has evoked strong protests from all sections of the people.

No wonder then India has seen in the last few years great mass struggles of all sections of the people.

The fighting peasantry of our country has started its fight for land occupation and in Kerala, the agricultural workers showed exemplary heroism in meeting the police terror of the Achutha Menon Government.

The fighting peasantry of West Bengal, earlier helped by the U.F. Government led by our Party, succeeded in occupying land, and reaping crops on the basis of their organised strength.

In Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra, Punjab — the mass of peasants waged a heroic struggle for land and the Congress Governments tried to crush them in cold blood.

The heroic working class of our country, led by the fighting workers of West Bengal, waged prolonged battles in defence of their rights and demands and in the States ruled

by the Indira Congress they were often met with lathis, jails and bullets.

The bank employees, school teachers, Central and State Government employees, university professors all had to fight for days against the monstrous policies, go to jail and brave lathi-charges.

Whether it is the Achutha Menon Government, the Congress(R) or the Congress(O) Government, the B.K.D. coalition — all have tried to suppress these struggles and crush them.

Such has been the record of Indira Gandhi's policies, the policies of the capitalist-landlord path.

The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra alliance opposition to the Indira Congress is in the interest of further strengthening the defence of the capitalists and landlords. They oppose, tooth and nail every measure of restriction against the moneyed classes. They opposed the bank nationalization; they opposed the abolition of Privy Purses; they opposed all measures to restrict land monopoly; they demand full freedom for private enterprise and demand suppression of workers' struggles and workers' rights; they demand suppression of the CPI(M) and the trade union and kisan movement. Above all, they demand open alliance with American imperialism; some of them have demanded that Taiwan Government — that American stooge—should be recognized and diplomatic relations with People's China be broken. They sing the hymn of anti-Communist hatred; they sow hatred against all Socialist countries and demand a foreign policy of helping American imperialism in its aggressive adventures. They attack every demonstration of friendly feelings towards the people of Vietnam and fight against restoration of normal and friendly relations between India and People's China.

Besides, the Jana Sangh, included in the alliance, fans feelings of communal hatred between Hindus and Muslims, and some of their followers indulge in organizing communal riots. They declare that Muslims must be Indianized and thereby create suspicions and hatred between the two communities, disrupt

the unity of the democratic forces and all sense of national unity. By preaching old obscurantist ideas they support the caste system with its untouchability and show themselves as henchmen of the worst feudal elements.

The Constitution and the People

The economic misery of the toiling people increases every day. Along with this, the attacks on people's liberties continue as never before. Indira Gandhi and her allies like the treacherous Right C.P. group swear by the Constitution. They parade the Constitution as an instrument of people's advance to Socialism.

The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra crowd, supported by the opportunist leadership of the SSP, also swears by the Constitution. The Jana Sangh, at the same time, stands opposed to the limited powers of the States and demands a completely unitary Constitution.

All of them have been attacking our Party which declared that the present Constitution must go lock, stock and barrel and should be replaced by a new one enshrining the real sovereignty of the people in place of the sovereignty of the vested interests.

What has been revealed now after two decades of the Constitution? What has been revealed during the last few years of Indira Gandhi's rule?

The Fundamental Rights are now reduced to sanctity of private property, the right of big property holders to hold private property while small holders like the peasants are evicted by thousands. But for this, the right to hold property would not have led to greater concentration of land in the hands of a few holders; nor to the rise of seventy-five monopoly houses who control a substantial part of production and capital, exercise control over the Government and the Press and the economic life of the people.

The Constitution has placed in the hands of these people the right to play havoc with the jobs and lives of thousands of people.

Freedom of organization, etc., which directly affects the class struggle of the masses, is being virtually scuttled. Not only Preventive Detention Acts have been enacted; not only is there the handy use of Section 144 in every strike and arrests of workers; the worst type of legislation of the British days is being shamelessly enacted in West Bengal in the name of suppressing the Naxalites. In contrast every freedom is ensured to the capitalists—freedom of profit, freedom to hire and fire workers as they like, of running or closing the concerns.

The abolition of untouchability proclaimed in the Constitution is being accomplished with atrocities on Harijans in villages, including burning of their huts and sometimes burning alive of Harijans.

Freedom of the Press really has meant freedom of the Goenkas, Tatas and Birlas to propagate poisonous and lying propaganda against the masses and in support of the vested interests. The majority of the newspapers with huge circulations are owned by chains of these monopolists who fatten on Government advertisements.

A public bonfire is being made of all the Fundamental Rights. The CRP, the Central Industrial Security Force are the new instruments of enforcing Fundamental Rights. The agencies of the courts have been replaced by the new thug army, the CRP, organised by the Government. These new champions of the Fundamental Rights invade universities, beat down professors and students alike, and assert the supremacy of the lathi over the right to education.

Democracy in the States

The Constitution is federal only in name but unitary in content and practice.

The President has the final power of review over State legislations if the State Governor who is appointed by him withholds legislation for Presidential approval.

The President can take over the administration of any State, whose Governor reports that parliamentary Govern-

ment has broken down there. How this provision is being prostituted by the ruling party to thwart the will of the people in the States was seen in West Bengal in 1967.

Since then it has become an undeclared constitutional rule that when it suits the ruling party in its feud with other parties, it is the Governor, the appointee of the President, that has to decide whether a particular party commands majority.

The people of the States and their elected representatives have been virtually shorn of all power in critical times and made to look as intruders and interlopers.

The writ of the President or the Governor must decide whether a Ministry will be allowed to be formed or not. Recent developments in U.P. with the Governor playing a dirty conspiratorial role have served to highlight how powers of the State Legislature are at the mercy of the Centre.

Far more sinister is the significance of President's rule in West Bengal though the conspiracy against the States' powers is here screened by the treachery of the revisionists and other parties.

The role played by the State Governors shows that they invariably act as the instrument of the Centre against the people of the State. They act as the watch-dog of the Centre, the refuge of the anti-people bureaucracy. They conspire to bring down popular Ministries and install docile ones. The CPI(M) demands the abolition of the post of Governors so that one instrument of thwarting popular will is removed. The CPI(M) further demands that the President must be shorn of all powers which enable him to take over the administration of States for months and run it without the consent of the people.

Notwithstanding detailed lists dividing the State and the Union subjects, the real power is in the hands of the Centre. The States' power in relation to the Concurrent List is purely illusory and formal since all legislation on the Concurrent List is subject to the President's approval.

The concentration of all economic power in the hands of the Centre has made the State Governments a supplicant at

the door of the Union Government. Their economic programmes, their agricultural programmes, all are at the mercy of the Centre.

The food supplies they need to feed the population are controlled by the Centre. All the power is unscrupulously utilised to bring down or create difficulties in the way of democratic and progressive State Governments. It is known that the U.F. Government of Kerala led by our Party was denied the promised food supplies. Similar was the case with the first U.F. Ministry in West Bengal. At the same time, other Governments towards whom the Centre was well disposed have been bountifully helped by the Indira Government to bolster their rule because they are in alliance with the latter.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) warns that this monstrous concentration of power in the hands of the Centre is creating the danger of a bureaucratic police State, spelling abrogation of all democratic rights.

The Centre uses its hold over the all-India cadre of the bureaucracy to over-ride the elected Ministries. The concept of all-India police and administrative cadre—IAS, etc.— was originally advocated in the name of an Indian outlook and unity.

In reality, it has meant that the bureaucracy is responsible only to the Centre, acts as its spies against the elected Ministry, subverts the policies of the Legislature and conspires with the Centre to bring down an unwanted Ministry. The police “revolt” against the U.F. Ministry in West Bengal was not hatched without the knowledge of the superior police officers whose loyalty is only to the Centre.

So powerful is the bureaucracy when supported by the Centre that an unwanted head of a department could not be sent out of the State by the State Ministry. Any punishment, even transfer by way of punishment, for violating ministerial directives, cannot be easily done because of the services rules as well as because the Centre came against it.

And sometimes, directives for attacking the people, arresting the striking workers or employees are sent over the heads of the Chief Minister directly to the Chief Secretary. Chavan's directives to arrest the striking Central employees in Kerala in 1968 were sent to the Chief Secretary behind the back of the Chief Minister. The position of the Ministry which is persona-non-grata with the Central sultans is not very different from that of the Ministry under the Montford Reforms.

Further Assaults on States' Power

The latest in the series of assaults against the autonomy of the States and the democracy of the people is the arbitrary right claimed by the Centre to send its loyal force to the States under the excuse of defending the Central establishments. Under this excuse the Centre can cover its numerous establishments in the various States with hundreds of policemen.

The creation of the Industrial Security Force in Central establishments constitutes an open assault on the States' powers regarding maintenance of law and order.

The members of the force can arrest and detain any worker without a warrant, can take action against the workers in the name of protecting the plant without reference to the State authorities.

The arbitrary interference of the army in Karnataka and its moves without the knowledge of the State government show how the Centre is using all powers and unmasking the sham federalism of the Constitution.

Thus the powerful Centre makes and unmakes Ministries and Governments in the States irrespective of the wishes of the people of the State concerned. Ministries of progressive and democratic parties are discriminated against; a reactionary set-up is brought in as in Kerala. And during the Kerala elections, the Finance Minister, Chavan, openly promised liberal financial help to Kerala, if a stable Government, i.e., a Government of the Congress alliance was elected.

Bureaucracy Gains

The result has been a tremendous increase in the power of the Indian bureaucracy, notorious for its corruption, jobbery, anti-people outlook and its propensity to sell itself to the highest bidder.

The growing popular struggle and discontent against the Congress rule has already led to a greater and greater reliance on the policeman's baton, on the local bureaucracy to maintain law and order, now that Congress blandishments are not taken seriously by the people. The bourgeois-landlord rule maintaining its existence against the wishes of the people is perforce seeking new instruments of violence against the people.

All this has already enhanced the role of the bureaucracy. In recent months, there is evidence that the bureaucrats have conspired to demand a free hand in dealing with the people of West Bengal and an assurance that no police action will be followed by an enquiry.

Is there any wonder that the various agencies of the Constitution stand on guard against the advance of the people?

The Supreme Court, the holy of holies, declares that the right to property cannot be abridged by Parliament; it decrees that banks cannot be taken without full compensation and liberty of the banks to start banking business with the compensation money.

The Supreme Court further decrees that Privy Purses are property and for time eternal they cannot be abolished under the Constitution. At the same time, under the same Fundamental Rights, they declared ultra-vires agrarian legislation measures benefiting the peasantry.

The Supreme Court verdicts emphasise that basic changes in the conditions of the people cannot be ushered in under the present Constitution. They demand both a change in the Constitution and a complete overhauling of the machinery of the Supreme Court.

Legal quarters themselves have said that some of the

judgements of the court are political judgements. Bourgeois jurists are also saying that the Supreme Court is not only claiming the right to interpret laws but to make it.

It seems that according to the Supreme Court while Parliament has no right to amend the Constitution, six Supreme Court Judges can do it.

In the name of independence of the judiciary, the right to interpret the Constitution, unheard of powers are claimed by public officials paid from the common treasury.

Experience shows that even moderate legislation giving relief to the peasants can be rendered ineffective for years through judicial process. In West Bengal, nearly two lakhs acres of land were declared surplus under the present legislation. And yet the peasants could not get possession of the land as the landlords succeeded in getting injunctions from the High Court and drag the cases from four to seven years.

The entire concept about the Supreme Court must change. The judges are paid officials of the people who constitute the only sovereign authority. The officials or their judgements cannot be allowed to determine the basic policies of the people.

The CPI(M) demands that the concept of the role of the court and its organization must be completely changed. The courts must function as the instrument of people's will, not as an instrument opposing popular progress. The people must have complete freedom to dispense with the services of judges who hold up the march of progress. The courts must move with the times. Above all, the court must be deprived of all powers to set at nought legislations in regard to removal of social injustice, inequality and oppression.

The Indira Congress upholds this Constitution. The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra upholds the same lending support to all the verdicts of the Supreme Court.

The shameless opportunists of the Right C.P. swear by the same bourgeois-landlord Constitution and join the Indira Congress in defending it against the people. The opportunist leaders of the SSP defend it in the company of Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra allies.

Our Party calls upon the people to realize that unless the entire Constitution is overhauled by the mighty hands of the people, unless all the reactionary defenders of the Constitution are defeated and routed, the people cannot advance to their cherished goal.

The great goal of People's Democracy leading to Socialism cannot be achieved within the framework of the present bourgeois-landlord Constitution. Unless the democratic movement, basing itself on an alliance of the workers and peasants, develops mass sanctions to scrap the present Constitution and replace it by one enshrining the sovereignty of the people, Socialism and freedom for exploitation cannot be achieved. The CPI(M) calls upon the people to join hands to forge the requisite sanctions to end the bourgeois-landlord rule.

Attacks against Democracy

Indira Congress, with "fight the Syndicate" on its lips, started in right earnest a fight against the democratic force and anti-Congress democratic front they had formed to challenge the Congress rule.

The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra forces were repeatedly demanding a break-up of U.F. Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal. It was Indira Gandhi Congress that brought this about. Utilising the power of the Central Government, buying over treacherous elements like the Right C.P., the Bangla Congress, the RSP, and PSP in Kerala, Indira Gandhi, with Socialist phrases, brought about disruption of democratic unity of the U.F. Ministries that stood as the real alternative to Congress misrule.

The Indira Congress with the support of the big bourgeois Press helped the Right C.P. and others to spread slanders against the CPI(M), undermine the unity of the people and push back the Congress in power in Kerala. Her game in West Bengal to steal into power is being stoutly resisted by the people.

In Kerala, under the Mini-Front Ministry, a reign of repression has been launched. Earlier thousands were arrested;

several were tortured. The police terror against agricultural workers with its rapes and tortures are the Socialist gifts of the alliance of the Indira Congress and the Right C.P. in Kerala.

The Central Government with its profuse promises of Socialism, is forging new measures to attack the working class strikes and choke all independent trade union movements.

Its proposal for an Industrial Relations Commission, armed with full powers of arbitration, and accompanied by banning of workers' strikes, is one of the atrocious measures it is placing to fulfil its promises of Socialism.

The Terror in Bengal

Under President's rule in West Bengal, it despatched 25,000 armed police including the notorious CRP to crush the strike of 60,000 Durgapur workers, protesting against the arrest of their leaders. Laying seige to the town, the CRP stopped food and milk supplies, raided the workers' quarters, beat and tortured, assaulted their wives to break the strike.

The Durgapur attack constitutes one of the most shameful events in recent Indian history showing how the ruling classes are ready to smother all principles of democracy and the Constitution to put down the just struggles of the masses.

But then the vile misdeeds of the Indira Gandhi Government have converted the whole of West Bengal into a prison of democracy, a graveyard of all democratic liberties of the people.

Confronted by an organized movement of workers, peasants, employees, school teachers, the Indira Gandhi Government under President's rule has resorted to suppression of all protests. Sec.144 is proclaimed over large areas of West Bengal and the right to hold public meeting has been done away with.

Proclamation of curfew is becoming a routine affair. Warrants have been issued against more than 70,000 persons,

leaders and active workers of the CPI(M), trade unions, Kisan Sabha and student movements. More than 10,000 leaders and active workers of the mass movement are already under arrest. Prominent leaders and ex-MLAs are arrested on fabricated charges of murder and bail is refused to them. Their families are also put in jail.

No less has been the oppression directed against the peasant masses. The efforts under President's rule to evict peasants from occupied land have been defeated. But the peasants had to fight the landlords' goondas and brave police repression. Warrants have been issued against leaders of the peasants.

Goonda Attacks

In order to hunt down the democratic movement led by our Party, the only challenge to the Congress rule, the police, under the guidance of the Central Home Ministry, headed by Indira Gandhi, is conniving and encouraging murderous goonda attacks by Naxalites and by other anti-social gangs organised by sections of the Forward Bloc and SUC against the leaders of the trade unions and kisan movement and against the leading cadres of our Party and the democratic movement. More than a hundred and fifty of our best comrades have died either in police firing or killings by these gangsters who are actively helped by the local police.

The bourgeois Press is suppressing the story of murders and even encouraging the Naxalites by describing them as revolutionaries. These elements everyday seek to create new records in their cowardly attacks. Under the pretext of fighting these same elements, the police are killing young men after arrest, assured by the Indira Government that there will be no enquiry into their misdeeds.

The CPI(M) warns the country that what is being done by the Indira Gandhi Congress in West Bengal will have the gravest consequences on the future of our people and our country. Here is an open and frontal attack against democracy in the most shameless and naked manner. It is screened

from the public eye because of the approval it gets from the treacherous Right C.P. leaders and some sections of the leaders of the Forward Bloc, SUC and others. They conceal the Indira Gandhi Government's brutal attack on the people, often join with the police, as in Durgapur, and prevent the people from learning the truth. They are aiding and abetting the Indira Gandhi Government to attack the CPI(M) and destroy the democratic liberties and lay the foundation of a police State.

This is the recent record of Indira Congress, its achievements since it parted company with the Syndicate. This is the achievement which Indira Congress wants to achieve all over India in alliance with the shameless Right Communist leaders. This is the real electoral platform of the Indira Congress.

State Governments Attack People

State Governments loyal to Indira Gandhi are adopting the same policy of repression towards popular movements.

The Achutha Menon government in Kerala, living on the charity of the Indira Congress, uses increased violence against the agricultural workers, industrial workers, peasants and students, teachers and others. In the most shameless manner, Achutha Menon demands a wage-freeze and threatens dire action against state employees fighting for their rights.

The Bihar and Rajasthan Governments use police violence to suppress the workers' and peasants' struggles and defend the landlords and capitalists. The Naik Government in Maharashtra opens fire on workers and lathi-charges textile workers fighting for their rights and against the treachery of INTUC and AITUC leaders.

Gruesome happenings reminding one of fascist terror take place in Andhra Pradesh. Under the Indira Congress Ministry there, scores of young men caught by the police in connection with the Srikakulam conflict are murdered by the police in cold blood and there is no redress.

Security proceedings are systematically used to stifle all democratic movements. Thousands of security cases have

been started against the active workers of the Party, of the Kisan Sabha and trade unions.

The DMK Government of Tamil Nadu, now in alliance with the Indira Gandhi Government, has distinguished itself by its atrocities, against the workers of Neyveli, its repression of other workers, of students and the peasant masses. It was under this DMK government that the goondas of landlords, feeling secure, organised the mass burnings of Harijan women and their children—wives and children of agricultural workers at Kilvenmani.

In the matter of repression against the common man, there is no distinction between the Syndicate and the Indicate.

It was under the Syndicate Government of Gujarat that nearly 3,000 Muslim workers were murdered in Hindu-Muslim riots in Ahmedabad.

Have the Jana Sangh, Syndicate, Swatantra, said a word against these monstrous attacks on the people? Have they raised a word of protest against the unending murder of trade union, kisan and CPI(M) leaders, against the suppression of the people on the anti-working class legislation?

On the contrary they have been criticising the Government for not launching still more repression. Their essential identity of views with the Government, the identity of their class aims was fully seen when they supported all the repressive legislations—Preventive Detention Acts—in Parliament.

In U.P. where they now control the Ministry, they, in the company of the leaders of the SSP fully endorsed the P.D. Act, the anti-students legislation — all of which make it clear that in the matter of suppression of the common man they are one with the Indira Congress.

They oppose ceilings on land, land reform, trade union rights, with greater determination.

The U.F. Ministries

Against this bleak record of the State Congress Ministries, of the Central Government, and the Syndicate Ministries,

stands the proud record of the two United Front Ministries led by our Party — the Kerala and West Bengal U.F. Ministries.

Remaining loyal to the people, standing firm against the exploiting classes, our Ministries boldly declared that the police would not be used to suppress the toilers; they implemented this promise and gave every protection to the toilers' struggles.

They succeeded in raising the wages of agricultural workers, in giving them homestead land, land for cultivation, in raising the wages of lakhs of workers, in satisfying the demands of the employees, in expanding the liberties and freedom of the people.

That is why they were toppled down by the traitors.

Foreign Policy

Having pitted itself against the people, committed to suppress them in the interest of the exploiting strata, the Indira Congress repeatedly compromises with the reactionaries in her foreign policy.

Under the weight of American debts, the Indira Government dares not openly support the Vietnam struggle and demand a complete withdrawal of Amercian forces without conditions and declare U.S. imperialism to be the aggressor in Vietnam. Frightened by the Jana Sangh and Swatantra pressure the Government took an apologetic attitude in connection with the visit of Madam Binh.

The Government dares not recognize the Sihanouk Government; it dares not raise the status of its relationship with the Korean and North Vietnamese governments for fear of offending the Americans, for fear of reaction at home. When almost every country in the world is developing friendly ties with People's China, which bring mutual economic benefits, the Indira Government, frightened by the reactionaries, is unable to take initial steps for bettering relations. The same fear directs it to freeze its relationship with the people of Pakistan.

The Indira Government has not yet granted full diplomatic

recognition to the Democratic Republic of East Germany. Its relations with Cuba are formal. Notwithstanding the fact that the Socialist countries have rendered immense help to India, the Government pursues this discriminating policy.

It is a matter of shame for the people that the Government of this newly liberated country does not throw its weight on the side of people fighting for their freedom; that under American pressure, it supplies vital goods to the stooge Governments of South Korea and South Vietnam and refrains from developing friendly relations with the revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. With all its talk of defending national sovereignty, the Indira Government often succumbs to U.S. pressure.

Once more the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra alliance stands for an open shift in a reactionary direction in the foreign policy.

This is the reality that faces the people in the present election.

Attack on National Unity

The policies of the Congress(R) are leading to a rapid disintegration of all sense of national unity.

The State Congress units carry on an incessant struggle against each other over border disputes, water disputes, rouse chauvinistic feelings and pit one region against another.

Indira Gandhi's Congress is unable to maintain the unity of India, because it can be maintained only on the basis of equality of its constituent units. Under its rule the initiative in the States is passing to the landed gentry, to the separatists and chauvinists who avoid democratic issues and rouse chauvinism to blackmail the Centre for additional funds, or a steel plant or a refinery. For its own selfish ends, the Indira Government compromises with such elements to crush the democratic movement in the State.

The Union Government led by Indira Gandhi parleys and encourages such elements like the Telangana Praja Samiti who demand a splitting of the linguistic States.

Indira Gandhi's Naik Ministry in Maharashtra has been encouraging the Shiva Sena with its rabid Marathi chauvinism, as a weapon against the working class.

Notwithstanding tall talk about national intergration, the country is witnessing a rabid outburst of provincialism, communalism and regionalism.

The years since the last elections have witnessed unprecedented Hindu-Muslim riots. In Ahmedabad, Ranchi, Bhiwnadi, Jalgaon, hundreds of Muslims were killed.

The Indira Congress has been unable to curb the activities of Hindu chauvinistic Jana Sangh or the RSS. While verbally denouncing them, the Government has failed to bring them under control and save the minority.

The same policies of suppressing the democratic movement, of compromising with the reactionaries, have led to frequent appeals to casteism. The sense of national unity is being steadily undermined by all these.

The communalists who organise Hindu-Muslim riots, the casteists who attack Harijans, the chauvinists, who attack workers from other States, all play the game of the capitalists and landlords and often act as the agents of the American Central Intelligence Agency. The CPI(M) calls upon the electors to reject all such parties that directly or indirectly support communalism.

The CPI(M) expresses its sympathy and solidarity with the masses of the minority communities who are being oppressed under the Congress regime. Standing firmly for the defence of minority rights, for full protection to their life and property, for full freedom to Urdu, the CPI(M) calls upon the Muslim masses not to walk into the trap of Muslim communalists who seek to exploit their plight to keep them away from the common struggle against the Congress regime.

It is only the united struggle of the workers, peasants and others—the united struggle of the Hindu and Muslim masses that will defeat the Jana Sangh, and the Congress regime and ensure safety for the minorities.

The CPI(M) expresses its solidarity with the oppressed

Harijans, for whom the Congress leaders shed only tears. Once again, untouchability will end only in the flames of an agrarian revolution lit jointly by the Harijan and non-Harijan rural masses.

What role is the Right C.P. playing? What role is the SSP playing?

Instead of rousing the masses to the danger posed by both the combinations, instead of unmasking their Socialist and nationalist pretensions, the leaders of the two parties have joined one or the other groups to screen its anti-mass designs.

The Right C.P. leaders, faithful servitors of the Indian capitalist class, capitalist agents in the ranks of the labour movement, took the lead in undermining the unity of the U.F. and U.F. Ministries in Kerala and West Bengal.

Taking its instructions from the Central Government and Indira Gandhi, the Right C.P. leadership undermined the U.F. with the help of Ajoy Mukherjee in West Bengal and Muslim League in Kerala. They screened their treacherous acts, they supported them, they carried on a slanderous campaign and in the end ended in open alliance and servitude to the Indira Congress in Kerala.

They are pushing the same path in West Bengal.

Their electoral programme is one of supporting the Congress or sham opposition to the Congress, a programme of directing fire against the CPI(M) and the democratic movement and disrupting the unity of the masses against the Congress. If elected they will continue to be lackeys of the Indira Congress in the name of fighting the Syndicate.

In Kerala, the Right Communist Party, living on Congress charity, is directing a merciless repression against the people; Achutha Menon is following in the footsteps of Morarji Desai and is advocating a wage-freeze and threatening the State employees with dire consequences if they fought for their wages.

In West Bengal, this shameless crowd in effect supports the murderous attacks on our comrades, and demands police repression against us. The National Council of that party

concentrated its fire on our Party while, pleading with the Congress that it be admitted into the inner-sanctuary of the bourgeois-landlord party.

Boundless opportunism is the hallmark of the Right C.P. leaders.

They swear by the USSR. They demand a foreign policy based on friendship with the Socialist countries. And yet in the elections to Parliament where issues of foreign policy are important, they are not ashamed to join hands with the PSP which has a pathological hatred towards the Soviet Union, towards Communism.

The collapse of the SSP is similar, only it has joined hands with the notorious Jana Sangh-Syndicate-Swatantra alliance

The people have to make a herculean effort to rebuff these two combinations and ward off the impending danger of a police State.

The CPI(M) warns the people that unless the economic and political power of the capitalist and landlord classes is attacked, unless the masses are able to secure their demands, the way to real freedom and democracy will not be open. Against the sham Socialist phrases of Indira Gandhi, against the reactionary programme of the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra, against the deceptive promises of the Right C.P. and SSP, the CPI(M) puts forward the following programme for immediate implementation :

The CPI(M) fights and expects all the genuinely democratic parties, organizations, groups and individuals to fight the bankrupt policy of the capitalist path which has been consistently followed by the Congress and its Central Government for twenty years of planning. This is the path which has reduced the country to the position of a beggar going all over the world for "aid" on such terms as no self-respecting nation can accept :

(a) Nationalization of industries, banks, plantations, mines, and other property owned by private foreign monopolists, which will prevent the flow abroad of the interest on and the principal of the capital invested by these private foreign monopolists;

(b) Review of all agreements at Governmental level, or at the level of international agencies, with a view to removing all those provisions which are detrimental to the national interests ;

(c) Nationalization of all the heavy industries and other key sectors of the economy, whether they are owned by foreign or Indian capitalists;

(d) Effective democratic control over, and employee participation in the management of, nationalized sector of the economy with a view to unleashing the production enthusiasm of workers and employees, eliminating wastages, maximizing production, enhancing the quantum of savings out of the nationalized sector even while improving the living standards of workers and employees, etc.;

(e) Complete elimination of all feudal and big landlord interests in the countryside including the abolition of all the privileges and Privy Purses of the princes without compensation, annulment of compensation amounts which are still due to the zamindars and other feudal landlords, take-over of large estates held by big landlords;

(f) Vigorous measures to raise the wages and improve the living and working conditions of agricultural labourers, artisans and other sections of the rural poor; distribute the surplus lands of big landlords among those sections of the rural poor as well as among such poor peasants as have only small patches of lands; large-scale and generous aid by way of seeds, fertilizers, water and other agricultural inputs to poor and middle peasants; a thorough overhaul of the working of the credit and other co-operatives in such a way as to be of benefit to the poor and middle peasants;

(g) A total reversal of the procurement and price policies in such a way as to be of benefit to the poor and middle peasants on the one hand, and to the mass of consumers on the other;

(h) Overhaul of the policies of taxation with a view to making the burden on the rich heavier while giving substantial relief to the poor.

A break with the present policies involving the above measures would alone help the country out of the very serious crisis into which planning has fallen. This alone will help any Government to take even the initial steps for the solution of the two major problems which are affecting every single family and individual in the country — the problems of ever-increasing prices and of ever-deepening unemployment.

The Party would therefore fight, and invites other genuinely democratic parties, organizations, groups and individuals to fight, the two Congresses and other parties of the ruling classes in the fields of the political and constitutional rights of the people by demanding :

(a) Repeal of all repressive laws including the Preventive Detention Act, the Industrial Security Act, and so on;

(b) An end to the practice of resorting to prohibitory orders, security proceedings and so on to prevent workers' strikes and other popular struggles;

(c) Release of prisoners and withdrawal of cases in connection with workers' and other toiling people's struggles;

(d) Necessary amendments to the Fundamental Rights laid down in the Constitution so as to make it possible for Parliament and the State Legislatures to legislate against the private property of foreign and Indian monopolists, former princes and big landlords and other top strata of society, together with measures which will further strengthen the democratic rights of the common people, including their right to the land, instruments of production, and other small property they own;

(e) The resolution of the conflict which has arisen between the requirements of a rapidly changing democratic public opinion in the country and the reactionary viewpoint held by the Supreme Court and High Courts many of whose judgements have been admitted to be "political" rather than judicial. A thorough reorganisation of the judiciary by replacing those who are demonstrably prejudiced in favour of the vested interests by those who are committed to a rapid change in the socio-economic set-up in the country. Courts

must be deprived of all powers to set at nought legislations in regard to removal of social injustice, inequality and oppression.

The two decades of the working of the present Constitution has shown that its federal character is being rapidly undermined. All the powers that had been envisaged for the States to exercise are being increasingly encroached upon. This naturally has intensified the conflict between the States and the Centre in a situation in which the natural tendency of a multi-lingual country like ours is for the States to assert themselves as against the Centre.

Our Party will therefore fight, and invites all other genuinely democratic parties, organizations, groups and individuals to fight, against the policy of this increasing centralization of power and for greater powers to the States. It would demand :

(a) Abolition of the post of Governors and of President's rule in the States;

(b) Revision of the allocation of powers and functions between the States and Centre with a view to making the States' powers real;

(c) Most of the subjects in the Concurrent List of the 7th Schedule to the Constitution to be transferred to the States;

(d) Greater resources to the States; 75 per cent share of all the taxes Centrally collected to go to the States, to begin with;

(e) Complete control by the State Governments over all its officials, including those who belong to all-India services.

Together with these proposals in the field of economic development, political and constitutional reforms, etc., the Party would also fight for, and invites all other genuinely democratic parties, organizations, groups and individuals to fight for, a genuinely anti-imperialist foreign policy. It would demand:

(a) A firm line of struggle against imperialist (particularly American) policy in relation to the three Indo-China States, to Korea, to West Asia, to Germany, and to Cuba;

full recognition by the Government of the Vietnamese Korean, the GDR and Cuban Governments with exchanges of Ambassadors between each of these countries and India and recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. Full support to the African people struggling against White racist regimes in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and to the liberation fighters against Portuguese imperialism in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Full solidarity with the Arab people fighting against Israeli Government aggression, backed by U.S. imperialism;

(b) New initiatives to be taken by the Government of India to organise common struggles of all the anti-imperialist countries, particularly those of Asia and Africa against the increasing penetration of the American, West German, Japanese and other imperialist Powers in the economy, political life, cultural activities and in the military affairs of the newly independent countries;

(c) Bold initiatives to bring India's relations with People's China and Pakistan back to normalcy;

(d) Revision of all the cultural agreements with foreign countries with a view to eliminating all those provisions that enable foreign Powers to penetrate into the social and cultural life of the nation.

The CPI(M) hopes that every genuine democrat in the country, including those who belong to the parties that have allied themselves with and even those who belong to the two Congresses, would see that unless a complete break from the present policies is made, the nation's economy, political and cultural life and all those values which we treasure are in danger of being submerged in the barrage launched against it by the imperialist powers and their faithful followers in the country.

The Party therefore is confident that larger and larger sections of the people will see the necessity of a consistent struggle inside Parliament, inside the State Legislatures and everywhere in the country to carry on a fight for the policies outlined here. The Party wants to assure the people that

every one of its candidates, if elected, either to the Lok Sabha or to the State Legislatures will fight for these policies and that the Party organization outside will supplement this fight inside Parliament and the State Legislatures by powerful mass movements outside.

The CPI(M) calls upon the electors to rally round this programme and rebuff both the combinations who stand for the rule of the capitalists and landlords.

Their programme is one of unending misery, unending slavery and repression of the people — a programme of establishing a police State.

The CPI(M) appeals to the people, to the rank and file of parties like the SSP, Right C.P., to realise that joining hands with either combination is joining hands with the enemy class and betraying the people.

Only the united strength of the democratic people will defeat the policies of the Indira Congress; and defeat the conspiracy of the Syndicate combine to steal into power. The CPI(M) calls upon all sections to support its efforts to forge such unity to rebuff the combinations.

The CPI(M) further calls upon the people of West Bengal to rout the Congress in the Assembly elections, to rout the Bangla Congress and other Congress allies — the Eight-Party Combination — and entrust their mandate to the United Left Front of six parties. Let the people of West Bengal speak with one voice against the terror regime of President's rule, against the traitors who brought so much suffering and misery to the people of West Bengal.

Jyoti Basu's Letters to Ajoy Mukherjee*

**(i) Comrade Jyoti Basu's letter dated January 2, 1970 to
Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee**

My dear Ajoy Babu,

I have just received your letter No. 184-CM dated the 29th December, 1969, regarding the transfer of Shri Mihiresh Barman, officer-in-charge, Gazole P.S. Your order that his transfer should be kept in abeyance for six months because of certain personal difficulties faced by him is being allowed to stand for I do not wish to create an embarrassing position either for you or for the State Government in public by issuing a contrary order. I do, however, wish to acquaint you with certain vital facts which may have escaped your notice. The transfer of subordinate police officers does not require the approval of the Chief Minister under the Rules of Business. The position in this regard is different from that obtaining with regard to IPS officers. Subordinate police officers are transferred either by the Superintendent of Police, or by the DIG of Police or by the IG of Police. Should the transfer of any particular officer place him under difficulties which were not foreseen by the officer transferring him then there are recognized processes for his bringing these difficulties to

*Jyoti Basu was Deputy Chief Minister and Minister-in-charge for Home (Police) Department in the United Front Government of West Bengal in 1969-70. And CPI(M) was the biggest Party in the United Front Government of West Bengal. Ajoy Mukherjee, representing a minority party, was the Chief Minister of United Front Government of West Bengal.

the notice of the latter officer or to a superior officer. Shri Mihresh Barman did not proceed in the proper way but instead approached you. I should have thought that the correct thing for you would have been to first send Shri Barman's representation to me instead of passing an order, which I may very respectfully point out was slightly beyond your jurisdiction. Had the representation been forwarded to me I would have known what his difficulties were and how they could be resolved. As matters now stand, I have no knowledge whatever of his difficulties. The Inspector-General of Police and the Home (Police) Department are equally in the dark about them. The IG of Police has of course received from the S.P. Malda, a copy of a petition submitted to the S.P. by Shri Barman. This petition does not mention any difficulty whatever in Shri Barman's complying with the order of his transfer. It does, however, contain a threat to the effect that if the order is not rescinded he will appeal to the High Court. You can therefore very well judge what is the true nature and character of the officer who has sought your protection.

For important administrative reasons it is necessary that Shri Barman should be relieved of the charge of Gazole Police Station. The end of the calendar year is the best time for transferring officers, for then it is ensured that the education of their children does not suffer. It is for this reason that the order of transfer of Shri Barman was issued in the middle of December 1969.

Since I do not know what are the difficulties standing in Shri Barman's way, I have decided to call for a report regarding them. If I find that these difficulties are either imaginary or flimsy, he will have to move from Gazole Police Station.

If subordinate officers of Government can circumvent the orders of their superior officers in the way shown by Shri Barman, the maintenance of discipline in the rank of subordinate officers will, I am sure you will agree with me, become extremely difficult. Each one of us should be allowed

to do our work in our own allotted sphere and no intrusion by others into this sphere should be encouraged. If this principle is recognized by all our Cabinet colleagues, things will work much better in future.

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

**(ii) Comrade Jyoti Basu's letter dated January 12, 1970,
to Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee**

My dear Ajoy Babu,

I have seen your extraordinary message addressed to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, purporting to cancel, in exercise of some power thought by you—erroneously I say—to be conferred upon you by Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business, the order issued by the Superintendent of Police for the transfer of Shri Mihiresh Barman, O.C., Gazole P.S. I fail to see how you could have sent such a message to the Superintendent of Police. I do not know what value it possesses. On the face of it, the message does not even purport to be an order of Government. Apart from this, the improper decision taken by you with regard to the O.C., Gazole P.S. is beyond your legal competence as pointed out by me in my last letter to you on this subject. You seem to think that sub-rule(3) of Rule 29 of the Rules of Business confers upon you the power to take such a decision. Here you are entirely wrong. Those rules belong to the category of adjunctive and not substantive law. They govern only the procedure for arriving at any decision for taking executive action but they do not authorize executive action in any field. Executive action in any field can be taken only by the entity known as "Government" and by officials of Government in accordance with a separate body of substantive rules. A Minister is not an executive officer of Government, nor does he constitute "Government". A Minister cannot, therefore, issue a valid executive order on his own. His orders must first be converted into orders of Government in accordance with the prescribed procedure and then—and only then—they become

effective and operable. The Rules of Business specifically mention the postings of certain officials, but can you issue any order over your signature transferring any official from one place to another? You cannot. If you issue any such order and say that it is authorized by the Rules, that will be a meaningless statement. You can now see why your message to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, is meaningless. As regards specified officials, the Rules say in what manner the decision of the appointment and transfer should be taken but they do not empower any Minister to issue any order of appointment or transfer.

2. I now turn to another important question. It is true that any decision that you take must first be converted to an order of Government before it becomes effective and operable. But can you take any decision with regard to the O.C., Gazole P.S. who comes under the control of the Home(Police) Department which is not in your charge? In your message to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, you have quoted sub-rule(3) of Rule 29 of the Rules of Business. If you examine this sub-rule you will find that it enables you to pass order with regard to matters of public policy and urgent public importance of any department. The transfer of a Sub-Inspector of Police is neither a matter of policy nor a matter of urgent public importance. In your letter to me regarding this matter, you yourself stated that on account of certain personal difficulties faced by Shri Mihiresh Barman, you had directed that the order of his transfer should be kept in abeyance for six months. This direction, admittedly, is designed to suit the personal convenience of the officer. There was, therefore, no question of any public importance. Apart from this where was the urgency of the matter? The matter could easily have been reserved for my consideration. Ex-hypothesis there can be no urgency for the cancellation of Shri Barman's transfer for the very simple reason that first, in your own assessment of the matter, the keeping in abeyance of the transfer was all that was necessary and, secondly, the transfer having been kept in abeyance for six months, the decision for its

cancellation, if at all necessary, could have been taken after more deliberation. You will thus perceive that you have wrongly involved the provision of sub-rule(3) of Rule 29 of the Rules of Business.

3. Perhaps you will be tempted to argue that in the absence of a definition of the expression "urgent matter of public importance" and of an express provision saying who should decide whether any particular matter comes within the purview of that expression or not, the prerogative of making this decision is entirely yours. A moment's reflection will indicate how bad such an argument is. If a correct construction of the rules leads to the conclusion that a matter of urgent public importance or a matter of public policy is any matter deemed to be so by the Chief Minister, then the entire body of rules become meaningless, for by virtue of such a construction the Chief Minister will be able to conduct the business of all Departments of Government. I refuse to accept such a position. No one will argue—perhaps not even you—that this was the position contemplated by the Governor when the Rules of Business were framed. It is obvious that the Chief Minister cannot arbitrarily determine what is a matter of policy and what is a matter of urgent public importance. There are numerous pronouncements of Courts of Law on this matter. There can, therefore, be no arbitrariness in this. The Chief Minister cannot whimsically describe a matter as one of public importance and in this process arrogate to himself absolute powers of Government. This is not a matter that can be left to the discretion of the Chief Minister and certainly not to a Chief Minister functioning in today's context.

4. If you do not agree with what I have stated in the last preceding paragraph and if you maintain the stand that a matter of policy or a matter of urgent public importance is any matter deemed to be so by you, then I call upon you to obtain the advice of the Cabinet regarding the meaning of the Rules, for I refuse to accept such a stand on account of the grave dangers inherent in it. A vital constitutional issue

is at stake viz., the position of the Chief Minister vis-a-vis Departments not in his charge. Obviously, the Chief Minister cannot be empowered to determine this position unilaterally on his own. You must remember that the stewardship of Government is no longer entrusted to a single political party. Now there is a coalition of parties and the functional jurisdiction of each party is clearly and rigidly demarcated. No individual Minister can, therefore, claim predominance in the affairs of Government which do not concern him. The Chief Minister will be committing a grave mistake if he pays heed to the unwise counsel of others and persuades himself that by interpreting Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business in any manner he thinks fits he can claim an ascendancy in the affairs of Government. Regardless of the position that might have obtained in days gone by, the position today is entirely different. The Chief Minister of the United Front has not been appointed by the Governor in the traditional manner. You are fully aware of the circumstances in which you were appointed Chief Minister. No Minister of the present Government holds his office on the sufferance of any other Minister or of the Chief Minister. The notion that the Chief Minister is "*Primus inter pares*" is no longer valid and should be abandoned. No one is today "more equal" than others. The stand that you have adopted is, therefore, not one that you can afford to adopt. Government must be conducted by the consensus of all partners. I would like to remind you here about the fate that overtook our erstwhile Governor, Shri Dharma Vira. He had persuaded himself that he was possessed of discretionary powers which he could arbitrarily exercise without consulting his Council of Ministers. The subsequent course of history revealed the enormity of the delusion by which he had been swayed. Other Governors and also the Government of India learned the correct lesson from this episode. There is no further talk now of the Governor acting in his discretion.

5. Legalities apart, I shall request you to consider whether the manner in which you have conducted yourself in this

affair has been proper. In my last letter to you regarding it I said that your desire that the transfer of the O.C., Gazole P.S. should be kept in abeyance was being honoured, for I did not wish to create an embarrassing position for you in public. I also stated that since I did not know what were the personal difficulties which stood against the officer's moving out of Gazole P.S. I had decided to call for a report regarding them. After receiving this letter you could have easily discussed the matter with me. There was ample opportunity for such a discussion. If such a discussion had taken place we could have exchanged our views regarding this matter and it is probable that as a result the matter could have been resolved to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. But you did not discuss the matter with me. You did not even reply to my letter. You proceeded straight to the assumption (which does not have any basis at all) that my attitude would be unreasonable and you peremptorily sent a message to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, saying that the transfer of the O.C., Gazole P.S. should be cancelled. In this message you invoked Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business. Had you discussed the matter with me before sending this message the full implications of your action and the true meaning of the Rule in question could have been discussed and clarified. If you had thought that the matter was of sufficient importance you could have raised it at the two meetings of the Cabinet which preceded your precipitate action. One meeting was held on the 5th and the other on the 8th. In the Cabinet also you remained silent. I am really perplexed by your conduct. I do not know what meaning should be derived from it.

6. I hope you have realized the full consequences of your action. If we countenance the kind of thing that you have done, the maintenance of discipline among the ranks of Government servants will become impossible. There will be open dissension between one Government servant and another. All of them will be encouraged to exploit the unhappy situation created by you. There will be a tendency on the

part of subordinate officers to flout the orders of their superior officers because of the feeling that any action taken against them will perhaps be set at naught by your invocation of Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business. In fact, I have today received a foretaste of what may be in store for us in future. You have sent to me a telegram protesting against the transfer of O.C., Contai P.S. and the Circle Inspector, Contai Circle. You want to know the circumstances in which these transfers have been ordered. I myself do not even know whether these transfers have been ordered. There is no information on this point either in the Home (Police) Department or in the office of the Inspector General of Police. The information that you want is being collected and will be sent to you. My intention in mentioning this to you is only to show the kind of thing that we should expect in future if we countenance your action with regard to the O.C., Gazole P.S. Officers are transferred periodically. Government will come to a standstill if their transfer is periodically stalled by the invocation of Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business.

7. A word is now necessary about Shri Mihiresb Barman. As indicated by me in my last letter to you, I called for a report from him regarding his personal difficulties in moving out of Gazole. He has flatly declined to state these difficulties upon the plea that he wishes to approach the High Court and his case there will be prejudiced if he discloses them. This is the man to whom you have given refuge. He will tell his personal difficulties to you but he will not tell them to his own superior officers or to the Minister-in-charge of the Home (Police) Department.

8. It is obvious that your message to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, irrelevant and valueless though it is, cannot stand unchallenged.

9. I wish to mention here, incidentally, another matter which has acutely embarrassed the position of Government. While I was away from Calcutta on tour, you issued instructions for the Special Branch of the Calcutta Police to maintain a secret vigilance over the activities of Shri Sukumar Roy, a

member of your Bangla Congress. Political differences between him and others led to his suspension from your party. Not content with his suspension, you thought it necessary to have him placed under surveillance. This decision should not have been taken without consulting me, for as you may be aware, we have decided not to use the Special Branch of the Calcutta Police or the Intelligence Branch of the West Bengal Police against our political colleagues. Thanks to you, the Sukumar Roy affair has placed our Government in a very embarrassing position.

10. I am now compelled to observe, painful though I find it, that your Gazole venture shows that you have merely shifted the scene of your endeavours from Curzon Park to Writers' Buildings. These endeavours aimed at belittling the Home Department with the ulterior purpose of achieving a political gain, began with your public satyagraha performance at Curzon Park. Perhaps frustration in your public performance has led you to act quietly from Writers' Buildings. You are misusing the seat of Government for the improper purpose of securing a political gain by attempting to undermine the position of the Home Department. You ought really to consider whether you should pursue your present course or whether you should allow reason and good sense to prevail. There is still time left for reversion to the path of reason. We can still discuss the Constitutional issues mentioned by me and from such discussion evolve a *modus vivendi*.

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

(iii) Comrade Jyoti Basu's letter dated January 15, 1970 to Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee

My dear Ajoy Babu, .

I am writing this with reference to your message to the Superintendent of Police, Malda, in which you have purported to cancel, by invoking Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business, the order issued by the State Government for withdrawing

eight criminal cases instituted by the police in the district of Malda. If you had first discussed this matter with me you would have seen that there was no necessity for your sending any message to the SP, Malda, regarding it. Through a regrettable error instructions were sent by Government for withdrawing eight cases of the Malda district when my positive desire and determination with regard to these eight cases was and still remains that they should be pursued by the Police to the very end, for the accused persons involved in them are alleged to be habitual criminals and my information is that they have sought the shelter of the Bangla Congress. You will probably remember that while addressing a public meeting at Malda on the 9th December last I very loudly proclaimed the fact that supporters or members of the Bangla Congress, which was engaged in an intense vilification campaign against the Home Department and my own political party, were involved in these eight cases and they were alleged to be habitual criminals. I therefore publicly proclaimed that all these cases would be pursued by the Police. I did this in order to scotch rumours that certain political leaders were trying to have the cases withdrawn. Nothing could then have been—nothing is now—further from my desire than that the cases should be withdrawn. Through inadvertence, the particulars of these cases were mentioned in a long list of cases to be withdrawn. No one could be more sorry than I for this inadvertence. Such errors have occurred on one or two occasions in the past also. Had the error with regard to the Malda cases been brought to my notice by anyone I would have been the first person to direct that the cases should continue. You will now see how you could have avoided the extraordinary (and, as I have already explained in another letter to you, ineffective) invocation of Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business.

2. There is an impression in certain quarters that the Malda cases referred to above include two cases of Gazole P.S. in which molestation of some women has been alleged and the accused persons are alleged to belong to my party. I do not

know if you will be glad to learn that these two cases are not included in the eight cases in question. Instructions have not been and will not be issued for withdrawing these two cases. Heavy weather has been made in the Press and elsewhere regarding the withdrawing of the eight Malda cases upon the assumption that included in them were the cases of alleged molestation of women about which earlier there was much song and dance by the Bangla Congress in its campaign against my party. The impression was sought to be created that my party had been caught on the wrong foot in the cases of alleged molestation of women and that I had used my office in Government to get the cases withdrawn. I hope you now realize that the assumption that was made and the impression that was sought to be created upon this assumption are both equally erroneous and misconceived. Thus, as you will no doubt have realized by now, in the whole matter there has been much ado about nothing.

3. I wish to conclude expressing my inability to understand why you attempt to solve through extraordinary and complex methods trivial problems whose solution is simple and straightforward. I think it will be much better in future for everyone concerned if instead of resorting to complex processes you adopt the obvious common sense method of discussing, or even mentioning, your problems to me in the first instance. More often than not, if you do this, you will find that what you consider to be problems are not problems at all.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

(iv) Comrade Jyoti Basu's letter dated January 24, 1970 to Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee

My dear Ajoy Babu,

I have received your D.O letter No. 12/CM of the 22nd January, 1970. It contains many misconceptions and incorrect statements and it also shows that you

are suffering from certain illusions which needs to be corrected.

2. You have taken exception to my releasing to the Press one of the three D.O. letters that I wrote to you recently. Kindly note that I released only one of the letters and not all three as incorrectly alleged by you. It is of course true that my letter to you regarding the O.C., Gazole P.S. was widely quoted in the Press. As you know, I circulated copies of the letter among our Cabinet colleagues with a view to securing a discussion in the cabinet of certain vital issues mentioned in the letter. The Press manages to get access to papers not officially released for publication. One newspaper appears somehow to have got hold of a copy of my letter. The letter that I released to the Press pertained to the withdrawal of eight criminal cases of the Malda district. The reason for its release will be obvious from its contents. Objectionable propaganda was made by you regarding the withdrawal of the cases. It was necessary for the public to know the truth of the matter. The truth was that the accused persons involved in these cases are alleged to be habitual criminals and they profess to be supporters of your Bangla Congress party. It was also necessary for the public to know that my desire, which I publicly proclaimed at a meeting at Malda, was that the cases should be pursued by the Police to the very end. Since the cases have no political basis and since the accused persons are alleged to be habitual criminals the order for the withdrawal of the cases was mistaken.

3. You have referred to a code of courtesy. I wish that, occasionally at least, you would reinforce your precepts with personal examples. The instructions that you gave to the S.P., Malda, for keeping in abeyance the transfer of the O.C., Gazole P.S appeared in the Press even before you told me about them. At that time I was in Siliguri. I was much surprised to learn from the newspapers there about your precipitate action. Then came your radiogram to the S.P., Malda, invoking the powers that you seem to think you possess by virtue of Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business. The contents

of these radiograms also duly appeared in the Press. You told me nothing about these disclosures. Please therefore in future refrain from referring to any code of courtesy.

4. Your observations regarding your radiogram to the S.P., Malda, by which you purported to cancel the order of the Home Department for the withdrawal of the eight criminal cases provide a splendid example of the art of casuistry which you seem to be practising rather efficiently of late. You say that there was justification for the cancellation of the order. In saying this you have evaded—I say deliberately—the point that was made by me. In my letter to you on this subject there was ample indication that if you had even mentioned the matter to me I would have been the first person to have countermanded the order for the withdrawal of the cases in question for reasons that I have expressed in para 2 above. I therefore made the charge—and I now maintain this charge—that you acted in a most improper and unbecoming manner by peremptorily sending a radiogram to the S.P., Malda, without even first mentioning the matter to me. Why did you not first discuss this matter with me? What was the necessity and justification for the radiogram that you sent to the S.P., Malda, without consulting me? You have very cleverly avoided answering these questions. Will you please answer them now?

5. I now come to your conduct with regard to the O.C., Gazole P.S. Your explanation of your conduct is unsatisfactory and unacceptable. Once again without consulting me you directed that the transfer of the officer should be kept in abeyance for six months. In your defence you say that if you had not done this the officer would have been transferred and that might have been unjust. This statement cannot be accepted. You could have easily asked the S.P. to forbear from giving effect to his order for the transfer of the officer till I had dealt with the latter's representation with regard to his so-called personal difficulties. If you had simply done this it would not have been necessary for you to direct that the transfer should be kept in abeyance. So you now see

why your explanation of your conduct sounds hollow. In the most discourteous manner you passed the unwarranted, improper and wholly unjustified order for keeping the transfer of the O.C. in abeyance. On my part I honoured your wish in the matter, for, as I explained to you, I did not want to embarrass you in public by issuing a contrary order. I wrote to you about this matter on the 2nd January, 1970. In this letter I pointed out to you that you could easily have referred the case of the O.C. to me. I also indicated to you the nature of the man who had sought your protection. To this letter you did not give any reply. You maintained complete silence. You did not even think it necessary to discuss this matter with me any further although our respective offices are situated in close proximity to each other, as you yourself have pointed out. I therefore took it that you had accepted the views that I had expressed in my letter. You can therefore well imagine my surprise when on the 9th January—after total and absolute silence for seven days—I received a copy of your radiogram purporting to cancel, in the exercise of your so-called power under Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business, the order for the transfer of the officer. What was the necessity and justification for this action? You have argued that Rule 29(3) empowers you to interfere in the affairs of a Department not in your charge whenever any urgent matter of public importance is involved. This argument is not only untenable but totally irrelevant. Assuming, but not admitting, that you possess the power that you claim, may I ask where was the urgency of the matter? This question I asked in my last letter also. You have very conveniently avoided answering this question. I do not think I can blame you for this. You have no satisfactory answer to offer. I had agreed to keep the transfer of the O.C. in abeyance for six months. There was therefore no urgency at all for the cancellation of the order of the transfer. The cancellation, if at all necessary, could have been done after further deliberation even five months later. Therefore, as you will see, Rule 29(3), even if it is taken to mean what you think it means, was wrongly invoked.

6. You have attempted to justify your action with regard to the O.C., Gazole P.S. by saying that his transfer had been ordered for political reasons and it was necessary for you to intervene on his behalf. I know it is difficult for you to admit your mistakes. You have therefore been driven to concocting a novel and false theory in defence of your action. You say that you avoided disclosing your real reasons for the action taken by you in order to save me embarrassment. Such fine considerations do not appear to have tempered your conduct in the past. Even in the case we are now discussing my embarrassment was complete. Without consulting me you first kept the order for the transfer of the O.C. in abeyance. For seven days you did not send any reply to the letter that I had written to you regarding this matter. For seven days you did not even consider it necessary to discuss the matter with me and then without my knowing anything about it you sent a radiogram to the S.P., Malda, saying that the order for the transfer of the O.C. is cancelled. And now you say all this was intended to save me embarrassment. This is the last word in hypocrisy.

7. No one will accept the explanation that you have now offered of your conduct. If as you now say you had to adopt a subterfuge in order to explain your conduct, may I ask what prevented you from mentioning your real reasons to me either verbally or in a confidential D.O.? You went to Malda in the last week of December, 1969. From then onwards till the 22nd January, 1970, which is the date of your letter to which I am now replying, you maintained total and complete silence. You maintained this silence in spite of my letter of the 2nd January. And then out of the blue you suddenly burst forth with your reasons. Alas, it is too late. No one will believe you now.

8. In reply to my query as to why you did not discuss the matter of the O.C., Gazole P.S before taking your thoroughly unbecoming and improper action you say: "I assure you that I had every intention of doing so, but several matters and events intervened and I could not do so. But I must also

point out that you too did not care to discuss the matter with me though our offices are in the same building within sight of each other" Another example of your remarkable art of casuistry and chicanery. I had written to you regarding this matter as early as the 2nd January. You did not give any reply to this letter. I was waiting for your reply every day. And now you seem to suggest that having failed to elicit a reply from you it was necessary for me to meet you and discuss the matter with you. This is indeed a remarkable way of thinking. You also say that from the 2nd January you did not find time for any discussion with me. During this time you certainly remained silent but by no means inactive. You were able to find all the time in the world to consult your advisers, to go through the Rules of Business, to locate Rule 29(3) and then to send a radiogram to the S.P., Malda. You had time to do all this but you did not have any time for any discussion with me. I should have thought that there was some limit to hypocrisy. May I ask what was the great urgency for your radiogram? Would the heavens have fallen if you had waited a few days more in order to discuss the matter with me if we assume you did not have any time for a discussion with me from the 2nd to the 9th January? As I have already proved, you could have waited at least five months more. Therefore, your plea that you had no time for any discussion with me is not acceptable. The action taken by you without consulting me was deplorable and your excuse for it is worse.

9. I have already expressed in detail my views regarding the true construction of Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Business. I shall always adhere to these views and I reject outright the views expressed by you. Your theory that you are the sole judge of what is and what not is a matter of urgent public importance and therefore you can interfere in the affairs of any Department of Government by simply declaring the subject matter involved to be one of urgent public importance will, if accepted, render the entire body of rules meaningless and convert the Chief Minister into an autocrat. If this had been

the real intention of the Rules of Business, then the incorporation of so many provisions in it would not have been necessary. Much energy and effort could have been saved by the recital of only one provision, namely, that the business of Government will be conducted in such manner as the Chief Minister thinks fit. It should thus be obvious—even to you—that Rule 29(3) cannot be used in an arbitrary manner and it cannot certainly be made the pretext for the Chief Minister to arrogate to himself absolute powers of Government which do not belong to him. I am afraid your thesis cannot be accepted.

10. There is another point with regard to which you owe an explanation. Assuming once again, but not admitting, that Rule 29(3) empowers you to interfere in the affairs of all Departments of Government, is it not necessary, desirable and proper that before you do interfere you should at least discuss the subject matter involved with the Minister of the Department concerned? You cannot just peremptorily invoke Rule 29(3) without telling anything about it and without consulting the Minister concerned. This you cannot deny.

11. Your dissertation on the provisions of the Constitution will do much credit to a schoolboy. It is true, as pointed out by you with such puerile spirit of triumph, that according to the Constitution “there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions” and that “the Chief Minister shall be appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister”. All this, however, does not lead to the conclusion that in any and every political situation the Chief Minister has a position of supremacy in the affairs of Government and that he will have a general power of superintendence over his colleagues. The meaning of Constitutional provisions cannot be obtained from a summation of the meaning of the various words used in them. The literal construction of constitutional provisions will not yield their true meaning. Constitutional provisions must always be

understood in relation to the particular political scene where they are to be applied.

12. Article 154(1) of the Constitution says that “the executive power of the State shall be vested in the Governor and shall be exercised by him either directly and through officers subordinate to him...” Article 163(1) provides that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions except in so far he is by or under the Constitution required to exercise his functions or any of them in his discretion. Article 163 (2) says that if any question arises whether any matter is or is not a matter as respects which the Governor is by or under this Constitution required to act in his discretion, the decision of the Governor in his discretion shall be final, and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in his discretion. It will thus be seen that on the basis of a literal construction of the Constitution the Governor is all powerful in executive matters. The Council of Ministers, it is true, exists for the purpose of aiding and advising the Governor with regard to matters which do not fall within his discretion. Nothing in the Constitution, however, says that the Governor is compelled to accept his aid and advice. Furthermore, the Governor has been made the sole judge of the question whether or not any matter falls within his discretion. Can it therefore be argued from these propositions that the Governor can act in any matter he thinks fit? The answer to this is definitely in the negative. The Government in most matters is only the constitutional Head of Government.

13. As you have seen, upon the question whether any matter falls within the discretion of the Governor, the decision of the Governor shall be final. Notwithstanding this, the first United Front challenged the power of the Governor to treat any matter he liked as a matter of his discretion. Rule 29(3) or any other provision of the Rules of Business does not say that the Chief Minister shall be the sole judge of the

question whether or not any matter is one of urgent public importance. Nevertheless, you wish to arrogate to yourself the power of arbitrarily judging this question. You are trying to do what Shri Dharma Vira, our erstwhile Governor, tried to do. All of us, including you objected to Shri Dharma Vira's interpretation of the Constitution. At least, he seems to have some words of Article 163 in his favour. Nothing in the Rules of Business supports you.

14. You boast that the West Bengal Council of Ministers was appointed by the Governor upon your advice. This is correct. This does not, however, mean that the individual Ministers should be grateful to you in some way or other for their appointment. You had no hand in their selection. They were selected by the parties to which they belong. They were given their portfolios by their parties also. You advised the Governor to appoint them because that was the mandate you received from the United Front—you had no discretion in this matter. The United Front had to make its wishes known to the Governor. Under the Constitution you were the only messenger available for communicating those wishes. Therefore, please note that the Constitutional provision that Ministers are appointed by the Governor upon the advice of the Chief Minister does not in the prevailing political situation of West Bengal lead to the inference that the Chief Minister has a position of eminence vis-a-vis the other Ministers.

15. You seem to be suffering from some illusion regarding your position and your powers. You have even suggested that you can relieve any Minister of his portfolio. No doubt, constitutionally you have this power. Constitutionally, the Governor also has wide executive powers. You, however, do know very well what will be the consequences of your relieving any Minister (not belonging to your party) of his portfolio. The United Front will disintegrate. As I have already stated, all Ministers were selected by their respective party. Therefore, without the mandate of the parties involved no Minister can be relieved of his portfolio. This is the truth, whatever be the reply.

16. You have referred to the appointment of Churchill as the Prime Minister of a Coalition Government in England during the Second World War. I do not get the relevance of this. I do not know if Churchill, was in the habit of invoking Rule 29(3) of the British Rules of Business and interfering in the affairs of other Ministers without consulting them. I do not know whether he was in the habit of avoiding discussions with his colleagues, not replying to their letters and generally maintaining silence while secretly consulting his advisers about Rule 29(3).

17. You have made a reference to the antics of two other British Prime Ministers, namely, Mr MacMillan and Mr Wilson. This reference is as inane as your reference to Churchill. Messrs. Macmillan and Wilson certainly relieved some of their Cabinet colleagues of their portfolios. To prove this point why must you go so far as England? You will find an equally good example nearer home. Only recently Shrimati Indira Gandhi relieved some of her Cabinet colleagues of their portfolios. Her late father also tried his hand at this sort of thing. But what does all this prove? It proves that where Government is run by a single political party the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister can do whatever he wants provided he has the requisite mandate from his party. But conditions under the United Front are different. You cannot relieve any Minister of his portfolio on your own without causing a disintegration of the Front. Examples of Prime Ministers of single-party Governments, whether of British or Indian variety, will prove to be of little avail.

18. You have also made some reference to the Government of France. If you study French constitutional history you will find that the French people are in the habit of changing their Prime Minister with distressing frequency.

19. You speak of the subversion of the Constitution and of your duty in the face of such subversion to defend the Constitution. You will certainly quote the scripture, for it is you who are trying to subvert the Constitution by annihilating the Council of Ministers and arrogating to yourself absolute

powers of Government. The agreement among the partners of the United Front is that the Government of the State shall be conducted by consensus and by discussion. The Constitution is always to be upheld. The Chief Minister cannot on the pretext of upholding the Constitution arrogate to himself absolute powers. The Constitution does not permit you to do what you are trying to do.

20. By your conduct you have created dissension between Government servants, promoted indiscipline among them and caused disruption and confusion in the working of Government. If you persevere in such conduct there will be a complete breakdown of the Government machinery and ultimately the United Front will suffer.

21. I now turn to an entirely different point. This relates to the Sukumar Roy affair. In my last letter I told you that you had embarrassed Government by instructing the Police to maintain a secret vigilance over his activities. You did this in order to promote some political purpose of your Bangla Congress. In your letter to me there is no explanation regarding this matter. You allege that the transfer of the O.C., Gazole P.S. was ordered for political reasons. Does it lie in your mouth to make such an allegation? Have you forgotten the adage about persons living in glass houses?

22. Your conscience was aroused in the O.C., Gazole affair. Your sense of justice was affronted. I perceive much sanctimony in all this. May I ask what have you been doing for the last four months regarding the fraud on the Cabinet that the C. & I. Department are about to practice in the matter of appointment of the Controller of Sugar Industries? For your convenience I shall briefly recount the relevant facts. The C. & I. Department want to appoint a petty officer (who is now holding on temporary basis a post of District Industrial Officer) to the post of Controller of Sugar Industries. The latter post carries pay in the scale of Rs. 1800 — 2250. The officer's present pay is reported to be in the vicinity of Rs. 800. The Cabinet on several occasions turned down the proposal of the C. & I. Department to appoint the officer to

a post which at one stroke would enhance his pay by about Rs. 1000. Thereafter the Cabinet accepted the proposal of the C. & I. Department to appoint a suitable officer through a Committee of Experts. One of the essential qualifications for the post was knowledge of sugar technology, knowledge of the manufacture of sugar and cane cultivation, such knowledge being both theoretical and practical. It follows therefore that the Committee of Experts should have been composed of members possessing at least this qualification to a pre-eminent degree. A Committee was, however, formed by the C. & I. Department with members who do not appear to possess this qualification. One member retired from the I.A.S. and he last held a post equivalent to that of Deputy Secretary to Government. Another member retired as Deputy Director of Industries. The third member belongs to the State Civil Service and he was then, as he now is, a Deputy Secretary to Government. Thus three members never exceeded the position of Deputy Secretary of Government whereas the post of Controller of Sugar Industries carries a scale of pay which is drawn by senior Joint Secretaries to Government. Furthermore, these members had only administrative experience and no experience whatever of the manufacture of sugar and the cultivation of cane. The fourth member is a member of the Executive Committee of the Bangla Congress. Nothing is known about the fifth member. The qualifications prescribed by Government for the post raise some question. For instance, it was stipulated that the age of prospective candidates should be in the range of 45 - 54 years. The upper limit was extended subsequently to 55 years. Why was this done ? There is no proper explanation for this. Only one candidate appeared before the Committee. He said he was 55 years old. He was promptly selected. He is the officer that the C. & I. Department always had in mind. I should like to know whether this officer has any knowledge, and practical experience, of the manufacture of sugar and cultivation of cane. I sent a very detailed note to you regarding this matter in September, 1969. The seriousness of the matter was indicated in the note. You

promised to discuss the matter with me. That discussion is still to take place. I have written to you about this recently reiterating the need for further discussion and suggesting that, if necessary, a discussion in Cabinet should also take place. You have not invoked Rule 29 (3) in this case. Perhaps you find yourself on weak ground here. Hints have been given in the Press that you cannot afford to take any action because your Bangla Congress occupies free of rent a house belonging to the officer whom the C. & I. Department wish to favour. An honest man will be honest in all matters. There cannot be any selectivity in matters in which honesty will be practised. Once again you have exhibited a difference between precept and example. I therefore say, while there is still time left, that you should take suitable action to arrest the scandal of the C. & I. Department even though that may cost your party the facility of free office accommodation.

23. In the penultimate paragraph of your letter you have wanted my cooperation for "preserving and strengthening the United Front Government by resisting outside pressures". I do not know what you mean by this. I do not know what pressures work on you, but I always act in complete freedom. You say that you are prepared to discuss with me any matter of problem. This is what you say, but are you really prepared to do this ? I have been crying hoarse about the need for discussion. My grievance against you in the Gazole affair has been that you did not discuss the issues involved, that you did not take me into confidence and that you took precipitate action without my knowing anything about it. Twice we have received the mandate of the people for running the Government of the State. That mandate was that Government should be run by discussion and consensus. In my last letter to you also I emphasized the need of discussion for resolving our problems. Before delivering that letter to you I called on you and explained to you my point of view. I am always prepared for discussions—in the past also I was prepared. I shall, therefore, conclude by saying : let us meet and find a solution to our problems in

Government. There should be complete accord and understanding among all members of the Council of Ministers, and particularly between the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, for otherwise Government cannot be run successfully and the people on whose mandate we hold our office will suffer the most on this account.

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

(v) Text of the Letter written by Comrade Jyoti Basu on February 3, 1970, in reply to Sri Ajoy Mukherjee's letter dated January 31, 1970 :

I returned from Purulia on Sunday evening (February 1) I, therefore, received your Top Secret D. O. Letter No. 16-CM of January 31 only on Monday morning. Others had, of course, seen it in the newspapers on Sunday morning.

2. You have observed that my last letter to you was discourteous. If calling a spade by its true name was discourteous that was provoked by the greater discourtesy of your behaviour and of your action. You did not reply to my letter of January 2. You avoided having any discussion with me over the issues involved in the Gazole affair and without any notice to me, having planned it all in the utmost secrecy, you intruded into my affairs and attacked me in public.

3. In your first letter you referred to Messrs. Winston Churchill, Harold Macmillan and Harold Wilson. Now you have referred to Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. E. S. Montague. There appears to be in you an ill-concealed admiration for the exploits of British Prime Ministers. When will you realize that what is important is not what others have done but what you yourself can do?

4. You have expressed the apprehension that my reference to certain British Prime Ministers in my letter may create an unpleasant diplomatic situation for our country. I do not see why you have to bother yourself with our country's foreign

relations. Your time will be wore fruitfully spent if it is spent at home and is devoted to improving relations between the partners of the United Front. The British people have a better sense of humour than you think. You may, therefore, leave it to them to judge what impact my letter has had on their relations with India.

5. I am amazed at your silence with regard to the Sukumar Roy affair. I have twice drawn your attention to it but you have remained completely silent.

6. Your reaction to the observations made by me regarding the scandal perpetrated by your Bangla Congress colleague in the C. & I. Department in appointing the Controller of Sugar Industries is marvellous. You have no defence to offer against the charge of scandal, no explanation with regard to it. You, therefore, turn round and say that I should not have publicly exposed the scandal !! You accuse me of having committed a breach of the Official Secrets Act. Once again you have been ill-advised and badly let down by your counsellors. The facts that were "disclosed" by me did not come to my knowledge in the course of my official business. They relate to a Department with which I have no dealing. At no time were they revealed in any meeting of the Cabinet. In fact, the gravamen of the charge that I laid against your Bangla Congress colleague was that these facts were dishonestly suppressed and kept away from the Cabinet. They came to my knowledge from an external source which, I have reasons to believe, is reliable. Furthermore, the Press on its own gained access to the facts and they were published, first in the *Jugantar* and subsequently in other newspapers. Moreover, the Private Secretary of the C. & I. Minister sent a lengthy letter to the *Jugantar* relating facts from the files of the C. & I. Department. Therefore, no official secrets were betrayed by ME. In any case, were the facts disclosed in any way secret ? Was it a secret that the so-called committee of experts which interviewed the lone candidate for the post of Controller of Sugar Industries was a got up committee? Was it a secret that most members of

this Committee do not have the faintest knowledge of sugar technology ? Was it a secret that one member of this committee belongs to the executive committee of the Bangla Congress ? Was it a secret that the lone applicant was between 54 and 55 years of age and the age limit for the post was mysteriously extended from 54 to 55 years ? Was it a secret that the Bangla Congress occupies free of rent a house belonging to the lone applicant ? Was it a secret that the C. & I. Department have attempted to compensate the poor applicant at the expense of the State Exchequer by enhancing his salary by Rs. 1,000 per month ? In this connection, I should like to draw your attention to press reports regarding the interviews which certain reporters had with the C. & I. Minister. He is reported to have confessed that your party does occupy free of rent a house belonging to the prospective Controller of Sugar Industries and he (the Minister) also resides in the same house free of rent.

7. The stand that you have taken is indeed remarkable. Scandals will be perpetrated, acts of dishonesty will be committed, but woe betide the man who exposes these things. You will then take shelter behind the Official Secrets Act. Let me warn you that Act was not intended to be a shield for dishonesty. The duty to observe secrecy does not imply that silence should be maintained in the face of dishonest acts. On the contrary, it is the duty of every man to expose dishonesty and to tear into shreds the cloak under which it is committed.

8. If you think that I have committed a crime by exposing the dishonesty of your Bangla Congress colleague in the C. & I. Department, you may take whatever action you like. I am not the one to flinch from your threats. I have spent a considerable time in jail for the sake of the values that I cherish. In fact, I was preparing to go to jail even in 1967 when plans were secretly made for overthrowing the first U.F. Ministry.

9. You say that my exposure of the C. & I. Department scandal was irrelevant to the issues being discussed in our

present correspondence. Here you are wrong once again. In the Gazole Affair you went to the extraordinary length of invoking Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business without any necessity or justification for it and you assumed a posture of righteousness. By mentioning the C. & I. Department's scandal I wanted to prove to you that it was an invalid posture and that you have adopted double standards, one with respect to your Bangla Congress party and another with respect to others. In the C. & I. Department case the very integrity of Government has been called into question, but you have refused to take action in spite of repeated demands. I can only repeat what I said in my last letter : an honest man will be honest in all matters. I entreat you once again to do something with regard to the C. & I. Department scandal or at least to say something about it, for you have maintained a stolid silence since September, 1969 in spite of public criticisms in the Press. The public are surely entitled to an explanation of the goings on in the C. & I. Department. After all, it is public money that is involved. I, therefore, charge you once again to uphold the integrity of Government and to take prompt and effective action for arresting the scandal of the C. & I. Department.

10. Your impression about the procession of students that came to the gates of the Legislative Assembly on January 29 are completely wrong. As long as I was in their midst they did not raise the slogans mentioned by you. They came with two specific propositions. The first was that education should be free for everyone up to the stage of Class VIII in schools. The second was that all conspiracies against the United Front Government should be defeated. Both these propositions I supported. There was no question of the students intimidating the Legislature. The demonstration that they made was in consonance with the democratic traditions that we support. You will definitely remember that in 1967 when conspiracies were afoot for the overthrow of the first U.F. Ministry and members of Bangla Congress were being bought without much secrecy by the Congress and other reaction.

forces, the United Front with your express approval and blessings, called upon the people to demonstrate their solidarity against the conspirators and as a consequence of this massive demonstrations were held in front of the Assembly gates in Calcutta, elsewhere in Calcutta and in the districts. I, therefore, do not understand why you allowed yourself to become unduly alarmed over the students' procession of January 29.

11. It is true, as you have pointed out, that in my public speeches I have said that if as result of any unjust action taken by you or your Bangla Congress the United Front disintergrates, then a fresh mandate will be necessary from the people for the formation of another Government to replace the present Government. I do not know why you are in the habit of making appeals to the people of West Bengal whom you fondly describe as your Supreme Court. In my public speeches all that I did was to affirm my faith in your Supreme Court. Surely you will not suggest that in a matter of supreme importance your Supreme Court will not pronounce the correct verdict.

12. You say that you wish to terminate our present correspondence because you fear that there will be more disclosures of "official secrets" (of the nature of the C. & I. Department's scandal?) if you prolong it. This is a bad pretext for seeking disengagement from the issues that we have joined. Perhaps there are other disclosures which you fear. Perhaps the real reason for your wanting to terminate our correspondence is entirely different. You have failed to uphold your interpretation of Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business and to justify its use in the Gazole cases. You have failed to prove that the Chief Minister in the present political context is superior to the other Ministers. You have failed to answer the charges that I have laid against you.

13. In your first letter you took the stand that since all Ministers are appointed by the Governor upon the advice of the Chief Minister the latter is superior to all Minister. I pointed out to you that this is only theoretically correct, but in the prevailing political context all Ministers are selected

by the parties to which they belong, they are given their portfolios by their parties and the Chief Minister has no say either in the selection of the Ministers or in the distribution of portfolios among them. I am glad to note that you have accepted this and you have abandoned your stand in this matter. You, however, will seem to think that the Chief Minister is superior to the other Ministers because under Article 163(1) of the Constitution he is the head of the Council of Minister And you argue that if the Chief Minister abuses his authority he can be taken to task by the Legislature to whom he is responsible. Once again your understanding of the Constitution is defective. Nothing in the Constitution says that the Chief Minister is superior to the other Minister or that the latter are subordinate to him; nothing in the Constitution empowers him to interfere in the affairs of other Ministers The Constitution does not concern itself with individual Ministers. Individual Ministers are not relevant to the purpose of the Constitution. As far as the Constitution is concerned the only relevant entity is the Council of Ministers Under Article 163 (1) of the Constitution it is this Council of Ministers which advise the Governor in the discharge of his executive functions. Under Article 164 (3) it is this Council of Ministers which is collectively responsible to the Legislature. Neither the Chief Minister nor any other Minister individually advises the Governor or is individually responsible to the Legislature. However, you may entertain whatever notions you please regarding your position and authority and derive whatever consolation you can from such notions. But if you attempt to put these notions into practice then, as I have warned previously, the United Front will disintegrate. In future, therefore, you will not intrude into my affairs if you do not wish to jeopardize the United Front.

14. I had against you the following charges :

First, that you improperly interfered in the matter of the transfer of the O.C., Gazole P.S.;

Secondly, that you improperly interfered in the matter of withdrawal of certain criminal cases in the Malda district;

Thirdly, that you failed without good cause to reply to my letter of January 2 regarding the O.C., Gazole P.S;

Fourthly, that in spite of ample opportunity that you had for it, you avoided discussing the Gazole affair with me although your office is situated next door to mine;

Fifthly, that without discussing the issues involved or consulting me about them you invoked Rule 29 (3) of the Rules of Business and passed unnecessary, unjustified, unwarranted and illegal orders in the Gazole affair, thereby promoting indiscipline in the ranks of Government servants and causing dissension among them;

Sixthly, that you embarrassed Government by asking the police to maintain vigilance over the activities of Sri Sukumar Roy with a view to promoting some political purpose of your Bangla Congress; and

Seventhly, that you failed to arrest the scandal and the dishonesty perpetrated by your Bangla Congress colleague in the C. & I. Department in the matter of appointment of the Controller of Sugar Industries.

You have not denied any of these charges and you have not been able to defend yourself against them. Further comment is unnecessary.

15. I suppose this is the last letter in our present correspondence. I am happy with the results that I have achieved.

Yours sincerely,
Jyoti Basu

On the Revisionist Disruption of the A.I.T.U.C.*

**Correspondence Between
CPI(M) and Right Communist Party.**

Introduction

We are publishing here the entire correspondence that passed between the representatives of our Party and of the Right Communist Party on the question of trade union unity.

From December 1965 to May 1966 all our comrades in the Working Committee and General Council of the AITUC were in jail. Due to public pressure we were being released in batches from February 1965 onwards. Just at this time, Dange called his Working Committee and decided to hold the session of the AITUC in Bombay in May 1965. He did not have any consultation with us on this. The plea that we were in jail cannot be taken seriously, for by then the process of release had begun and public opinion was mounting and he could have waited for a month. In the alternative, he could have interviewed us in jail and consulted us.

After our release, when we pleaded with him to postpone the session by just a few weeks so that our comrades could go round among the trade unions and arrange for collections at the next pay day and pay the arrears of affiliation and the fare of the delegates, Dange turned a deaf ear to this. The motive behind all this is too patent.

Despite all this handicap, at the Bombay session, we worked for unity of the AITUC and TUs. I, therefore, moved the Resolution on "Platform of Unity and Struggle," which was unanimously adopted by the session.

However, the Dangeites who control the AITUC sabotaged

*Published as a booklet with an introduction by P. Ramamurty.

the resolution in practice, taking no steps in the direction of implementing it.

Meanwhile, they began further splitting the trade unions at the base; extremely anxious to preserve the unity of the TUs at the base, in the November-December meeting of the General Council of the AITUC, I moved a resolution which aimed at merging of the rival unions on the basis of elections by the combined membership with proportional representation, guaranteeing democratic functioning and thereby not starting any rival unions in future.

The resolution, too, was adopted unanimously only to be sabotaged in practice by the Dangeites.

On May 9, 1969, P. Sundarayya, the General Secretary of our Party, in his talks with the General Secretary of the Right Communist Party, C. Rajeswar Rao, suggested in all seriousness that talks should be held between the representatives of the two parties to stop the disruption in the TUs and restore unity.

Dange wrote on May 10 to P.Sundarayya. He made no mention of the talks between P.Sundarayya and the General Secretary of the Right C.P. but asked if we were agreeable to talks to resolve differences.

This was what we were seeking, and we therefore readily agreed. The meeting was fixed two days before the meeting of the AITUC in the last week of August 1969. The talks did not lead to any agreement because the Right C.P. representatives had no concrete proposals to make, and on the other hand, they would not accept our proposals which were further concretization of the principles accepted by the General Council, based on trade union democracy. They stated that they would meet us again after consulting their comrades on the Working Committee which was meeting the next day.

However, they did not call us for any such meeting as promised. The correspondence published here would show how Dange and the Right C.P. consistently stalled this meeting, and how they would not agree to the proposals for unity of the trade unions at the base, based on the accepted principles of trade union democracy.

It is quite clear that their comrades or the Working Committee with whom they must have held consultations on our proposals must have been alarmed at them. For their acceptance and implementation would have led to the loss of the majority they were claiming—a fact proved by us in innumerable factories in the statutory elections to the Works Committees and other bodies and would seriously hamper the anti-working class agreements they were entering into with the employers in pursuance of their line of class collaboration.

The two resolutions moved by me and the Dangeites at the meeting of the Working Committee in December 1969, just a month before the Guntur session reveal in a flash that the Right C.P. was bent upon its course of disruption and imposing its line of class-collaboration on the working class. What is more, it was bent upon making the AITUC ditto the political line of the Right C.P. which as is well-known is one of tailing behind the Indira Gandhi Congress and making the AITUC an appendage of the ruling Congress Party.

And hence we boycotted the session.

Dange pretended his concern for unity at the session and dropped the amendments to the constitution that he had proposed and also kept all of us on the Working Committee and General Council, even though we had boycotted it.

Immediately after the session, I wrote to him about the urgent need to restoring unity at the base level of the trade unions and sought discussions with him and his party.

Dange curtly rejected the proposal for talks between the two parties. And yet, this same gentleman in his letter dated May 10, 1969 proposed talks between the representatives of the two parties.

The letter that Sudhir Mukhoti, a member of the Working Committee, wrote to Dange on May 20, 1970, the telegram that Dange sent to me on May 22 and the letter Mukhoti wrote to Satish Loomba, Secretary of the AITUC, clearly reveal the extent of distortion to which the Dangeites resort.

How could they agree to unity of the trade unions at the

base level if they have to pursue their line of collaboration with the bourgeoisie at both the economic and political level? Disruption of the unity of the working class is a specific weapon of the bourgeoisie to fight the working class. And it is a weapon they are wielding through the services of the Right C.P. and Dange. They want to get the stamp of approval to their line through their cooked up majority in the AITUC and thus disrupt the growing unity and struggles of the working class.

We cannot oblige them. The time has come, when for building the unity of the class and overcome disruption, the entire class has to know their real face.

Hence we are publishing this correspondence.

P.Ramamurti

Calcutta,
May 26, 1970

S. A. Dange's Letter of May 10, 1969

To
Comrade Sundarayya,
General Secretary,
Communist Party of India (Marxist),
Calcutta.

Dear Comrade Sundarayya,

I am writing this letter in connection with the trade unions, the AITUC and the relations between our two parties in that field.

You are aware that we together share the major part of the work of the AITUC and unions and federations, affiliated or non-affiliated.

There have been differences between us in regard to many matters connected with the AITUC and the T.U. movement where we come on the same platform.

From time to time, these differences were discussed mutually within the framework of the AITUC. For example,

the matter of starting rival unions in the same factory or industry by some of your members in places where a union led by our party members existed has been discussed many times. The matter was dealt with in a resolution of the General Council of the AITUC. Other parties also participated in the discussions when it came formally before the Council, though the instances concerned mainly the comrades of our two parties.

There was also the question of affiliation, Comrade Pandhe and the office. That also was resolved in the Council.

But the situation has not improved very much. Lately you have had your meeting of your T.U. cadres and leaders. Though all the reports in the Press may not be true, yet from the Press and other reports we find that you seem to be entertaining serious differences with our party's work in the AITUC, inasmuch as we man the major posts of the organization.

Hence our party gave serious thought to the matter and decided that it would be full if our parties have discussion on the reported differences.

What exactly is your difference, grouse or complaint about our functioning of the AITUC—apart from the general political "abuses" you hurl about us?

Do you have any concrete proposals that such and such a thing should be done or should not be done?

We have been told that you want to clear up the AITUC of "revisionism", that you want "democratization", that you want "militancy" and so on.

This is all too general.

Can you, with regard to any trade union action or policy, give us an illustration of your so-called "charges" based on facts and not mere fiction or subjective reporting?

Can you, with regard to any big campaign or action in recent period, put down the above points for discussion so that we can concretely deal with matters?

If such a discussion is agreed to by you, we for our part are prepared to discuss on the basis of concrete facts. But we do not want to load this letter with a catalogue of instances

or illustrations unless we agree to discuss them. Otherwise, it would be merely another document for controversy or exposure or whatever you may call it. And that is no good start, if we all do mean to improve the T.U. situation as a whole and the AITUC.

If you are agreeable in principle to a joint discussion, we may then decide about how to proceed further in the matter.

As in the AITUC work, I generally refer matters to Comrades Ramamurti and Mirajkar, I am apprising them on this proposal.

The central bodies of our party as well as our all-India trade union fraction have decided in favour of this proposal and they consider that it would be a great gain to the working class and T.U. movement if the area of differences or misunderstandings is substantially reduced to begin with, if not altogether removed, through such mutual discussion, in a very vital field and organization like the AITUC, where we are already working together and jointly share some responsibilities.

Awaiting your reply,

Yours fraternally,
sd/- S.A.Dange
10.5.1969

Comrade P.Sundaryya's reply dated May 19,1969

Calcutta

Dear Comrade Dange,

I have gone through your letter of May 10 regarding relations between our two parties in connection with the AITUC as soon as I reached here yesterday. I am surprised to see that in your latter, you have not even referred to our letter to your General Secretary, dated April 29.

I had a personal talk on April 9, with Comrade Rajeswar Rao in Delhi and mentioned about the sharp differences that exist between our parties in the AITUC functioning and how the office-bearers belonging to your party had been making it impossible to function the AITUC democratically and how

many of our functionaries had been thrown out of unions undemocratically and how your party had been starting rival unions and getting them affiliated to AITUC. We both agreed that talks between our party representatives be held to thrash out this and other issues.

Your Secretary wrote me a letter in the last week of April, enclosing a copy of the resolution passed by your National Council, in which certain proposals for "Communist Co-ordination Committee, Joint Legislative Bloc, etc." were mentioned. In that letter he mentioned your party's decision to hold talks with our party. I have sent a reply on April 30 and suggested that May 23-25 at Calcutta, would be convenient to us. Till now I have not received any reply from him.

In that letter, we have raised this question of our mutual relations in connection with the work in the AITUC. We are waiting for the reply from your General Secretary when your party would be able to meet us and discuss all the issues raised in these letters. As soon as we receive it, we are anxious to carry on mutual talks to forge united action at least on certain specific issues.

Yours fraternally,
Sd/-P.Sundarayya

S.A.Dange's Letter dated May 25, 1969

Dear Comrade Sundarayya,

This is in reference to "the specific issue of our mutual relations in the work of the AITUC", which you have mentioned in your letters dated April 29 and May 19.

The same issues were raised by your representatives in the General Council of the AITUC last year and as I have said in my letter to you dated May 6, they were resolved therein. If you are repeating the same, over again, there is nothing else for us to do but to refer you to those decisions, which were taken there unanimously. At that meeting Comrade Ramamurti and others of your party were present. If you refer to the proceedings you will find that your side was found to be clearly in the wrong. If you so desire, we will

bring up those issues again—that is, how you fomented rival unions, how your representative took away the account books of the AITUC and conveniently “lost” them, etc., etc.

It is also on record of the meeting of the Working Committee of the AITUC that the Labour Minister in Kerala, who is your protege, submitted a memorandum to the National Labour Commission, which had to be condemned by the AITUC. It is also on record that it took your party and your Kerala Chief Minister about a year or so to get it withdrawn and that the AITUC has even now received no communication from the Ministry or Government about what they have done in the matter. We learnt about the revocation of the memorandum, from the Press and from our Secretary of the Kerala TUC.

Are we going to discuss all this over again? I think we need not.

Maybe, you have fresh complaints, and so have we. So what we have done is that we have asked our leadership in the various State Committees to make a list of their complaints and argue them with your leaders there for resolving the differences. Whatever they cannot settle at the local levels, could then be taken up at the top levels. Without such preliminary clearance, how can we discuss things in detail and on specific complaints or issues as you want to do?

But in case you have specific complaints you can name them in regard to unions and individuals; we can examine them at the AITUC central office between our two representatives and report back to the respective central leaderships the result of such examination.

It would be more useful in reducing friction. Merely hurling general accusations at each other leads nowhere and solves no problems.

Once again coming to your reference in your letter of April 29 to our functioning of the AITUC, where, you say, we use our majority to your disadvantage, you raise the following points in your letter; since you have put them on record, I have to reply.

(A) You say—"Our unions are denied affiliations."

Our comment—Affiliations are passed by the Working Committee meetings, on the report of a Credentials Committee appointed by it. So far, all these reports have been unanimous and the committees included your representatives, who have agreed to the decisions,

(B) "Our unions are disaffiliated without showing reasons".

Your informant does not know that the AITUC has no provision for disaffiliation and no one has been disaffiliated. Will you name some?

(C) "Our members, some of whom are members of the AITUC Working Committee, are expelled by State TUC's which your members control"

There is only the case of the Andhra TUC on record. In this case too only the individuals were judged by the committee for their disruptive and scandalous behaviour and splitting activities, not the unions.

None has been removed from the Working Committee of the AITUC. You will, however, note that this stands in sharp contrast to the wholesale expulsions that some of those leaders, who are in your party now, carried out, as a matter of policy, when they had absolute control of the AITUC some years back.

But you fail to mention the case in U.P. where your group has set up a rival TUC when they failed to capture the majority in the open conference. Do you know the fact that Comrade Ram Asrey, your representative there, at that time as General Secretary of the UPTUC, gave to the AITUC a false cheque as affiliation fee, to secure a majority at the conference and refused payment, when he failed to get the majority, locked out the conference hall and walked away. And yet we have not expelled him from the Working Committee of the AITUC.

Do you not know the fact that you have summarily expelled some of our members from your unions? That recently you expelled the General Secretary of a Naxalite union? or their sympathizer? Do you know that you are running union in

Burnpur, which is a rival to the one affiliated to the AITUC, while your leader of the rival union is still a working President of our union?

But as I have said, let us list up and take individual cases separately, first at local State levels, before we come up with them at the top levels.

(D) "The meetings of the Working Committee and the General Council are not called regularly".

This is partly true. But these committees have met periodically though not on exact time. This is not due to any so-called policy of ours as such but is due to organizational difficulties; for example, when once or twice we planned to call the General Council, the State Committees were involved in some movements or natural calamities and so on. The delay has never been deliberate and why should it be? As you yourself say, since we have a majority why should we be shy of calling these meetings? And as you know the Working Committee had met recently to plan the march to Parliament.

(E) "There is no prior consultations with our comrades", This is not correct. On all major problems we have had consultation. But if you suggest any better method we will examine it. We have no objection to improving it.

(F) "Announcement of January meeting arranged by the AITUC... does not mention any one of our leaders".

In the first place, that meeting was not organized by the AITUC but by the Co-ordinating Committee of various T.U. organizations. Secondly, Comrade Mirajkar, who is your member and President of the AITUC, was announced and was present. If you desired a change, you could have said it, as your representative Comrade P.Ramamurti or his substitute was also on the Co-ordination Committee itself.

May I also point out that though your leadership was party to the march and petition movement, your people sabotaged it in actual practice, wherever you had absolute control of the unions.

(G) You say that as a result, "the AITUC has now been relegated to the third place" (in verification).

It is good to see that you have developed faith in the Government of India's verification procedure, to measure the place of the AITUC. That is revolutionary progress enough on your part. In the AITUC, however, we reject verification as a test for recognition.

You should, however, remember that the failure to report membership returns is mainly from the two States, where you are supposed to be a majority, that is, Kerala and West Bengal.

In fact, it would be worth asking you, whether you deliberately failed to report, to verification, so as to pull down the AITUC and then provide a reason for denouncing us ?

(H) "Such tricks are played by your members. All this makes your talk of unity and co-ordinated action meaningless".

We think we can return the compliment in the same words. Are you impelled to talk like that because your "master-trick" of capturing the AITUC and wrecking it has so far failed to click, thanks to the vigilance of the workers!

But let me say once again, such talk leads nowhere.

Let us argue in better spirit for better ends.

In fact, having failed to secure majority in the AITUC as a whole, your leadership, which now controls the Home and Police departments in two States and can now influence the employers also in the matter of trade union recognition, is trying to capture or break up trade unions, where our party or parties other than yours, like Naxalites, RSP, etc., have a hold. The other day your leadership tried to prevent a settlement of the wages question in the Indian Oxygen, wherein our union is a recognized union. Your leadership obstructed the reinstatement of the victimized leaders in Indian Oil for the simple reason that the union was not under your control. This is against all T.U. morals and the basic concepts of class struggle. You are trying to smash our work in the tea plantation area. As I said above, there are many such complaints from our workers and leaders. In many unions, your people ally themselves with highly doubtful non-political

elements in order to oust our leaders from the unions. Should we not change this?

What we really would like you to do is that in West Bengal where the working class is most harassed and is a decisive force, the Government in which you hold all the major Ministries, except Finance, should have called a conference of all working class representatives and trade unions, to work out agreed industrial and trade union policy, on matters of wages, T.U. rights, strikes, gheraos, production and automation. We should then have confronted the employers with concrete proposals from trade to trade or industry to industry and in some cases, plant to plant. The main points of the general policies no doubt do exist in the United Front Programme. But an all-round unity and plan of concrete action and work in the new situation after our coming to power is essential. We tried to initiate such a course, when we met your Labour Minister immediately after the formation of the Government. But what we find is that instead of taking such a course, you have started giving one-sided homilies and obitor dicta on strikes and gheraos or workers' obligations on your own. Not that we object to considering a new approach to these questions in view of the coming to power of a democratic Government of the U.F. relying mainly on the support of the toiling masses. What we, however, would have liked is a united approach to the problem, in considering which we must not forget that, in essence, effective power and central apparatus is still with the bourgeoisie. Instead, from all reports we find that you have almost declared a war against all other parties of the Front, to capture the mass organizations for your party alone. That is neither Marxism-Leninism nor the line of the United Front, as we have seen them in revolutionary history elsewhere.

Exclusive party control of trade unions by the INTUC has harmed the working class. But the INTUC was allied with the bourgeoisie. That analogy does not apply to the Communist Party. Even then exclusive party control, even by a Communist Party, of whatever colour or line, is also

not helpful to the working class in today's conditions of our country, where the working class or its party alone does not form the Government of the country and is not the major force in society as yet. But it seems you believe that you alone can represent the revolutionary interests of the working class. That is wrong theory, wrong tactics, wrong approach. Hence the growing clashes and disunity in the T.U. field. And police measures will not help you in this, however "reformed" the police may be under your "Home". If you continue to attack us, we will be forced to retaliate, however costly and painful it may be to the common interests of all of us and our Front Government.

Finally, we may do well to remember that it is under the guidance of the very AITUC and its leadership, its cadres and self-sacrificing workers, whom you decry, that the working class in India has fought great battles and won many victories and your partymen and our partymen both have shared those battles and victories in common.

Hence, I would propose that we together draw out a common plan of action, which should embrace the whole of the working class and all the trade unions, to fight for the defence of the interests of the workers, in all industries and trades, including Government employees, teachers, etc., throughout the country. But emphasis should first be laid on problems in West Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra and Kerala. After we two have agreed, we should draw unions of other parties also in this common programme and action, which should have an edge, particularly directed against the giant monopolies. We can have the plan endorsed by the Working Committee of the AITUC.

Meanwhile, can we agree to stop attacking each other in unfriendly or hostile terms and disturbing the unions with a view to "capture" them for this or that party? Common struggle against the bourgeois-landlord interests should be more on the agenda, than a fratricidal factional war to exterminate each other's strongholds or areas or organizations.

We shall be glad to discuss this with you, if you agree, at

the AITUC centre, with reference to the trade union sector, as part of our general discussions.

I did not want to go into all this, in this letter, but unfortunately, the tone of hostility and the invectives of your letter left no alternative, though I would have liked to avoid it, in the interests of common agreements.

With greetings,

Yours Fraternally.

Sd/-S.A.Dange

Chairman, CPI.

P. Sundarayya's letter to S. A. Dange

Calcutta

Dear Comrade Dange,

This has reference to your letter of May 25, 1969. It has not been possible for me to reply to you earlier due to other pressing preoccupations.

It is a matter of regret that instead of replying to the points in our note you have chosen to evade the main issues and resorted to hurling unfounded abuses and slandering our Party, and T.U. functionaries. I do not think it will lead us anywhere.

You have sought to create an impression that what we are saying is nothing new. These issues have already been settled in the General Council meeting of the AITUC.

As you know, the General Council of the AITUC in its meeting in December 1966 adopted a resolution on organization. It was visualized that efforts would be made to prevent further splitting up of the AITUC and Statewise as well as at all-India level machinery would be created to settle the disputes within the AITUC. The AITUC centre which is controlled by your party has made no effort to create any machinery of the sort with the result that your local party leaders went on with disruptive methods throughout the country with direct encouragement from you.

Our comrades in Tamilnadu took initiative in implementing

the General Council resolution on organization and the TNTUC decided to appoint a committee to jointly visit centres wherever split had taken place and explore the possibility of bridging the split. Accordingly, the committee paid a visit to one centre and when the facts showed your side to be completely wrong, your party's representative on the committee began to show coolness and ultimately the decisions of the TNTUC remained on paper. What is more surprising is that one of the members of the Committee, Comrade K.T.K.Thangamani, took initiative in forming a rival union in textiles in Madurai despite the fact that he was President of the united Union. It is but natural the committee died its natural death.

Perhaps you remember that dispute regarding the Coimbatore District Textile Worker's Union was raised on the eve of the last session of the AITUC. The split in the union occurred because our comrades were compelled to convene an annual conference of the union when your leadership refused to hold democratically elected conferences on the one hand and resorted to the inordinate step of dissolving branches after branches in the most bureaucratic manner. It was agreed in the AITUC session that efforts should be made to bring both the unions together. However, immediately after the session your union started issuing leaflets against our union.

The case of the Madukkaria Cement Worker's Union is perhaps the most glaring. Though a properly constituted General Body meeting was held under the Presidentship of a member of our party, the supporters of your party walked out of the meeting before the elections of new office-bearers seeing that your group was in a hopeless minority. When the rest of the delegates marched to the union office, an agreement was reached in the presence of Comrade P.Ramamurti that a joint letter would be forwarded to the TNTUC asking for sending one representative from each side to supervise the fresh elections of office-bearers and Executive Committee. This was also announced jointly in a public meeting. A letter signed by Comrades K. Ramani and Ramaswamy was

sent to the TNTUC. Meanwhile, false cases have been launched against our comrades in the court.

Such examples can be multiplied in Tamilnadu and other States. In that signed letter Comrades Ramani and Ramaswamy requested the TNTUC for convening the General Body meeting and holding the elections under the supervision of the observer of the TNTUC. Two years have elapsed and your party men in the TNTUC refused to take action.

We repeatedly suggested that a joint conference should be held of membership of both the unions and new executive should be re-elected on the basis of proportional representation without eliminating any group. However, even this proposal was consistently rejected by your side. The net result is that the majority of the membership of the union is denied the right of affiliation. When this question was raised in the AITUC Secretariat you also refused to intervene in the matter.

The dispute regarding T.U. rivalry in Jessops was also raised on the eve of the last AITUC session and both sides agreed to make united efforts. After the General Council resolution our comrades felt that your party would be prepared for joint functioning. Our comrades therefore approached your people several times for joint discussion but so far your side has not responded, in any manner. The General Secretary of the BPTUC himself made a number of attempts to unify both the unions but your side gave a cold shoulder to every proposal. In the Bombay session of the AITUC it was agreed that a joint team should go into the question of split and make efforts to unify both the unions. Your side nominated Comrade Ranen Sen, we nominated Comrade Manoranjan Roy. Your side, however, failed to carry out this talk also. The AITUC centre, however, has recognized only the group led by your people, which is only a breakaway wing that walked out of a democratically convened conference. And the union where we had a majority is now practically out of the AITUC. It is virtually a case of disaffiliating an affiliated union and affiliating a parallel union.

If sincere efforts had been made to reunify the unions, a large number of our unions would not have to face the situation of remaining out of the AITUC. Your partisan attitude in the matter of AITUC functioning has been a serious obstacle in unifying the ranks of the AITUC. Your letter clearly shows that you want to pursue this policy doggedly in future also which, I am afraid, will not help in building the AITUC.

Your group has taken action against many of our comrades, the most glaring case being Andhra Pradesh, where you have resorted to "disciplinary action" against a Secretary of the State TUC and a member of the Working Committee of the AITUC.

Comrade Balaji Das, Secretary of the APTUC, was suspended by levelling charge of "disruptive" activities. His real "crime" was that he along with our comrades opposed the atrocious agreement your leadership in the ILTD Workers' Union was planning to sign with the management which included clauses like giving up the right of weekly holiday of workers by accepting overtime payment for the work, giving up the tea-break of 20 minutes and accepting nominal payment, and similar other anti-working class provisions. It is only due to the campaign launched by our comrades that the management could not impose such onerous conditions on workers at that time. To cover up this betrayal your Andhra leadership resorted to a vilification campaign against him and took the so-called disciplinary action.

Comrade Parsa Satyanarayana, Vice-President of the Singareni Colliery Workers Union, was elected president of the Committee during the 1967 strike. Your leadership without consulting either the committee or him withdrew the strike on a mere assurance of the Minister. Your leadership further entered into agreement with the management resulting in retrenchment of 2,200 workers. Our comrades could not keep quiet over these anti-working class actions and had to oppose this abject surrender. For this "crime" action was taken against him.

In Delhi textiles, the split in the united union occurred

when your party representatives dissolved union branches in the most arbitrary manner for the simple reason that they were controlled by our supporters. Our comrades successfully won all the elections in the Swatantra Bharat Mill which clearly showed that we had major influence there. After the last general elections representatives of both the parties met in the AITUC office and a committee was constituted to unify both the unions. While the negotiations were going on your representatives joined hands with the INTUC in the Swatantra Bharat Mill against our union in Works Committee elections. Thus, the negotiations were without any results. Recently, our union won most of the Works Committee seats in the Swatantra Bharat Mill and in Delhi Cloth Mill also we have improved our position considerably. Your side even now opposes every effort for united action.

We would like to know whether such actions will help the process of unity in the AITUC. Your group never felt it necessary to raise these questions in the AITUC Secretariat before resorting to such drastic steps.

You have rejected our contention that you do not consult our comrades before taking important decisions regarding functioning of the AITUC. Your claim that you have been regularly doing so is totally untrue.

Since the last session of the AITUC you have been functioning on your own. The General Secretary of such an important organization as the AITUC is expected to devote a major part of his time for the functioning of the AITUC. However, by and large, the centre functions according to your own convenience.

Earlier the Secretariat meetings were called mainly for the nomination of delegates for the tripartite bodies. The problems of the T. U. movement or building up of the organization were rarely discussed in such meetings. What is strange is that even at times in the matter of nominating our comrades you wanted to have names of your own choice instead of those suggested by our representative on the Secretariat.

In August 1967, you issued a false circular against Comrade Pandhe, our only representative on the AITUC Secretariat, and have prevented him from functioning as Secretary since then. Even after the withdrawal of the charges against him by the Working Committee he was not given the responsibilities he was discharging prior to the levelling of the charges against him and virtually he was not allowed to function as Secretary of the AITUC.

There was no Secretariat meeting between October 1968 and March 1969 with the result that you were practically functioning on your own without taking into account the views of our party. Yet you claim that there was consultation on every issue.

However, instead of making an effort to correct the partisan ways of your group, you resorted to scurrilous attacks against our party. Without substantiation you have built up a case on the following instances quoted by you in your letter.

1. We disrupted the UPTUC when we failed to get a majority in it. Comrade Ram Asrey gave false cheques to the AITUC centre.

2. In Indian Oxygen we tried to prevent the settlement which your comrades were trying to arrive at with the management.

3. In Indian Oil, our local leadership obstructed the reinstatement of the victimized leaders of Indian Oil as the union was not under our control.

4. We are trying to smash your work in the tea plantation areas.

5. We are using the Home portfolio in Kerala and West Bengal to boost the unions led by our Party.

6. We have disrupted the union in Burnpur.

We would like first of all to go into these cases because they prove how your whole case is based on levelling slanderous charges against our party despite the fact that your party has been in the wrong in all these cases:

1. Regarding the split in the UPTUC. you have given a

totally false and distorted version of the development. You have said, "but you fail to mention the case in U. P. where your group has set up a rival TUC when they failed to capture the majority in the conference. Do you know the fact that Comrade Ram Asrey, your representative there, at that time, as General Secretary of the UPTUC, gave to the AITUC a false cheque as affiliation fee to secure majority, locked out the conference hall and walked away and yet we have not expelled him from the Working Committee of the AITUC."

What, however, is the reality?

It is none but yourself, along with your disciples, who have directly engineered the split in the UPTUC. You personally went there and stayed for three days to conduct the operation. The manner in which you manipulated delegates is indeed unheard of in the T.U. movement. Satish Loomba, Secretary of the AITUC, was made a delegate from one engineering union in Gaziabad. Ramesh Mukherjee, of the AITUC staff, became the delegate from a union in Hardwar.

Your concern to "mobilize" delegates could be seen from the fact that Kali Sankar Sukla, Secretary of the State unit of your party, Ramesh Sinha and Guruprasad Sinha, State leaders of your party, who do not work in the T. U. movement were also delegates. As if this was not enough, Sarjoo Pande and A. P. Tewary, prominent kisan leaders of your party, were also made delegates.

You had distributed affiliation fee receipts to your unions to "manufacture" the delegates. The protest letters of Comrade Ram Asrey in this regard were callously disregarded.

Yet you could not get the majority in the conference which can be verified even now from the papers of the Credentials Committee. Though the Credentials Committee was unanimously elected in the conference, K. G. Srivastava demanded dissolution of the Credentials Committee. This move of Srivastava was defeated by the conference. Then your people held a separate meeting and elected the so-called UPTUC.

2. Now coming to West Bengal. Though the General Council of the AITUC gave a specific number of affiliation forms to the

Secretariat for scrutiny, your group without consulting the Secretariat asked for more affiliation forms. Though the General Council did not authorize the Secretariat to do so you arbitrarily took the decision only to inflate your strength. A large number of forms were manufactured with a view to maintain your dwindling strength in West Bengal. When this method was opposed you went on levelling false charges against our comrades of removing from the office the affiliation forms of unions with 2,000 membership! In a hurry you forgot to note that three of the unions whose papers were supposed to have been removed, were already in the AITUC list.

The matters became so ridiculous that your own followers in West Bengal could not justify your steps. You were no doubt in great discomfiture when the BPTUC Working Committee unanimously decided to reject the delegations of all the fictitious unions you formed after the General Council meeting.

You also know that you could not substantiate the charge of removal of the affiliation forms (which you called vital documents!) and they had to be dropped by the Working Committee.

And yet you volunteer to teach us lessons about T.U. morals, etc.,

Your letter says, "The other day, your leadership tried to prevent a settlement of the wages question in the Indian Oxygen, wherein our union is a recognized union". You have however, not mentioned what that agreement was. A cursory view of it would make it clear that while accepting some monetary rise you accepted the introduction of labour-saving devices. Though a formal clause of "no retrenchment" has been included, as in every agreement on introduction of such schemes, in reality it was a green signal to the management to go ahead with their retrenchment measures. This betrayal of the interests of Indian Oxygen workers is being paraded as a big victory for the working class. Thanks to your agreement the management was successful in introducing a modern cardpunching and data-processing machine.

Your representatives in Indian Oxygen are so shamelessly co-operating with the management that some of your supporters openly appeared as prosecution witnesses in so-called disciplinary proceedings against three popular leaders of the Taratala factory of the Indian Oxygen, resulting in dismissal of these workers. A nine-day strike was organized against the high-handed attitude of the management in April 1967 and the management was forced to accept arbitration. The arbitrator gave a decision to reinstate two of these workers which the management refused and went to the High Court. It should be noted in this connection that your local leaderships kept mum about the whole matter and gave a helping hand to the British monopoly concern.

The annual conference of the union was held in April 1968 and two panels were submitted for the election.

Though your panel was defeated by majority our comrades agreed to a proposal to defer the announcement of the decision until a reasonable decision was taken in the presence of Comrade Jyoti Basu, President of the Union. Your leaders, however, unilaterally announced the election of your Managing Committee and it is not surprising that the management readily recognized your union.

Your class-collaboration with the management has reached such limits that even when the U.F. Labour Minister called a meeting of the representatives of workers and the management to discuss the 12-point charter of demand signed by 1,700 out of 2,400 employed workers, your union and management joined hands and boycotted the meeting. Your people even went to the extent of criticizing the Deputy Chief Minister and State Labour Minister through a leaflet and indirectly applauded the decision of the management to boycott the tripartite meeting.

Despite the fact that the BPTUC General Secretary sharply criticized the betrayal of the union, the Trade Union Record, the organ of the AITUC, published your version only.

A convention of employees of Indian Oxygen workers

was organized which sharply condemned your disruptive role in openly maligning the U.F. Government.

You have also levelled a charge against us that "your leadership obstructed the reinstatement of the victimized leaders in Indian Oil for the simple reason that the union was not under your control." The charge is extremely serious and we cannot take it in a light-hearted manner.

You want to say that the management was kind enough to take the union activists back but our people desired their victimization. Behind this malicious remark you want to hide the fact that your own leaders, Y.D. Sharma and Sushil Ghosh, signed an agreement with the IOC stipulating among other things the withdrawal of court injunction against installation of two more automatic machines. Your representative agreed secretly to give up your opposition to automation. In a circular, the IOC management intimated to employees that Manas Roy Chowdhuri, General Secretary of your union in Calcutta, would not object to or obstruct the installation of new automatic machines.

Your party leaders agreed that the ten victimized employees would individually express regret and pray for reinstatement to the management in writing. By agreement, four of the employees were transferred as a measure of punishment. You may not feel that it is abject surrender to the bourgeoisie but others have a right to do so.

We would also like you to note that our comrades tried to unify the movement by bridging the split and your representatives agreed to disband the parallel committees set up by your comrades. We had fully supported the struggle for the reinstatement of these employees through united efforts. However, your representatives went back from the commitment and preferred to sign a secret deal with the management supporting automation. This is what we opposed but you want to malign us by saying that we opposed reinstatement of these ten victimized employees.

Incidentally, your representative, Y.D.Sharma, clearly opposed the re-employment of victimized Caltex workers in

IOC. Therefore, despite the assurance given by the Union Labour minister that 20 victimized employees of Caltex would be employed, only three could be absorbed so far.

3. When you are making a charge of disrupting the union at Burnpur, you are not on safe ground. Though you are the President of this union I do not know whether you visit the place once in a year. Your local leadership here is thoroughly discredited among the workers and the manner in which they run the union is worth investigating. Here you personally indulged in virulent attacks against our comrades during your last visit and your local leaders have virtually made it impossible for our comrades to work inside the union. That our influence is growing among the workers could be verified from the fact that during the 1967 elections when Tahir Hussain contested against our comrade, he could barely save his security and our candidate was defeated only by about 700 votes, despite the fact that our candidate got twice the number of votes as your candidate. During the mid-term election we could win that seat with a thumping majority. You are still keeping the union as a pocket-borough of your party and rejecting every effort of joint functioning. Even now if you show some concern for unity there is no difficulty to settle the question through democratic procedures.

It is indeed amusing to learn from you that "you are trying to smash our work in the tea plantations area." The reality is that you are getting isolated from the workers because of your own class-collaborationist policies while we cannot help in maintaining your hold over the working class. If the disillusioned workers come to our party with the hope of getting better leadership, we are not to be blamed for that. It is for you to seriously ponder over the method of your functioning in the tea plantation union and see what is wrong with your policies.

In the Kerala plantations even before the last General Elections our influence had been growing and in the 1965 elections your leaders were trounced by our nominees.

Our party took the initiative in launching a Statewide campaign for workers' demands, which was opposed in the beginning by your partymen. Our comrades led the strike of plantation workers which ended in getting some concessions. Your comrades joined the struggle only at a later stage and naturally it adversely affected your position in the Kerala plantations. So far as Bengal is concerned there is nothing for you to complain. There is no T.U. rivalry there. In Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Terai you were not in the picture at all. In Dooars though in the executive we have an overwhelming majority, we have not disturbed a member of your party who is working as General Secretary. He, however, utilized the opportunity of the arrest of our leaders to shift the union office to his residence which was only restored to its earlier place by our comrades. Moreover, they insisted on proper accounting of union funds and depositing the money in the bank. Nothing beyond this has happened in the union which would lead to smashing your work in North Bengal at least.

To say that our influence is growing because the Home portfolio is with us is sheer slander and we reject it. You should have noted that despite twenty years of the Home portfolio in its hands, the Congress Party could not strengthen its influence in the plantations in Kerala and West Bengal. Does it not look odd when you try to level the charge of using the Home portfolio for bolstering our trade unions? Do you not realize that by levelling this charge you are virtually echoing the slander of the reactionaries against the U.F. Governments in Kerala and West Bengal?

In our previous letter we pointed out that the organized strength of the AITUC has been falling day by day. When the bourgeoisie is launching a ferocious offensive against the working class, the AITUC is today not in a position to strike back effectively. Under your leadership, the AITUC has virtually been emasculated and the bourgeoisie has been able to get on with the offensive with comparative ease. We wish that it should acquire the status of the premier militant organization of the working class in our country.

It is in this context that we raised the question of the AITUC's dwindling membership. In order to hide this fact you are placing reliance on inflating figures of membership. In order to hide this fact you are placing reliance on inflating figures of membership. This has been going on for more than a decade and you continue to indulge in such a practice. However, the real strength cannot go up by just showing a rise in paper membership.

You have tried to ridicule us at our reference to the recent verification results by saying that, "it is good to see that you have developed faith in the Government of India's verification procedure to measure the place of the AITUC. That is revolutionary progress enough on your part."

Our main complaint is that you are inflating the membership figure unjustifiably which is difficult to prove before the verifying authorities. This can be seen from the fact that in 1958, you claimed a membership of 14 lakhs and seeing that you got only five lakhs., next time you reduced even the claims by about four lakhs. It is indeed tarnishing the image of the AITUC. You are showing a higher membership only to claim more representatives from the Government. Your own representatives in the Credentials Committee in the Bombay conference stressed the need for this so that it would help in obtaining more nominations.

Moreover, this inflated membership figures are also used by your party to show your strength against us within the AITUC. We are totally against this method of work.

Now you want to cover up your failure to prove the claims of membership by levelling false charges against us that the membership went down due to our sabotage. We only request you to go into the records of verification and see yourself that some of your "mighty" organizations which provided you with hundreds of delegates in the AITUC session could not even produce records before the verifying authorities.

The bulk of the membership of the AITUC is no doubt in West Bengal and Kerala and we are in a majority in both the States. You have inflated memberships of your unions in

these States substantially to reduce our majority which has also contributed to giving the AITUC less certified membership. When you slander the States like West Bengal and Kerala, why do you not level the same charges against your own State Committees in other States which could not prove even 20 per cent of their claims in some cases. But this would be rather inconvenient to you.

As for failure of our unions to submit returns properly we have openly criticized our unions. *People's Democracy* while commenting on the latest verification results noted, "as many as 420 unions had not submitted returns in time and about 160 unions had their registration cancelled because of non-submission of their records. This is due not only to the failure of the revisionists but also to the failure of some of our trade union leaders who have developed a parochial and local outlook and failed to understand the importance of the AITUC as the central organization of the trade union struggles of the working class".

Thus while criticizing our own weakness, we also pointed out the cause of this outlook "But once again the question arises, from where comes this parochial local outlook which is callous towards all-India unity? The answer lies in the way Dange and Company are functioning the AITUC".

Therefore, the weakness can be overcome if the functioning of the AITUC is reoriented and democratic norms are established to build a genuine fighting centre of the T.U. movement of the country.

We have been trying all these days to improve the functioning of the AITUC and keep the T.U. movement united. It is with this idea we had refrained from starting our own trade union centre.

Your approach however is not conducive to T.U. united actions. Our hope that discussions at party level may restore the joint functioning of the organization has been belied by the manner in which you have responded to our sincere efforts.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
P. Sundarayya

**P.Ramamurti's Letter to
S.A. Dange on September 3,1969**

My dear Dange,

As mutually agreed to, representatives of your party including you and our party including myself met on August 21,1969, to discuss the disruption of the trade unions loyal to the AITUC, the functioning of the AITUC and other matters connected therewith.

We were looking forward to this meeting at the highest level of the two parties, with hopes that it would lead to unity in these trade unions and rapidly pave the way for unleashing a mighty united movement throughout the country.

That is why we came to the meeting with concrete proposals for restoring unity.

The only point on which agreement was reached was on the question of the machinery in the State TUCs to scrutinize and forward applications for the trade unions. You agreed to our suggestion that hereafter such applications for affiliation should be scrutinized at the State level by a committee of four representatives of the two political trends and forwarded. It was further held that this committee can only make recommendations, unanimous or divergent, but cannot withhold the applications.

I regret, however, to state that apart from this question nothing tangible emerged from the talks particularly on the all-important question of T.U. unity, although no objection was taken to our proposal in this regard. Yet many practical difficulties were put forward as standing in the way. Finally it was stated that the discussion would be continued with the members of the Working Committee from the States. No such meetings, however, took place.

Our party attached the greatest importance to this question of putting an end to the disruption in the trade unions, owing allegiance to the AITUC and restoring unity in its ranks. Restoration of unity has assumed paramount importance today in the background of the huge struggles that have taken

place in the recent past, such as that of the two hundred thousand jute workers, tea garden workers and the textile workers of West Bengal. In view of the ferment in the working class, such actions are possible today in other States as well. The biggest obstacle to the development of such a mighty movement and struggle is the disunity among the unions owing allegiance to the AITUC.

Furthermore, in the developing political situation in the country, the strengthening of the united front movement of the democratic forces assumes tremendous importance. How could this be strengthened if the working class is unable to play its role because of division in its own ranks. Needless to say that in mobilizing the working class, both for its own immediate demands as well as for the general democratic tasks facing the country, the AITUC has a great role to play. The division in the AITUC unions is the highest obstacle in the way.

In this connection, I may mention that it has not been possible to have a worthwhile mobilization of the working class even around the Platform of Unity unanimously adopted at the Bombay session of the AITUC. I am of the opinion that in the absence of unity at the base, the urge for such mobilization get blunted.

Our party, therefore, once again makes the following proposals:

1. Wherever splits have taken place, and the rival unions are led by comrades belonging to your party and our party, the two rival unions should be immediately merged into one union.

2. After jointly scrutinizing the memberships of the two unions, a common list of members should be drawn up.

3. Election should be held to the union's Executive Committee on the basis of this common membership list and on the basis of proportional representation, if no common list for office-bearers and Executive Committee members is agreed upon before the elections.

We would propose that we should take steps to get the

constitution of the unions amended so as to make elections on the basis of proportional representation obligatory.

4. Democratic functioning of unions must be guaranteed by regular meetings of the executive and providing that no agreement with the management on issues affecting the workers will be final unless ratified by a majority in a general body meeting of the workers.

5. In order to see that the above-mentioned proposals are effectively carried out, we propose that our respective party leaderships should give a directive to their respective State Committees to immediately meet together and set up appropriate joint committees at the State level and carry out the above process of merger within a stipulated time. The joint committee can draw up priorities.

6. Disputes in this regard, if considered at the union level, should be resolved by the District Committees of the two parties, and in case of failure by the State Committees of the two parties.

We may point out that these are not new proposals. The AITUC has made the same proposal to the unions affiliated to the other T.U. centres and has always taken the position along with the WFTU, that division of the working class on the basis of political affiliations is detrimental to the interest of the working class.

Moreover, towards the end of 1966, the General Council of the AITUC adopted a resolution calling for unity and merger of the rival unions owing allegiance to the AITUC on the same basis as proposed above. Unfortunately, despite efforts made by our comrades in many States, there was no response from your comrades. That is why, we have made the proposal that the leaderships of the two parties at the highest level must give a directive to their State Committees and see that the policy resolution of the AITUC in regard to the unity of T.U.s, is actually implemented in practice and does not remain a pious declaration. If the two parties in the AITUC cannot implement this, surely it would be hypocritical to make such proposals to the other T.U. centres and their political leaderships.

As regards the functioning of the AITUC, we have many things to say. We would insist that any decision on current political developments should be taken only on the basis of prior discussion and agreement. We have much to say on the question of delegations of the AITUC and its representation in the various governmental bodies.

But we are not elaborating these in this letter because we give the greatest importance to the question of T.U. unity. Without that unity, all talk of mobilizing the working class becomes meaningless. Of course, the meetings of the working Committee and General Council have become formal, and these meetings are not used as levers for uniting the working class for any big movement. This again is due to the lack of unity at the base.

We would therefore urge on your party to give the utmost consideration to these problems and agree to our proposals. Of course, some difficulties will crop up while actually implementing them. But that should not deter us from the basic task of uniting the trade unions. We are ever prepared to meet and overcome the difficulties.

With warm greetings,

Yours fraternally,
P.Ramamurti.

P.Ramamurti's letter to S.A.Dange of October 16.1969

New Delhi
16.10.1969

My dear Dange,

A recent newspaper announcement stated that the Working Committee of the AITUC had decided to hold the next AITUC session in December 1969 in Guntur.

You will recall that two days prior to the last meeting of the Working Committee last August, the representatives of your party and our party met to discuss the question of unity of the Trade Unions owing allegiance to the AITUC. We had put forward concrete proposals for achieving unity.

Although you did not reject them, you said that it required

further consideration. I had subsequently written to you in the beginning of August. As yet there has been no reply. Meanwhile, further disruption of trade unions is reported from many places.

I am firmly of the opinion that the next session of the AITUC, if it should serve the purpose of galvanising the working class, should go down in history as the Congress of Unity. This it cannot be, if the parties do not come to an agreement on the basis and the method of restoring unity.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we resume the talks with a determination to restore unity. If for any reason, these talks get prolonged, the AITUC session should be postponed.

With regard to the venue of the session, I understand that the Working Committee left it to be decided by the Secretariat. I do not know when the Secretariat met and decided on this issue. At any rate, Comrade M.K.Pandhe, our comrade in the Secretariat, did not receive any notice of such a meeting for considering this question.

Moreover, is it not necessary for you to consult our party when coming to a decision on such an important question? During the last few years and particularly during the last year, the working class movement in West Bengal has registered tremendous strides forward. The biggest strike action, such as the jute workers' strike, tea-garden workers' strike, textile workers' strike, have taken place there. Every section of the workers has been on the move. the attempt to transfer the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the workers are being frustrated by the working class.

In these conditions, the session, if held there, will help not only to consolidate these gains but will also inspire the delegates.

In contrast what is there in Guntur? The only workers there are the tobacco workers. I do not know what consideration weighed with you to decide upon Guntur as the venue of the session, particularly when the invitation from the Secretary of the BPTUC was there. All these go to show that the decision was entirely a factional one.

I would urge that this attitude should be given up and the question be reconsidered and a proper decision taken.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
P. Ramamurti
For Polit Bureau,
Communist Party of India
(Marxist)

S.A. Dange's Letter to P. Ramamurti of October 20, 1969

New Delhi October, 20, 1969

My dear P.R.,

Your letter dated October, 16, 1969.

The venue of the AITUC session or its timing is not yet finalized. Guntur has been suggested and this was mentioned in the last Working Committee meeting, where some people asked for Calcutta being kept in mind. But it was all off the record. The AITUC Secretariat has not met to decide on the question. When it meets, we will inform Pandhe.

But that is only the formal aspect of the matter. As you say, T.U. unity should be preserved and we should hold joint discussions on it, and arrive at some agreement before going to the session, if possible. I agree.

Now as regards your suggestion of holding the session at Calcutta. I agree that in recent times the working class movement in Bengal has made tremendous progress and that Calcutta therefore should provide the proper venue for the AITUC session.

But the question is—will the session there be a session of unity or break up ? As things stand today, it will be the latter.

The way your party is attacking our unions, workers and leaders both, is not the way of unity in the T.U. movement. I need not recount the cases. In such conditions, your people will simply break up the session by sheer gangsterism. And we on our part are not going to sit with folded hands. So instead of holding the AITUC session, the question will be

who can mobilize more lathis and show bigger "membership" and strength that way. The police, as usual, will be on your side. Thus there the session is sure to break. And at the end of it all, you will issue a statement saying that you had the majority and that you are the real AITUC, though you know you have no majority on an all-India scale. To come to such an end, is it necessary to provide a few broken heads? That is why I am not at all in favour of calling the session at Calcutta, because I want to preserve whatever unity there still remains.

Hence, I am proposing to hold the session in some place other than Calcutta.

But we can and should discuss not only the venue but also other things.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
S.A.Dange
Chairman, CPI

N.K.Krishnan's Letter to Sundarayya on December, 24

New Delhi,
December 24, 1969

Dear Comrade,

1. Eight comrades belonging to your party led by Comrade P.Ramamurti walked out from the meeting of the Working Committee of the AITUC held on December 21, 1996, after the resolution on "Unity in the AITUC" was adopted by a majority of 29 to eight votes. There had been a walk-out by some members of your party earlier in 1967 from the General Council meeting, though at that time, they rejoined the meeting of the next day. However, this time, Comrade Ramamurti in a press conference held on the very next day made statements which imply serious threat to the unity of the AITUC.

2. We are unable to appreciate the method of making a statement and walking out from meetings of the AITUC. It would have been better if, after going on record in any way they wanted, your

comrades had stayed on to participate in the meeting of the Working Committee. The AITUC is not a bourgeois forum but the premier organization of the working class in our country. In it many parties function and the cardinal principle of functioning in such an organization, a principle to which we have always adhered, is to try for unanimity. Failing unanimity the minority should submit to the majority.

3. In the draft resolution submitted by your party members reference has been made to non-implementation by us of the General Council resolution of 1966, and this has been made a ground for the astounding proposal to affiliate all unions including rival unions. A copy of the resolution of the General Council is enclosed for ready reference. As you will see, it states:

“The General Council is of the opinion that whatever may have been the circumstances under which rival unions have been formed in the past, such rival unions should not be formed under whatever pretexts in the future.”

In spite of this, in a number of States, your party members have formed several rival unions, even after the resolution was passed. Is this implementation of the General Council resolution of 1966?

Who has violated it? Your party members or ours?

It is alleged by your party members that ad hoc committees at State level to settle the so-called disputed cases were not set up. You are aware that such a committee was set up in Tamil Nadu two years ago. It could not function because your members were more interested in setting up rival unions rather than in co-operating and functioning this committee. Last month again, a committee has been formed in Tamil Nadu.

But may we know why such a committee was not formed in West Bengal where your party members are in the majority in the State Committee?

4. The proposal made by your party members that rival unions be given affiliation to the AITUC is contrary to all accepted principles of trade unionism and cannot be accepted by us. The proposal would also go contrary to the unanimous

resolution of the General Council, referred to above. It would put a premium on the formation of rival unions. Apart from our party, other parties working in the AITUC are also totally opposed to affiliating rival unions.

Your party members allege that we have been forming rival unions. This is not a fact. But if it is so, as you constantly allege, then why should you object to our proposal and put forward your suggestion for affiliation of rival unions? Since you press for affiliating all rival unions, it is a clear indication that it is your party members who have been active in splitting unions and forming rival unions.

5. Concrete suggestions have been made in the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the AITUC acting on which unification could be brought about at least for the purpose of sending delegates to the Guntur session in all cases where rival unions exist. A compromise suggestion which was finally accepted and now forms part of the resolution reads as follows:

“(a) No rival union should be granted affiliation to the AITUC.

“(b) No rival union will be formed in future by anyone working in a union affiliated to the AITUC.

“(c) For participation in the Guntur session, only the affiliated union shall send delegates. In cases where rival unions exist, delegates to the Guntur session shall be elected by a secret ballot among members of the union affiliated and seeking affiliation, if such an arrangement can be mutually agreed upon. In such a case, and if they belong to the rival union, they should enrol themselves as members of the affiliated union. In case no such agreement can be arrived at, only the affiliated union will be entitled to send delegates.” (text enclosed)

These suggestions were put forward by comrades belonging neither to your party nor to ours. If your party had some further suggestion to make, apart from your insistence on granting affiliation to all unions including rival unions, your members could have made those in the meeting instead of walking out in a huff.

We may remind you that your party is in a majority in the West Bengal TUC and on many occasions, you have taken decisions with which we do not agree. Yet our comrades have never resorted to the disruptive methods of walk-outs.

Though the Working Committee has passed a resolution on unity in the AITUC with which members belonging to all parties excluding yours are in agreement, in the interest of unity, we are willing to discuss the matter with you once again.

As you know, the applications for affiliation all go to the Credentials Committee in which your members as well as those belonging to other parties besides ours are always included. So far, all recommendations have been unanimous except in the case of one union. In this meeting also, a Credentials Committee having two representatives of your party as members has been set up. If your nominees find that the Credentials Committee is adopting a partisan attitude, they could give their point of view. In the past, such a situation has never arisen and all recommendations except in one case have been unanimous.

This also shows that your allegations that unions belonging to your party have been kept out deliberately and mala fide, are totally baseless and incorrect.

6. The Bombay session of the AITUC was held in May 1966. As a matter of fact, the session was scheduled for December 1965 but was postponed as some of the comrades belonging to your party were in jail. At the Bombay session, it was assured that if any of your comrades who had a leading position in the AITUC continued to be in jail, they would retain their position. As a matter of fact, all your party members were out by then and participated in the deliberations. The election of office-bearers and to all leading committees were through mutual consultation and agreement. In no case was a vote taken in the election of office-bearers or members of the Working Committee and the General Council. The only occasion on which a vote was taken was for the post of the General Secretary. And that had to be taken because though

we voted for the President and others belonging to your party, your party insisted on putting up a candidate against Comrade S.A.Dange.

We therefore, ask your party to reconsider its attitude and not to take steps which would lead to a split in the AITUC. In a fast developing situation, such an eventuality could only help our class enemies.

7. Regarding the Guntur session, we can arrive at an agreement on the basis of the resolution passed by the Working Committee or any other reasonable suggestion, not based on affiliation of rival unions. We also propose that all resolutions for this session should be discussed in advance and drafted jointly. Elections to all offices and leading bodies should also take place, as at Bombay, through mutual agreement.

If you agree, we can meet at a place and date convenient to both parties.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
Sd/-N.K.Krishnan,
Secretary,
National Council,
Communist Party of India.

P.Ramamurti's Letter to N.K.Krishnan of January 5, 1970

My dear N.K.Krishnan,

We are in receipt of your letter dated December 24, 1969.

The political line that you have been consistently adopting is one of disrupting the United Fronts in which our party is a leading constituent and forming an anti-Marxist United Front with the help of all parties and groups willing to join you in fighting our party. For this purpose you have no compunction in seeking the support and co-operation of the Congress Party or even an avowedly landlord party like the Kerala Congress. At last you succeeded in this attempt of toppling the Kerala U.F. Government and forming an all-in anti-Marxist Front Ministry with the active support of both

the Congress parties. No wonder you received plaudits from the leaders of the Jana Sangh and Swatantra parties.

In West Bengal, too, you have been pursuing the same line. It is well-known that in the General Elections of 1967, you prevented the formation of a single U.F. against the Congress by putting forward demands for seats for you out of all proportion to its influence with the sole aim of making the Bangla Congress the leading party in the U.F. and reducing our strength. The election results showed up the bogus nature of your claims. After the elections although our party was the leading party, you opposed our party being given the Chief Ministership and the Home portfolio and wanted these to go to a bourgeois party like the Bangla Congress.

And since the formation of the new U.F. Ministry in March 1969, after the mid-term elections, your party has been actively abetting the Bangla Congress leaders in their campaign of vilification of our party and the Government and even mouthing the same slanders. You are only waiting for an opportunity to topple the Ministry and form an anti-Marxist Ministry of the Kerala type with the support of the Congress Party.

It is this same line that you are pursuing in the mass organizations also. Two years ago, despite the fact that your leading comrades were parties to the unanimous decisions of the Central Kisan Council, they violated them and then split and formed a rival kisan organization.

In the trade union movement also, your partymen have been pursuing the same line of splitting the united organization. In this letter dated August 19, 1969, to S.A. Dange, Comrade P. Sundarayya had given illustrative cases of such splitting activities by your party men.

In a number of unions, where your partymen held the majority in the Executive Committees and among office-bearers, to which positions they had been elected when the party was united, they not only did not function the unions democratically and entered into agreements with the management behind the back of the mass of workers and even

without consulting the Executive Committees, but they would not also hold elections. In many cases as in the case of the Delhi Textile Union, Coimbatore District Textile Workers' Union they arbitrarily dissolved branches wholesale for fear that they would lose in the annual elections, even though the Constitution of the union did not provide for any such dissolution. In other cases like the State Transport Workers' Union, Madras, and the Magnesite Workers' Union of Salem, when in the annual elections your partymen were defeated, they ran away with the records of the union and claimed they were still the office-bearers of the union.

Enraged at such undemocratic functioning and anti-working class activities many new unions had come up which are mass unions, have led innumerable strikes and other struggles and won victories.

It was in these conditions that at my insistence the General Council of the AITUC, in December 1966, passed the resolution calling for the merger of unions on the basis of proportional representation and democratic functioning of the unions. That resolution also called for the setting up of committees at the State and all-India level to implement the resolution.

The State Committees and the General Council were also called upon to set up an appropriate machinery to ensure the democratic functioning of trade unions and to resolve disputes in this regard.

That resolution was a composite one. Did your party which controls the AITUC Centre and all the State Committees except that of West Bengal, do anything about these?

You say that "Such a Committee was set up in Tamilnadu two years ago. It could not function because your members were interested in setting up rival unions, rather than in co-operating and functioning this committee. Last month again, a committee has been formed in Tamilnadu."

If you had the least regard for truth, you would not have made such a statement. In 1967, in successive meetings, it was our comrades who persistently demanded the

implementation of this resolution and it was your partymen that resisted it. At last, they had to agree to set up such a committee. The committee visited a district and went into the question of the rival unions there. They were faced with the irrefutable facts of the responsibility for the split on the part of your partymen. Our comrade, Nalasivam, made concrete proposals for holding joint elections. Your comrade said that the question would be discussed in the next meeting of the committee. With that the committee died, because your comrade who was the convener, never called its meeting despite repeatedly being urged to do so by our representative.

It may also be mentioned that the Working Committee of the State TUC, controlled by you, never met for two years after that.

All this happened because your partymen, evidently acting on your advice, were not interested in unity. This is evident from the fact that within a few days of the setting up of the "Unity Committee" by the State Committee, K.T.K. Thangamani, set up a rival textile workers' union in Madurai, although only a few months ago a regular election had taken place to the existing union. The only difficulty was that the overwhelming majority of the workers would not accept your partymen in a majority in the Executive. They, however, had kept K.T.K. Thangamani as the President of the union.

Similarly, after your partymen lost the majority in the Executive of the Vikramasingapuram Textile Workers' Union, although the election was unanimous, they started a rival union. It is not without significance that just about that time when the General Secretary of the Madukarai Cement Workers' Union, who is your partyman and Comrade K. Ramani, its President, who belongs to our party, jointly wrote to the State Committee to depute two comrades belonging to your and our parties and come and conduct the elections to the union, the State Committee is still to act on it although over two years have elapsed. When our comrades in the so-called unity committee raised it, your partymen kept quiet.

And yet your partymen shamelessly wrote to the Registrar that elections have been held!

In the Sugar Workers' Union in Pugalur, on the eve of the elections one of your partymen got an injunction from the court restraining the executive from holding elections, and within a few days the President of the union who is a leading member of your party, started a rival union and became its President also!

On the other hand, even now our comrades have not set up a rival union in the Madukarai Cement Factory. They have been striving to persuade your partymen to hold proper elections. Your partymen know what the result of an election would be. Only few months back, in the Works Committee elections, all the candidates put up by your partymen, in spite of the support from the INTUC union and the DMK, were defeated by our comrades, who secured all the seats. The voting was in the proportion of 2 : 7.

In the Nagappatnam Steel Rolling Mills, in the last elections of the union, your partymen refused to come to any agreement with our comrades, but instead made a united front with the Congress and DMK and opposed us. Our comrades were defeated by a few votes. The voting was in the proportion of 52 per cent to 48 per cent. Our comrades cheerfully accepted the voting and did not form any rival union.

We can go on giving such instances. The boot is on the other leg. It was your partymen who were busy in setting up rival unions and who sabotaged every effort made by our party to restore unity.

When the Working Committee of the State TUC met two years after in August 1969, our comrades again demanded implementation of the resolution. The correspondence between your party and ours in Tamilnadu subsequent to it would show that your party would not agree to unity. They argued that until unanimity of views on all trade union problems was arrived at, no merger was possible. Our comrades exposed the fallacy and disruptive nature of this argument.

It was only in the last meeting of the Working Committee

of the State Committee, which was called with the one agenda of the date of the State T.U. Conference, our comrades forced the issue once again and finally your partymen agreed to the setting up of a new committee.

With the attitude that Dange and your partymen have adopted in the last meeting of the Working Committee of the AITUC, viz., of refusing to carry out the operative part of the December 1966 resolution of merging the rival unions on a democratic basis, we are sure this new committee of the Tamilnadu TUC will also share the same fate as its predecessor.

You ask, what has the West Bengal Committee of the TUC, in which our comrades are in a majority done by way of implementation of this resolution?

You know full well that the problem of rival unions did not arise in an acute form in West Bengal. There were two rival unions in Jessop. Our comrades have been repeatedly proposing to Comrade Ranen Sen to come with our comrades to the Jessops, meet your and our party comrades and persuade them to merge. Despite the reluctance shown by Comrade Ranen Sen, we at last succeeded in persuading the comrades and only recently elections were held jointly and the union has been unified.

Our comrades have been approaching your partymen both locally and at the State level to similarly merge the rival unions in Burnpur, but there has been no response from your sides.

In Indian Oxygen, where there was a dispute recently regarding the elections, your comrades agreed to discuss the whole question in the presence of the President, Comrade Jyoti Basu, but went back on the agreement and set up a rival union.

In the collieries your Comrade Kalyan Roy has been refusing to accept thousands of members in the branches run by our comrades and despite repeated efforts made by our comrades, no discussion even has taken place. No annual conference has taken place for the last eight years! And

yet we have not started any rival union, but are striving to get your partymen agree to function the union democratically.

When in the annual elections of the Petroleum Workers' Union our comrades lost the majority to your comrades, we did not set up a rival union; we bowed to the democratic decision of the workers.

On the other hand only last year, your partymen set up a rival union in the Special Alloy Steel Plant, although the Durgapur Steel Workers' Union, which has fought many a battle against the management, already exists as an affiliate of the AITUC and is a recognized union. Its representative character is shown by the fact that in the recent Works Committee elections all the seats were won by the nominees of the union, even though your union put up its candidates in alliance with the INTUC union.

And yet you had no compunction to give affiliation to this union, which was started with the sole purpose of disrupting the unity of the workers. The fact that it was a rival to the existing affiliate of the AITUC was no bar for such affiliation; why? Because your partymen had started that rival union.

May we ask why is it that your partymen in West Bengal, after the last general strike of jute workers, have started rival branches in almost all of the branches of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union.

Our comrades have been repeatedly urging the implementation of the December 1966 resolution in the meeting of the Working Committee but Dange turned a deaf ear to them.

At last towards the end of May 1969, Dange wrote to Comrade P. Sundarayya, pretending great concern for restoring unity in the T.U.s, and proposed that representatives of the two parties should meet to discuss the question of restoring unity.

We readily accepted the proposal and the meeting took place in the last week of August on the eve of the meeting

of the Working Committee. Neither Dange nor any one from your party had any proposal to make. It was we who put forward concrete proposals based on the December 1966 resolution. Dange did not accept them; nor did he turn them down. He stated that he would discuss the matter with your partymen who would be attending the Working Committee meeting and said that we should meet after the Working Committee meeting.

Even after a week no move for a meeting came from Dange. I wrote to Dange on September 3, reiterating our concrete proposals and urging your party to accept them.

Again I wrote on October 16 in which I stated:

"I am firmly of opinion that the next session of the AITUC, if it is to serve the purpose of galvanizing the working class, should go down in history as the Congress of Unity. This, it cannot be, if the two parties do not come to agreement on the basis and method of restoring unity.

"It is, therefore, of utmost importance that we resume the talks with a determination to restore unity. If for any reason, these talks get prolonged, the AITUC session should be postponed."

There was no response to these appeals, although Dange lost no time in replying to that part of the letter in which I had proposed that Calcutta, instead of Guntur, should be the venue of the next session and rejected it with a slanderous attack on our party in Bengal.

Again I wrote a detailed letter to Dange on November 9, pleading for the acceptance of the proposals made for implementing the December 1966 resolution on Trade Union Unity.

Not only was there no response to any of these letters, but on the eve of the last meeting of the Working Committee in December 20, when I proposed that our two parties' representatives should meet before the Working Committee meeting, Dange summarily and brusquely turned it down and said, "what is there to discuss? The Working Committee will decide things."

In the Working Committee meeting, you were determined to reject every proposal we made. Even the proposal to change the dates by just one day was rejected by you. And yet Dange, on his own, later changed the dates decided by the Working Committee!

He unilaterally sent a circular proposing that the Working Committee should decide that the affiliation applications should reach the AITUC office by December 13 and even without the Working Committee, which was convened for December 20 had met, implemented it. Our comrades pointed out the absurdity of the Working Committee deciding on the 20th that the application should reach the office seven days before the decision was taken and pleaded that all applications reaching till January 15, 1970, i.e., clear 11 days before the AITUC session, should be accepted. Even this was rejected by your comrades. What else is it but a calculated attempt to shut out our unions from the AITUC?

And then your partymen proposed a resolution on 'unity'. It said nothing about the failure to implement the December 1966 resolution on the subject. It peremptorily ordered the dissolution of every rival union, without going into the cause that led to the formation of each such union, its mass character, and struggles that have been conducted under its banner.

The resolution thus sought to put a stamp of approval of the Working Committee to the refusal of your partymen to implement the resolution unanimously adopted by a higher body, viz., the General Council.

You talk of the amendment moved by one member who does not belong to your or our party and which your comrades have accepted. But the fact remains that amendment does not alter the basic fact that the Working Committee has buried the resolution of the General Council on unity and endorsed your refusal to implement it.

You say that you are prepared to dissolve the rival unions formed by you and ask us why we are not prepared to do so. The fact is that the rival unions formed by your partymen are pitiable unions, having received little response from the

workers. As pointed out earlier, most of them were formed when your partymen were not able to secure a majority in the elections. You have nothing to lose by dissolving them.

But the unions formed by our comrades came into existence because of the anti-democratic, anti-working class activities of your partymen, reflecting the anger of the mass of workers. Hence they grew into mass unions and have conducted huge struggles.

You refuse to merge them on the basis of democratic elections, because that would expose all your pretensions to have a majority in the AITUC. And you ask them to be simply dissolved! That would suit you very well and facilitate the carrying out of your collaborationist policies without any hindrance and resistance. A neat plan indeed! But we cannot oblige you.

We would not have but forward the proposal for the affiliation of all unions—rival or otherwise—if you had agreed to faithfully implement the December 1966 resolution. In fact in my letter to Dange on October 16, I had proposed that we should meet with a determination to restore unity and if the talks, for any reason, get prolonged the AITUC session may be postponed.

Only when we found that Dange did not even agree to talks between our parties, and went ahead with the preparation for the session, I had no other alternative but to propose that all unions seeking affiliation should be affiliated. The resolution moved declared that steps would be taken to implement the December 1966 resolution on merger and democratic functioning.

If this determination was there, why should these fighting unions be deprived of their participation in the AITUC session? The merger could take place after the session. The fact is that you do not want fighting unions in the AITUC.

All this is not fortuitous. The last session of the WFTU laid its finger on the spot when it said that the main cause of split in the trade union movement was class-collaboration by a section of the trade union leaders. "The WFTU has

always stated that the main cause of trade union division lies in class collaboration by a section of trade union forces on the one hand, and of unity on the other hand in advancing the defence of class interests."

The records of your partymen and our party comrades in the trade union movement during the last few years bear ample testimony to this profound truth.

The record would show that we have been everywhere taking the initiative for forging unity for united actions of the working class against the offensive of the ruling class. The record of your partymen has been one of disrupting united organization, pursuit of class collaborationist policies, and for this purpose and for clinging on to offices, refusal to hold democratic elections to unions. Most of the State TUCs controlled by your partymen have been clinging on to office for years without holding elections. Maharashtra has not held a conference for 11 years, Tamilnadu for ten years, Kerala for eight years; and so on. It is only the West Bengal TUC, where our comrades are in a majority, that has been regularly holding conferences and elections.

It is not without significance that the mightiest struggles of the working class have taken place during the last few years precisely in those areas where our party is strong.

In Bombay city Dange claims to be very strong, particularly in the textiles. The biggest textile centre of India saw a number of textile mills closed and also constant attack on the workers. And yet no resistance was organized: no unity was forged; on the contrary all the efforts made by our comrades to have united front action and activize the Girni Kamgar Union of which Dange is the President were defeated by Dange. This once-mighty union has today no membership worth the name. And yet I am sure that at the next session Dange will claim, and it will be upheld by your majority, that this union has a membership of over fifty thousand.

It is no wonder that the textile workers of Bombay could not be rallied when the Shiva Sena went on the rampage, not

even for defending the Girni Kamgar Union, which remained closed for months, after the attack.

Is it any wonder that with these policies, in the last mid-term elections in West Bengal in February, 1969, while the United Front not only retained all seats it had earlier won in the working class constituencies but wrested every seat lost earlier to the Congress, the only seat in working class areas lost to the Congress by the U.F was the Kharagpur seat where your partyman, a sitting member, contested.

One has only to study the reports of the Study Groups of the National Labour Commission. Dange nominated your partymen on eleven of these twelve Study Groups. On only one, on the Study Group on tea industry, he nominated our Comrade Manoranjan Roy.

Is it fortuitous that in most of the Study Groups, your partymen as representatives of the AITUC joined hands with the employers, Government and INTUC nominees and made unanimous recommendations?

Among your partymen on these Study Groups, there were leading figures such as Ranen Sen, Balachandra Menon, G. Sundaram and others. Yet nowhere do we find a word of condemnation of the ruthless exploitation by the employers, nor of the barbarous repression, shootings and killings by Government during strikes; on the other hand, they pay tributes to official legislations, anti-strike laws, praise the wage board machinery, and Code of Conduct, which the AITUC itself was forced to denounce, and hold the workers responsible equally with the employers for strikes.

The report of the Study Group of which Balachandra Menon was a member stated that among other things "the main features of Government policy which have contributed to this unfortunate state of industrial relations are (a) failure of police effectively to put down action of violence and harassment of management staff; (b) constant and continuous interference at the ministerial level in labour disputes, etc."

Balachandra Menon had nothing to say against this call for police violence on the workers!

G. Sundaram joined the employers and demanded that in the fertilizer industry strikes should be banned. He demanded the same in the oil industry.

Ranan Sen also demanded a ban on strikes in the public utility services. He further demanded that strikes should be banned in all industries during the period when tribunal is sitting. Such gems can be quoted from many other reports of the Study Groups.

On the contrary, Comrade Manoranjan Roy refused to accept anti-working class positions and make a note of dissent.

Even when these things were pointed out in the Working Committee, Dange refused to repair the damage. How could he, when these comrades were only carrying out your party line of collaboration with the bourgeoisie?

What have been your partymen doing on the Productivity Councils and other bodies set up by the Government, except carrying on this policy? Dange's acceptance of "rationalization without tears" is well-known.

In the Indian Labour Conference or its Standing Committee meeting. Dange generally nominated your partymen. Even prior consultation with our comrades on the issues before these meetings never took place!

Dange's behaviour in connection with the negotiations on wage revision in the steel industry is the latest example of your partisan and arbitrary behaviour. It is well-known that the Durgapur Steel Workers' Union is the most organized, militant and representative union in the steel industry. The unions in Bhilai, Burnpur, affiliated to the AITUC, are very weak.

And, yet, without even consultation with this militant union Dange submits along with the INTUC and HMS a memorandum demanding an interim wage increase of Rs. 30 per month.

Needless to point out that when the demand itself was for Rs.30 he was prepared to settle at a much lower figure—say Rs. 20 or Rs. 25.

To carry out this nefarious game, he had to see that no Durgapur comrade was present at the negotiations. He therefore scrupulously avoided nominating any of them as the representative of the AITUC.

It was only the open denunciation of all these moves by the Durgapur union and the firm declaration that any agreement to which the Durgapur union was not a party would not bind it, that retrieved the situation. The Government was compelled to reckon with this mass union and invited its representative also to join the negotiations. As a result of the firm attitude of these comrades, the interim wage-increase was settled at Rs. 33, i.e., much above what Dange had demanded and very much above what he was prepared to accept.

And, yet, the resolution adopted by your majority in the last Working Committee meeting bans any criticism by an affiliated union of such conduct on the part of Dange and your partymen. And on top of it Dange has proposed to the next session of the AITUC an amendment to the Constitution to provide for disciplinary action against such unions which raised their voice of protest, including dis-affiliation from the AITUC. Your party leaders can join the employers in denouncing the working class, can go over the head of the workers and enter into any agreement. The unions and the affected workers must meekly put up with all these.

Quite apart from the pursuit of class collaborationist policies in the trade union movement, you want to use the AITUC to echo your political line. This is evident from the very resolution you have, with your majority, adopted in the Working Committee.

The resolution says:

"The upsurge of the mass movement in recent years and the growing organization of the toilers has already led to the formation of united front Government in Bengal and Kerala."

Which is the U.F. Government in Kerala you are referring to? Obviously the anti-Marxist front of all parties opposed to our party, including the Kerala Congress, and the

Congress, and which received the plaudits of the Jana Sangh and Swatantra. You want to use your fake majority in the AITUC to get your nefarious activities in collusion with all the anti-Marxist forces approved by it and parade it as the approval of the working class.

How wonderfully popular this Government is, is seen by the fact that on the morrow of its installation with the help of the Governor, it has let loose the Central Reserve Police throughout the State on the people and terrible beating up, assaults, and killings of the toiling people have become the order of the day. Even *Chandrika*, the Muslim League paper, had to report its atrocities on the people of Tirur.

The resolution further says:

"The split in the ruling party and the polarization of the political forces makes it possible to advance towards political power not only in other States but at the Centre itself."

You want to impose your understanding of the split in the Congress and your policy of working for a coalition with the Indira Gandhi Congress on the AITUC.

The resolution further says:

"The decision of the Rashtriya Sangram Samiti of West Bengal to hold demonstrations on December 26 on a political issue when organizations which compose the Samiti have different political views on the issue on which the demonstration is called, has accepted a situation which weakens unity and may give rise to serious disruption."

The fact is that the meeting of the Rashtriya Sangram Samity which was attended by a member of your party also took the decision for the demonstration unanimously.

But your party leadership has been the closest associate of Ajoy Mukherjee and the Bangla Congress and has been abetting his campaign to slander us and to topple the U.F. Government. All this is in consonance with your line of forming an anti-Marxist U.F. Ministry with the help of the Congress. That is why your leadership later came out against the unanimous decision of the Samiti. Your leader of the All-Bengal Federation of Bank Employees actually issued a

mandate to its affiliates not to participate in the demonstration.

However, the working class and middle-class employees rallied in hundreds of thousands and showed they understood your political motive. Individual units of the Bank Employees' Federation ignored the fiat of the Federation leaders and joined the demonstration.

All your organizational measures in the AITUC are designed to pursue this nefarious political purpose. You use the fact that you possess the office, to inflate the membership of unions under the control of your partymen.

In the Bombay session itself, our comrade on the Credentials Committee, Comrade Mohan Punamia, wrote a note pointing out that there was no way of verifying the claims of membership. But Dange refused to read it in the conference or publish it. You have been using your majority in the organization to do the same thing.

You want to shut out the militant fighting unions which would refuse to accept this line of class collaboration and your political line of tailing behind the Indira Gandhi Congress.

That is why you have refused all our proposals to forge unity of the trade unions on the basis of democratic functioning and elections.

We have tolerated all your doings so long in the hope that wisdom would dawn soon and you would agree to implement those agreed measures for unity of the trade unions. The Resolution adopted at the last Working Committee had shattered all such hopes.

All you are interested in is showing a bogus inflated membership so that Dange can have a chit to the WFTU and get its financial aid. You want to make the AITUC an appendage of your party and not the fighting organization of the Indian working class.

In such a situation the conference you are going to hold at Guntur will be nothing but your factional gathering. No useful purpose will be served our party members working in trade unions attending the conference, except to allow you

to misuse the name of the AITUC to put across your class-collaborationist policies in the name of the fighting Indian working class.

Even at this late hour, we are anxious to do everything in our power to restore unity in the trade union movement consistent with democracy.

If you are really interested in unity, we would ask you to postpone the session and agree to talks between the two parties, which we have been urging for so long without any response from you. The basis of the talks can only be the resolution of December 1966, viz., unity of the unions based on democratic elections and proportional representation and democratic functioning of the unions. They should take place with a firm determination to implement it and must be aimed at forging organizational guarantees by the two parties for its implementation.

With greetings,

Yours Fraternally
P. Ramamurti
For Polit Bureau,
Communist Party of India
(Marxist).

P. Ramamurti's Letter to N.K. Krishnan of January 16, 1970

New Delhi

Dear Comrade,

We have received your letter dated January 7, 1970. I was away in Madras when the letter was received in our office in Delhi. Later, when I saw the statement issued to the press by S.A.Dange, I had sent you a telegram that in view of his statement no basis exists for the talks. After reaching Delhi in the evening I saw your letter and hence this delay in replying thereto.

You seek to avoid the real issue that we have been raising, viz., the issue of trade union unity and you seek to reduce the whole issue to a question of affiliation on non-affiliation or rival unions.

From December 1966, I have raised the question. When

the resolution on Trade Union Unity which I moved in that meeting of the General Council was adopted unanimously by the Council, we had hoped that unity would be restored on the basis of democratic principles. Our hopes were dashed to the ground.

In the talks that took place between our two parties we had demanded the implementation of that resolution.

Subsequently, in my letters to Dange, I had repeatedly demanded the same. But there was no response from your party.

You are incorrect when you say that my demand for postponement was made for the first time in my last letter. As a matter of fact, even in my letter to Dange, dated October 16, 1969, I had stated;

"I am firmly of opinion that the next session of the AITUC if it should serve the purpose of galvanizing the working class, should go down in history as the Congress of Unity. This cannot be, if the two parties do not come to agreement on the basis and the method of restoring unity.

"It is therefore of utmost importance that we resume the talks with a determination to restore unity. If, for any reason, these talks get prolonged, the AITUC session should be postponed."

Your party not only failed to respond to all such serious proposals, but it did not have the elementary courtesy to even reply to these letters.

Finally, even on the eve of the last Working Committee meeting, as I had pointed out in my last letter, Dange categorically refused any talks on party to party basis.

All these only go to show that your party attaches little value to the question of unity in the trade unions and has been busy in disrupting them.

Our proposal for affiliation of all unions came only because of your refusal to postpone the conference pending talks, as suggested in my letter of October 16, 1969. Even then it was combined with the proposal for a firm commitment to implement that resolution.

And now, when as a result of your attitude, we informed you of our inability to attend the session, you suddenly propose talks at such time. How can one take you seriously, when even now you are not prepared to make a very firm commitment as regards this main question of trade union unity we have been raising?

If you are serious about the question of unity even at this late hour, you would have had no hesitation in postponing the session pending the talks.

Trade union unity is far more important than the inconvenience caused by postponing the session.

As regards the other points in your letter, I have already replied to them. The main question is whether the unity of the trade unions should be restored and consolidated or whether the splitting activities should be continued and give full rein in order to help Dange and others to carry on class collaborationist policies.

Your solicitude to trade union principles sounds ridiculous, not hypocritical, in the face of your consistent and persistent refusal to accept the most fundamental principle of trade unionism, viz., maintaining unity of the trade unions on the basis of democracy.

Since these are very vital and serious issues, there is no use of holding a session without first thrashing them out between the two parties.

We are always prepared to discuss with you. It is quite upto you to create the conditions for useful talks.

Yours fraternally,
P. Ramamurti
Member, Polit Bureau,
Communist Party of India
(Marxist)

Letter From P. Ramamurti to S. A. Dange of February 10, 1970

My dear Dange,

I am writing this letter on behalf of those members of the

Working Committee of the AITUC, who on account of the attitude of your party members to the question of trade union unity, had walked out of the meeting of the Working Committee in December 1969, and did not attend the last session at Guntur.

I find from newspaper reports that despite their absence you have got elected the same set of office-bearers, General Council and Working Committee, as were elected in the previous Bombay session.

It is also reported that the amendments to the Constitution, earlier proposed by you, have been dropped.

All these, it has been reported, have been done "with a view to preserving the unity of the AITUC"

But I find that nothing is said on the question of bringing about unity at the base, between the rival unions on a democratic basis and the functioning of the AITUC itself democratically.

We attach the greatest importance to this. That is why we have been proposing to you that all rival unions should be merged, and elections be held on the basis of proportional representation, which will be supervised by representatives of both our parties.

We also proposed that guarantees be forged by our two parties for the democratic functioning of the trade unions. Which would assure among other things, elections on the basis of proportional representation, no agreements to be entered into with the managements without the sanction and final approval of the Executive Committee of the union concerned, and in all cases where questions affecting all the workers are involved proposed agreements to be placed before the General Body. It is needless for me to repeat here that there are a large number of agreements that your party members, as office-bearers of unions had entered into with managements behind the back of the workers, which have been extremely detrimental to the workers.

Similarly your arbitrary functioning of the AITUC had also resulted in damage to the working class movement. I

have already pointed out the arbitrary way in which you nominated your own people to the Study Groups of the National Labour Commission and what havoc they have done by subscribing from A to Z to all the slanders of the employers against the working class.

Your appointment of the AITUC representatives for the wage negotiations in the steel industry is another glaring instance of arbitrariness. You deliberately excluded a representative of the strongest steel workers' union, viz., the Durgapur Union, from the AITUC team.

Similarly you have been appointing arbitrarily your people to the Wage Boards, irrespective of their competence. The latest example is the report of the Wage Board on the road transport industry. You appointed K.M. Sundaram. This gentleman did not think it necessary to hold any consultation with the motor transport workers' unions but his signed the Wage Board report along with the employers' representatives and other members of the board which is thus unanimous report.

The wage recommended are very much lower than what exist today in all the State Transport Corporations and in most of the standard motor transport companies in the private sector!

No wonder the Government of India promptly accepted these recommendations.

Please let me know if your party is prepared to accept our proposals for bringing about unity of the trade unions on a democratic basis with proportional representation and if you are prepared to put an end to the arbitrariness in the functioning of the AITUC.

You had been keeping silence on the letters that I had been writing to you on this question. We cannot wait indefinitely for reply. Please reply to me by the 25th of this month. If no reply is received from you, by that time, we would take it that you have rejected the proposals.

Yours fraternally,
P. Ramamurti.

S. A. Dange's letter to Ramamurti of February 13, 1970

Dear Com. Ramamurti,

Your letter dated February 10, 1970, regarding certain matters connected with the work of the AITUC and some unions.

We feel that the question you raised pertain to day-to-day functioning of the AITUC and trade unions as such, For example, the procedure by which union should ratify agreements falls in that domain.

We therefore feel that you and your other trade union leaders or those concerned with the running of the trade unions should take up these questions directly inside the AITUC. They are no such character as require discussion or decision as between two parties. We would not like to obliterate the distinction between the trade union and party organization nor subordinate it to purely party decisions as you are seeking to do in your letter.

We can certainly discuss such political questions or question of general policy as arise in the trade unions and are influenced by political parties.

It would be better, therefore, if you put the matter referred to by you to the Secretariat or the Working Committee of the AITUC, as also the particular matters to the particular trade unions concerned.

We would like to state it is no use giving ultimatums as you seem to be doing in your letter.

We are glad that you have ended your boycott of the AITUC which, of course, was totally uncalled for as you yourself have seen from the proceedings of the Guntur session of the AITUC.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
S.A.Dange

Letter from P. Ramamurti to S. A. Dange of May 26, 1970

My dear Dange,

I have received your telegram, dated May 22, 1970, which states :

"Sudhir Mukhoti of AITUC writes to say that you have told a Press conference that holding your new T.U. Conference might be reconsidered if AITUC discusses problems, in terms of its resolution of 1966. As already stated, we and the Working Committee are ever willing to discuss with you in terms of that resolution. Please reply."

I was surprised and puzzled as to how a comrade like Sudhir Mukhoti who was not present at the Press conference, could have attributed to me a statement I had not made and which no newspaper had attributed to me.

To day, I have received, through Comrade Manoranjan Roy, copies of the letter Comrade Mukhoti wrote to you on 20.5.1970, as well as the letter he had written to Satish Loomba, on 25.5.1970 repudiating what you have attributed to him and to me.

In his letter of 20.5.1970, he has quoted the report of *The Statesman* (Calcutta edition) and said that Comrade P. Ramamurti told a Press conference in Calcutta that their position regarding formation of a new central trade union organization might "still be reconsidered if the AITUC leadership dominated by the CPI agreed to accept the principle enunciated by the CP(M) in 1966 and proved their sincerity about their implementation."

Ever since the Bombay session, despite the serious and systematic attempts made by you and your partymen to disrupt the trade union at the base, we have been seriously striving for unity. It was we that made repeated proposals for uniting the trade unions on the basis of democratic elections with proportional representation.

And it is this crucial question you have been evading. The entire correspondence between our two parties proves this to the hilt.

What is the use of your offering to discuss in terms on the 1966 resolution in the Working Committee? We have had enough experience of such discussions. In 1966 at a meeting of the Working Committee, I pleaded that serious efforts should be made to merge the split unions. and restore

unity and to begin with to start form Kerala and Tamilnadu. I offered to go with you to Kerala to help in the process. But my offer fell on deaf ears.

At the last meeting of the Working Committee, in December 1969, before the Guntur session, by rejecting my resolution which first wanted the Working Committee to pledge itself to unite the rival unions on the basis of elections with proportional representation, after the Guntur session, and pending such merger and on that basis, agree to affiliate all the unions that apply for affiliation, and give them representation at the Guntur session, your party had rejected the basic principle of trade union unity.

Under the circumstances, this telegram of yours is nothing but a stunt; you do not want to commit yourself firmly to the basic principles of trade union democracy and unity. The telegram only shows that you cannot do so because you are determined to pursue your line of class collaboration and continue to keep the AITUC as an appendage of the ruling Congress Party which you have already done.

We cannot oblige you by agreeing to your stunts. The All-India Trade Union Conference will go on as scheduled and take appropriate decisions.

Yours sincerely

R. Ramamurti

P.S.: I find that at the recent National Council of your party, a resolution was adopted which states:

"As for Mr. P. Ramamurti's reported demand that wherever 'rival' unions exist, a democratic verdict of their pooled membership should be obtained through a secret ballot, this was precisely the principle which the overwhelming majority of the AITUC Working Committee had proposed in December 1969 for purposes of electing delegates to the Guntur session of the AITUC. And it was at that time that the CPI(M) faction rejected this democratic principle, insisted that 'rival' unions set up by them must be unquestionably affiliated to the AITUC..."

This is far from true.

The last two paras of the resolution that I moved in the meeting read as follows :

"Conscious of the urgent need for restoring unity in its ranks, the Working Committee resolves to take immediate steps to implement the resolution of the General Council of December 1966.

"Pending this process, and anxious to keep within its organizational fold all the fighting trade unions, the Working Committee resolves that all unions that seek affiliation to the AITUC shall be affiliated, irrespective of whatever they are rival unions or not, so that the forthcoming conference may go down in history as the Congress of Unity."

This proposal I made because all along you had refused to implement the resolution of November, 1966, and were in a hurry to hold the Guntur session. As a via media, I had proposed that the Working Committee should pledge itself to merge the unions after the Guntur session and once it is pledged to do so, there is no meaning in keeping our unions on the plea that they are rival unions.

You rejected this resolution outright.

The draft of the alternative resolution you placed before the Working Committee simply stated, "All unions formed or functioning as rival unions affiliated to the AITUC should be forthwith dissolved and members of such unions should be asked to enrol as members of the AITUC unions."

The final amended resolution adopted with your majority also said nothing about merger by means of democratic elections.

It only stated:

"For participation in the Guntur session, only the affiliated unions shall send delegates. In cases where rival unions exist, delegates to the Guntur session shall be elected by a secret ballot among members of the unions affiliated and seeking affiliation, *if such an arrangement can be mutually agreed upon* (emphasis mine)...In case no such arrangement can be arrived at, only the affiliated unions will be entitled to send delegates."

It is clear that election by combined membership of affiliated and rival unions was dependent on your people, of the concerned unions accepting the arrangement, and it was not mandatory.

When for three years, from 1966 your people had refused to implement the 1966 resolution, who could believe that within two weeks, they would have agreed to it, and go through the process of elections? This is a stunt, and we saw through the game.

It is clear, therefore, that your National Council's statement is an unvarnished lie.

P. Ramamurti

The Platform of Unity and Struggle

(Moved by Comrade P. Ramamurti at the Bombay Session of the AITUC and adopted by it unanimously)

Alarmed at the growth and strengthening of the world camp of Socialism, and immense victories in the struggle for national independence, the imperialists and chiefly the U.S. imperialists have stepped up their preparation for a world war.

They resort to subversion of regimes in the newly liberated and independent countries which refuse to become stooges of the U.S. imperialists as in Ghana, Congo, the Dominican Republic etc.

Failing to prevent the independent development of those countries, which did not fall into their neo-colonial manoeuvres due to the disinterested aid given by the Socialist camp countries, above all the Soviet Union, the imperialists began to offer their so-called aid to win vital positions in the economy and political life of these countries, use them as levers to buttress reaction in these countries and to draw them into the structure of neo-colonialism.

In the name of containing Communism, they build bases round the Soviet Union, China, the G.D.R. and other Socialist countries and also in and around some independent developing countries. They are also conducting a fiendish war of

aggression in Vietnam to drown the struggle of the Vietnamese people for freedom, democracy and Socialism in open violation of the Geneva accord of 1954.

The Government of India, although following a general policy of non-alignment, has in its anxiety to get aid from the U.S., kept silent on many of these activities and designs of the U.S. imperialists. More particularly, it refuses to condemn the U.S. war as aggression in Vietnam, despite its responsibility as Chairman of the International Control Commission.

All these objectively facilitate the U.S. plan of world domination and threaten India's freedom and independence.

The trade unions in India must mobilize the Indian working class to expose the machinations of the U.S. imperialists and demand of the Government of India to take a firm and forthright stand of condemnation of U.S. imperialism. In particular, the Government must demand the withdrawal of the U.S. armed forces from Vietnam and leave the people free to evolve their own mode of life.

Eighteen years after independence, India is facing a deep economic crisis. Despite some economic development and the three Five-Year Plans, the people have been suffering from acute shortage and are fleeced by mounting taxation and high prices.

Food production has stagnated in the Third Plan. Industries are working under capacity. The foreign exchange crisis is very acute. The worst feature of the crisis is that the country is facing a food crisis of an unprecedented nature. Lakhs of people in Orissa, Bengal, Rajasthan and other parts of the country are facing famine conditions. In other parts prices of foodgrains are so high as to make them unavailable to the people. Unemployment is mounting fast.

This crisis is not fortuitous. The Congress Government has been seeking to build capitalism in India. It refuses to liquidate landlordism and give land to the tiller. Its policy of building capitalism by means of taxing the masses and by inflationary deficit financing have resulted in concentration

of wealth in the hands of a handful of monopolists and heaped misery on the people.

Unable to unleash the forces of production and the inventive genius of the Indian people, it relies on foreign imperialists for technical know-how. Unable to mobilize the entire resources of the country for development by its capitalist path, it relies on foreign capital and imperialist aid for capital resources. It has let loose a flood of foreign collaboration agreements, which become adverse to our national interests.

Refusing to take firm measures against the hoarders, financiers and landlords, it relies on import of PL-480 foodgrains from the U.S. to mitigate the hardships of the food shortage.

All these have enabled the imperialists to intervene more intensively in India's internal and external policy, they use the crisis to exert pressure on the Government of India and dictate terms for their aid which undermine our independence.

They also use the conflict with China and Pakistan to further intensify their intervention in our affairs.

All these policies have resulted in a terrible attack on people's standards. The working class has faced big attacks on its real wages, bonus and other conditions. Workload has been increasing continuously. These measures have been resorted to in order to find capital for the capitalist path of development. The Government is surrendering one position after another to the imperialists and if this is not halted and reversed immediately the country's independence will be in danger.

People during the last three years have risen in struggle against these attacks. The Government attempted to lull the working class by conceding a partial linking of D.A. to the cost of living index and the smallest possible quantum of bonus and promises of a need-based minimum wage. But when the working class found these to be totally inadequate to meet their needs they have begun to struggle with greater intensity.

The Government has sought to drown these struggles in

repression. The Emergency and the DIR are being continued only for the purpose of suppressing the people, though the people's struggles and demand for withdrawal of emergency has forced the Government to retreat.

The working class and trade unions in India, though acting together from time to time in general strikes and bandhs, are divided in many national centres and rival unions. This disunity weakens the class struggle of the working class. To overcome this disunity, we appeal to all unions and their rank and file and leadership to unite in a common organization for common action for the following demands:

1. Nationalize the banks and the foodgrains trade;
2. Take over and nationalize firms owned or controlled by foreign monopolists; break up and nationalize the seventy-five monopoly houses listed by the Monopolies Commission;
3. Stop collaboration agreements with the imperialists and refuse their aid on humiliating conditions;
4. Nationalize import and export trade;
5. Introduce immediate land reforms giving land to the tiller;
6. Fix and enforce by law fair minimum prices to the peasant for his agricultural produce; and guarantee supply to him at reasonable prices essential articles for his everyday use;
7. Make substantial reduction in prices, especially of foodgrains and all essential commodities of life; reduction in those taxes which mainly fall on the common people;
8. Give an all-round 25 per cent increase in the wages paid at present to all workers and employees of both the private and public sectors;
9. Link immediately all D.A. with consumer price indices on a sliding scale; where no separate D.A. is paid the consolidated wage to be linked with the consumer price index;
10. Cent per cent neutralization for every rise in the cost of living to be automatically ensured for workers of all wage categories through a sliding scale of D.A.;
11. Correct and revise fully the existing wrong official

cost of living index figures and their construction to be made subject to the supervision of a suitable tripartite machinery;

12. Institute immediate fixation, and wherever necessary revision of minimum wages for industries and trade covered by the Minimum Wages Act, and immediately implement wages already fixed thereunder; adequate minimum wages for agricultural labour;

13. Take-over by government of all plants and mines which have been closed down by employers despite their being productive units;

14. Public sector workers to have the same democratic rights as in the private sector;

15. Take initiative to resolve the India-China and India Pakistan differences in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration.

This Congress calls upon the trade unions to mobilize the entire working class in unison with all democratic forces for the struggle against imperialism, against the Indian reactionaries and against the Congress Government with a view to replacing it by a Government which will go in the direction of the above platform.

Over Million Take Part in Kerala General Strike*

Over a million workers in Kerala participated in the General Strike on February 13 to press the immediate demands of the people of Kerala for which ten CPI(M) MLAs are on a hunger-strike since February 7. The demands include those for end to police repression and withdrawal of the CRP, reinstatement of discharged transport workers, settlement of agricultural workers' demands, etc.

The break-down for the districts shows that five lakh workers in Alleppey, one lakh each in Cannanore, Quilon and Kozhikode, 70,000 in Palghat, 60,000 in Kottayam, 40,000 in Trivandrum, 20,000 in Malappuram and 40,000 in Trichur participated in the strike. They included the agricultural workers of Alleppey and Palghat districts.

This succesful strike took place defeating all the conspiracies and threats of the ruling parties both at the party level and at the Governmental level.

To take revenge on the workers who refused to submit to their threats, the police were let loose on the workers in a number of places and lathi-charges in Kozhikode, Ponnani, Trichur and Payyannur were particularly brutal. Demonstrating and picketing workers in these places were inhumanly beaten by the CRP and police.

In Trichur, the offices of the CPI(M) and trade unions were searched the previous day and mass arrests made to create an atmosphere of terror.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, February 22, 1970.

In Ponnani, all those participating in a demonstration were beaten, put in police vans and taken to the police station. The injured demonstrators, some of them seriously, were marched naked from the station to the lock-up.

The worst repression was in Kozhikode and it was deliberately pre-planned. When the striking workers gathered at Muthalakkulam Maidan and forming into a demonstration were marching in front of the State Transport garage, the CRP attacked them from behind and began beating the demonstrators. And not only the demonstrators, even passers-by on the road were beaten. Sandals, umbrellas, etc, were lying scattered all along the road and many injured persons had fallen into the drains. The exact number of injured could not be estimated immediately.

The scene of repression then shifted to the Corporation bus-stand where women volunteers from the Mahila Federation were picketing buses. Here the police specially singled out Comrade V. K. Gopalan, member of the District Secretariat of the CPI(M), for their brutal assault. He was then thrown into the police van. This attack on Comrade Gopalan was made when he was helping to send an injured worker to the hospital.

The women volunteers, many of them with babes in their arms, were mercilessly dragged along the road before being put into police vans.

On the same day, State Government non-gazetted employees took mass casual leave. According to estimates from all over the State, 60 per cent of the NGOs took casual leave on February 13. In many places, employees who had submitted their casual leave application were threatened by Officers and asked to take back their applications, but they refused.

Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad in a signed editorial in *Deshabhimani* on February 15 wrote on the strike:

As usual and as expected All-India Radio and the monopolist Press have pointed out to the General Strike of February 13 as another instance of "The failure of the Marxists." All the anti-Marxist forces, including the Syndicate

which is alleged to have "an alliance with the Marxists", have expressed their happiness.

Some newspapers which print comparatively more objective reports have reported that "Marxist workers alone participated in the strike." They have given details of the over a million workers under the leadership of the CPI(M) and the three other parties which cooperate with it, who participated in the Strike—the agricultural workers of Alleppey and Palghat, toddy-tappers in various centres, other rural workers, a section of the workers in factories in the urban centres, etc.

As for the CPI(M), we would, as we have always done with all other struggles like to evaluate this strike with objectivity and self-criticism. From that point, there is nothing for us to be demoralized about this strike.

We are satisfied that we and the parties working with us have been able to organize a political strike—though it is termed as only "partial"—facing the continuous police attacks and threats of the last 3½ months.

It is true that only a section of the workers responded to our call and participated in the strike. We will take this fact and our weakness involved in it into consideration and try to spread into wider activities.

There is a section of workers still having illusions in this Government though it has cut at the root of the principle of security of service accepted by all trade unions and has unleashed bestial police repression to suppress the workers', peasants' and other mass movements in order to help the enemies of the people. But changes are taking place even in these sections. Because this has its impact on the ruling parties themselves, the Government has now come forward with proposals to refer the dispute in the Transport department for arbitration and solve other demands we have put forward.

We are happy about this. As made clear earlier, we will show a conciliatory spirit to make the present negotiations successful. At the same time, we will continue our efforts to

convince the people that it is the anti-working class attitude of the ruling parties that has led to the present situation. As a part of this effort, we will try to mobilize the masses following us and the parties working with us to conduct more powerful struggles against the anti-people policies of the Government.

Our enemies, if they have any sense of reality, will admit that the February 13 general strike has at least proved that we are capable of doing all this. And it need not be said that if the ruling parties try to deny this reality and mislead their followers, they will have themselves to suffer the consequences of this deception. Let the leaders of the ruling parties decide whether they should take to this path of self-deception!

Revisionists are Shielding Bangla Congress Betrayal*

The decision of the Bangla Congress executive on March 8, directing their leader, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee, to resign from the U.F. Government in West Bengal and to boycott U.F. meetings henceforth pushed the conspiracy against the U.F. Government a step further. The move was calculated to force either President's rule in the State or to form a mini-front with Bangla Congress's friendly parties, like the Right Communist Party, Forward Bloc, SUC and PSP (Dissidents) and with the support of the Congress. The aim of all the manoeuvrings has been to oust the CPI(M) from the U.F. Government.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M) wrote a letter on March 9, to all the constituent parties of the U.F. on the crisis which stated, "You are quite aware that the stand of our Party has always been that the U.F. must continue and carry out the mandate of the people and all differences and problems which arise from time to time should and can be settled by discussions within the U.F.

"We have also condemned in no uncertain terms the various statements that have appeared in the Press, from time to time that a mini-front without the CPI(M) should be formed with the direct or indirect support of the Congress, because we have

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 15, 1970. This is connected with the Documents covered under Item No. 11 and 12 of this Volume.

always held that this would be a gross betrayal of the people of West Bengal and the mandate they gave to the U.F.

"But a grave situation has been created by the unilateral decision of the Bangla Congress to leave the U.F. and topple the U.F. Government.

"This defection of the Bangla Congress from the U.F. makes it incumbent upon all other parties of the U.F. to meet together urgently to ensure the continuance of the U.F. and its Government and decide upon other measures to meet the interests of the people."

The question has been rightly raised in the political circles of West Bengal as to why cannot the U.F. continue even after the Bangla Congress defection when there is a clear majority for the parties of the U.F. in the Assembly. It was the desire of the majority of the electorate that Congress rule must be ended in the State, and since the U.F. minus Bangla Congress still has the majority it is morally incumbent on the constituent parties to carry on.

But the Right Communists from whom Bangla Congress took advice on every step so far, have not yet agreed to continue in the U.F. Government after Bangla Congress defection. The other parties friendly to Bangla Congress also have taken the same stand. Curiously, instead of blaming the Bangla Congress for its defection, they are trying to sell the idea that the CPI(M) is to be blamed for the development.

These parties under the inspiration of the Right Communists wanted to break the present U.F. where the CPI(M) is an important force and form a mini-front with the support of Congress, but all the time wanted to hide behind the alibi that they do not want President's rule and that they want to continue in the Government because the electorate wanted a U.F. Government to continue. Now with the turn of events when the position is much simpler, namely, that a U.F. Government can continue without the support of the Congress, the Rightists and their friends are pressing the CPI(M) to give concessions and help restore *status quo ante*.

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In the meantime, the BPTUC and 12th July Committee representing most of the organized workers and employees have given a call for one-day's general strike in the State immediately following the fall of the U.F. Ministry.

A Historic March of Andhra Peasants*

Massive Demonstration in Hyderabad City on January 26, 1970

Hyderabad city witnessed a historic demonstration on February 26, 1970. Trekking hundreds of miles from all corners of Andhra Pradesh, the toiling and the under-privileged masses reached Hyderabad in the early hours of the 26th, with flags in one hand and their breakfast in the other. From Dilsukhnagar up to Nimboliadda, it was a sea of red flags and banners.

Headed by Comrades P. Sundarayya, General Secretary, CPI (M), A. K. Gopalan President, AIKS, M. Hanumantha Rao, Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CPI (M), U. Ramam, President of A.P. Ryotu Sangham, L. B. Gangadhara Rao, General Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Labourers' Union, the demonstration went round some of the main thoroughfares of the city with slogans and songs depicting the plight of the common man and the need for intensified struggles to ameliorate their conditions.

The demonstration was colourful in the sense that a large number of agricultural labourers, both men and women with babies, joined this march, most of whom have been in the midst of struggles for waste lands. The rhythmic beats of country drums, *kolatam* (a form of chorus song by a group of persons with small sticks) evoked inspiration and enthusiasm in the millions of workers and toilers of the city.

Colourful, But Different

Hyderabad city, which has seen frequent agitations during

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 15, 1970.

the past one year or so, saw a colourful march with slogans altogether different from what the citizens are used to hear in the recent times. "Land to the Tiller", "Abolish Landlordism," "Distribute Surplus Land to the Landless Poor", "End Police Repression", "Achieve People's Raj in Visalaandhra" etc., were the main slogans. The toiling masses in the city, who had been swept away to some extent by regional emotions, witnessed the march with unusual sympathy and goodwill. At many places on the way, people from middle class and working-class families supplied drinking water to their counterparts from the countryside.

The demonstration surpassed all previous records of the demonstrations held when the Party was united and the subsequent *Koolidandu* demonstration organized by Right Communists in 1967. The demonstration is of great significance in the context of the situation prevailing in Hyderabad, a city which has been very badly affected with regional fanaticism in the recent times.

Record Gathering

As many as 8,000 people were left over on the wayside stations because of lack of transports. However, 25 to 30 thousand people could manage to reach Hyderabad city in time for the "Land Reforms March". The private bus and truck operators went back upon their commitment to ply their vehicles to Hyderabad on this occasion out of fear of possible damage in the tension-gripped city. The landlords in the villages, particularly in Hyderabad district and Nalgonda district, threatened dire consequences for those who would participate in the march. They said that the police would beat them. Unmindful of such threats, as many as 10,000 working masses from Ibrahimpatnam taluk of Hyderabad district and from parts of Nalgonda district came walking a distance of 35 miles. Women, too, did not lag behind.

The two-mile-long procession under a scorching sun ended at the Secretariat where a public meeting was held. The thirsty demonstrators not only did not mind even the paucity of drinking

water at the venue but heard with keen attention the speeches delivered by their beloved leaders, namely, Comrades P. Sundarayya and A. K. Gopalan and other State leaders.

The Chief minister who drove from the Assembly to the venue of the meeting to receive the memorandum as usual announced that a crash programme of distribution of *banjar* land to the landless poor was under way and would be completed within three months. A memorandum was presented to the State Chief Minister by the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Labour Union, Andhra Pradesh Ryotu Sangham and the Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CPI (M) setting the main demands of the agricultural labourers and the urgency of land reforms.

Later, the meeting was addressed by Comrades A. K. Gopalan, P. Sundarayya and M. Hanumantha Rao. Comrade Bhimireddy Narasimha Reddy, who presided over the open rally, appealed to the people who came from far-away places to be ready for the coming struggle for effective distribution of *banjar* land and the distribution of surplus lands from the landlords.

Addressing the rally, the President of the All-India Kisan Sabha, Comrade A. K. Gopalan said that in the 22 years of Congress rule it had been proved beyond doubt that under Congress rule no agrarian reform worth the name would be undertaken. Only in Kerala and West Bengal where the masses had taken the initiative with the assistance of United Front Government land was occupied and enjoyed by the tillers of the soil. He said in this connection that while Namboodiripad's U.F. Government brought out an effective land legislation and the people had taken the initiative in occupying land, the mini-front Government was making use of the worst possible repression, including use of CRP. He also said that inspired by the achievements of Kerala and West Bengal struggles were taking place in other States too. He concluded his speech by congratulating the toilers of Andhra Pradesh who effectively demonstrated their awareness for land reforms.

Comrade P. Sundarayya addressing the rally said that whatever the Chief Minister said nobody should entertain any illusion that land reforms could be realized through either Syndicate or Indicate Congress. The people of Telengana through their own bitter experience of the heroic struggle of Telengana (1946-51) have learnt that only through struggles they could realize land reforms. He wanted the people to build necessary movement to face all sorts of difficulties and to force the key issue of land reforms to the forefront.

He said though "Visalaandhra" was realized but not "Praja Rajyam". The separatists of today were even then against integration. We have no regional feelings at all. Our people would fight against all landlords whether they come from this or that region. Separatism was a reactionary slogan and a hindrance to the united struggles of the masses.

He condemned police repression in general and particularly the brutalities committed against the Naxalites.

The Memorandum

These were the salient points of the memorandum which was submitted on behalf of the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Labour Union, Andhra Pradesh Ryotu Sangham and the Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CPI(M) :

Agriculture is already over-burdened with surplus population. About 40 per cent of the agrarian population in our State is landless. Most of them do not possess even house sites to reside. 70 p.c. of landed peasants are poor peasants and tenants, besides other rural sections like the village artisan, etc. who depend upon the agrarian population for their living. All these toilers who constitute the overwhelming majority of the rural population are in dire need of immediate relief. No civilized Government worth the name can be indifferent to the needs of these people.

We consider that the only solution for this acute problem is to undertake land reforms with a view to give "land to the tiller". Only such a land reform policy can bring about increase

in production and put an end to our dependence on import of foreign food grains.

Eye-Wash Legislations

With deep agitation and agony we emphasize the fact that neither the legislative acts nor the manner of implementing them were hitherto undertaken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh with this aim really in view. All such legislations were only an eye-wash and in practice helped to perpetuate landlordism in various forms and widely too. The so-called Ceiling Act safely allowed the landlords to own hundreds of acres undeterred. All the exemptions given were only back-door provisions to by-pass the Ceiling Act and safeguard the landlords' monopoly of land. The Tenancy Acts were only used as pawns in the hands of the land-owning class to evict all tenants. They helped to create more tenants at will than solve this problem. The Minimum Wages Act too is another piece of useless legislation undertaken only as a ritual.

Repression Denounced

Thus the Government has not only failed to solve any basic problem of the rural poor but has also unleashed a reign of terror and massacres on the workers and peasants, particularly in Nalgonda, Khammam, Warangal and Srikakulam. Not only the police have failed to stop the landlords' zoolum and the atrocities of their goondas on the people but has also turned the police camps and CRP camps, ostensibly set up for the maintenance of law and order, as really shelter and shields to commit and cover the blackest of crimes. We raise our voice to seriously protest against and denounce this repression.

The memorandum demanded that following land reforms measures be undertaken here and now :

(1) Land Ceiling :

Scrap the existing Act on land holdings.

Introduce a new Bill with ceiling on ten acre double crop holding per family or its equivalent in other categories of land.

No exemptions to be allowed from ceiling.

Family is to be strictly defined and all land under individual names to be accounted in family holding.

Surplus lands to be distributed free to agricultural labourers and poor peasants.

(2) Tenancy Act :

Deed or no deed, all real tenants are to be protected from eviction and exorbitant rents.

Rent not to exceed 1/4th of the gross produce.

Long-standing tenants to be given ownership rights. Right of resumption to be allowed only to those whose main source of income is from land.

Tenants of religious endowments and other such institutions to be given ownership rights provided they are landless and poor.

(3) Distribute Cultivable Waste :

All cultivable waste lands like *banjar*, forest *banjar*, *poramboke*, tank bed and *lanka* lands to be distributed to agricultural labourers free of cost.

No poor cultivator who is in possession of cultivable waste of any category to be evicted. All such land in the hands of landlords to be immediately vacated.

Auction of *lanka* lands should be finally given up.

Agency lands to be allotted to tribals alone and all land illegally occupied to be given back to tribals.

(4) Protection To Agricultural Labour :

Guarantee a minimum daily wage of Rs. 4 to agricultural labourers and 30 bags paddy or its equivalent as annual salary to farm servants. Work and leave days to be fixed.

10 cents of dwelling land to be given to all those who do not possess it.

Unemployment bonus to all those who are fully or partially unemployed.

(5) Exemption of Tax To Poor Peasants :

Land revenue to be exempted from three acres wet land holdings or its equivalent and graded taxation to be introduced on the rest.

All arrears of land revenue in drought, drainage, and cyclone-affected areas to be cancelled.

(6) Moratorium on Debts :

Moratorium to be declared on all agricultural debts.

All debts and arrears of agricultural labourers and poor peasants to be annulled. Debts of other peasants to be graded and scaled down.

Provide cheap credit facilities by banks, co-operative banks and government to agricultural labourers and poor peasants on personal security.

(7) Reforms Through Popular Committees :

Land reforms to be implemented in co-operation with mass organizations. Committees with representatives of village poor to be set up at all levels to implement reforms.

(8) Withdraw Repressive Measures :

Present police policy of abetting landlord zoolum and aiding their goondaism to be given up.

Cases against all agrarian poor filed in connection with land, wage, *banjar* and rent disputes to be withdrawn.

Declaration of disturbed areas to be withdrawn. Withdraw CRP from Girijan areas. Stop all massacre taking place there and treat the Naxalite issue as political issue. Withdraw Preventive Detention Act.

Release all detenus and withdraw political conspiracy cases.

Calcutta Witnesses a Unique Rally*

More than 25 Lakhs People Assembled on March 15, 1970 at the Brigade Parade Ground, Calcutta, to Warn the Conspirators Who Wanted to Destroy the United Front Government of West Bengal

Seeing is believing. One, who has witnessed the rally on March 15 at the Brigade Parade Ground, would utter this word. The rally, which has surpassed all previous ones, called by the CPI(M), or any other party or even the U.F., cannot be described properly if you simply call it "mammoth." Even modestly estimated, it exceeded 25 lakhs. For the stooges of the vested interest, who were so long posing as popular forces while trying their best to disrupt the U.F., the rally had an enormous significance. It held out clearly for those stooges as well as their fellow travellers to see — with whom the toiling masses of the State are. The sea of humanity which gathered on Sunday March 15 at the Brigade Parade Ground, dispersed with a determination to sweep these despicable creatures off their feet if and when the occasion arises.

As usual, the peasant masses came to the rally, though in far greater number and from far-off places like villages on the borders of Bihar, Orissa or E. Pakistan. Gidhni in Midnapore is just a few miles away from Bihar—7,000 came from there. Jhalda is also a town bordering on Bihar—sun tanned peasants, unemployed lac workers from this Purulia town came to join this rally. From Debra in Midnapore, which bourgeois papers vie with each other to paint as "a liberated area" of the Naxalites, came more than 7,000 poor

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peasants and agricultural workers — mostly *adivasi* Santhals, with their bows and quiverfuls of arrows.

Unique Feature

But another unique feature marked this occasion. Unlike before, the peasants mostly came this time in *jathas*, covering hundreds of villages on foot, on their way to Calcutta. This rally had been planned a month ago, as soon as it was clear that the conspirators inside the U.F. were giving a final shape to their conspiracy to wreck the U.F. The peasants therefore undertook the task to make the village masses in course of these *jathas* aware of the real face of these conspirators and give a call to them to defeat this nefarious bid. The *jathas* had with them squads of IPTA, medical squads, and local youth and student workers. Beautifully decorated with festoons and posters, these *Jathas* made a tremendous sensation throughout the rural West Bengal.

Here are some of the reports on those *jathas*. The *Hooghly* district brought out eight such squads altogether. The first squad started from Arambagh as early as March 11. On its way to Calcutta via Pursura and Haripal, it was swelled by *jathas* coming from the districts of Bankura and Burdwan. The second squad started on the same day from Khanakul and the third one started on the 12th from Pandua on its way to Calcutta via Magra. The remaining five started on the 13th from different parts of the district like Balagarh, Dwarbasini, Dadpur-Amnan, Polba and Bhandarhati. All these *jathas* covered altogether 19 thanas of four sub-divisions of the district. *Burdwan* district, as usual, planned for a peasant *jatha* and began preparatory work for its success. But the working class of the district would not like the idea of a *jatha* consisting of only peasants. They insisted on their inclusion and ultimately the District Party had to yield to their wishes. So, the originally planned 5,000 strong *jatha* of the Burdwan district increased many times. *Nadia* and *Murshidabad* districts made history. While the *jathas* were proceeding towards Calcutta from every part of the State—

thousands of peasants from these districts could be seen coming on boats decorated with posters and festoons, creating sensation on both the banks of the river Hooghly by chanting slogans and bursting of crackers over water. The 24 Parganas district, which is the traditional seat of militant peasant movement and which in the recent period had been the venue of many atrocities perpetrated on the peasants by the landlords and their ruffians donning the garb of one or the other political parties, as well as of many sagas of peasants seizing lands illegally occupied by the landlords so long, sent a number of colourful *jathas*. These came from places like Sandeshkhali, Canning, Minakhan, Magrahat, Hingalgunj, Haroa, Bhangar, Amtala etc.

Marchers' Experience

Comrade Mehboob Zaidi, who is a member of the Burdwan District Committee, led the *jatha* from Burdwan. It started with an initial strength of 900 on the morning of March 11, from Guskara, on the Birbhum border. The first day they covered 32 miles before splitting into three groups one to pass through Burdwan town, another through Raina-Khandaghosh, and the third via Katwa. All the three sections met at Burdwan later when the strength of the *jatha* increased to 6,500.

Comrade Zaidi was all praise for the arrangements for reception given to the *jatha* on its way, the quality of food and refreshments provided and other attentions showered on them. He mentioned particularly a reception accorded to the *jatha* in a village by the Mahila Samiti in Memari whose name hit the headlines when Chief Minister, Ajoy Mukherjee, raised the cry of molestation of women in this village.

The *jatha* had a medical unit with it. But not many in the *jatha* needed their attention except for treatment of footsores and muscle contractions and minor ailments. Four marchers who fell ill on the way had to be sent to hospital, but all of them joined the *jatha* later.

The People's Relief Committee had opened 14 first aid

centres around a radius of 25 miles of Calcutta to treat these marchers and, according to an incomplete account, had treated 4,500 persons. Two of their centres opened at the Brigade Parade Ground was of immense service to the participants at the rally.

Since morning the city of Calcutta began to receive the participants of the rally coming from outside. Those who could not come with *jathas* began coming by train or chartered buses. Citizens of Calcutta, as usual, took the responsibility for feeding these people. You could notice throughout the city a silent but keen contest among people in the different localities in preparing rotis, curries, etc. Workers of a bakery are known to have forgone throughout the week their daily share of half- pound of loaves in order to donate 200 pounds of loaves for the participants in the rally. Numerous such instances could be cited.

Jyoti Basu

Comrade Basu in his speech reminded the audience of the juncture in the political history of West Bengal in which this meeting was being convened. He urged the people to prepare to smash the plot of the conspirators to destroy the U.F. Government. Whether or not this Government as achieved by the people should remain is to be determined by the people at large and not by a few leaders or a few parties. People still firmly consider that the U.F. Government as a weapon of mass struggle is deeply needed. Comrade Basu continued that some constituents of the U.F. in tune with the Indira Congress, have been launching a slander campaign against our Party. Comrade Basu made it clear that in the back of the Bangla Congress conspiracies, there is the big hand of the Right Communist Party. So far the revisionists have been ceaselessly instigating the Bangla Congress. Jyoti Basu emphatically declared that the CPI(M) wanted to form a government. Otherwise, midterm election must be held without delay. When it is to take place is up to the people of West Bengal and it is not to be decided by Smt. Indira

Gandhi. If Governor Dhavan does not move constitutionally, he must remember the fate of Dharma Vira.

The betrayal by the Bangla Congress is nothing unexpected. In 1967, Ajoy Mukherjee used to frequent the Congress but covering his face with a napkin. The statement he drafted then maligning the CPI(M) is still lying in the Congress quarters. Now this Gandhian leader says that military force or the CRP is the only way out for West Bengal! Comrade Basu reminded that in 1967 also, the Bangla Congress broke the U.F. Seventeen MLAs of the Bangla Congress were sold in the market as goats and cows. The role of the Bangla Congress of Ajoy Mukherjee in the democratic movement is finished. In fine, Comrade Basu appealed to the parties of the U.F. to fight the conspiracy of the vested interests so that Bengal can lead the democratic movement of the Indian people.

Promod Dasgupta

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau and Secretary of the State Committee of the CPI(M), said that the U.F. could not be broken only because some men want whimsically to break it. None can take away the gains of the people during the U.F. Government. The people are ready to lay down their lives to safeguard the gains, as also they are ready to befittingly answer the murderers. Dasgupta reminded the people that the U.F. is built upon many a movement and popular struggles of the past. For example, the anti-price-rise movement, famine resistance struggle, civil liberties movement, and so on. Mothers have lost their children, wives their husbands, and in the wake of these tears, the U.F. has emerged. The Right CP has argued that the U.F. is no more with the exit of the Bangla Congress. Is it the verdict of the people, Dasgupta asked. He pointed out clearly that along with Ajoy Babu and the revisionists, Smt. Indira Gandhi is also conspiring to topple the U.F. Government. Dasgupta doubted whether she and Dhavan will allow CPI(M) to form the ministry and get its majority support tested on

the floor of the Assembly. Comrade Pormod Dasgupta did not consider all MLAs of the defecting parties as traitors. All of them might not remain under their treacherous leaderships. In fine, he appealed to the people to observe one day's strike and hartal as a protest against the betrayal of Ajoy Mukherjee & Company.

Harekrishna Konar

Comrade Harekrishna Konar, member of the Central Committee of the CPI(M), analysed that a new consciousness has dawned upon the peasantry. They are throwing away their age-old servile mentality and asserting their own human dignity. In the teeth of jotdar attacks, the peasantry are today powerfully organized. This, according to Comrade Konar, is bringing about alarm in the hearts of the reactionaries. The vested interests are alarmed to death at the anti-benami struggle of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers. That is why Ajoy Babu in league with the Right CP is inviting to West Bengal the army and the CRP of Indira Gandhi. If the people are attacked, they will be forced to defend themselves, declared Konar. In conclusion, he warned that if the Bangla Congress, Right Communist Party and SUC foisted President's rule upon the people of Bengal, inevitably their lot will be the same as that of Dr. Prafulla Ghosh.

Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad informed the gathering of the atrocities committed by the mini-front Government in Kerala led by the Right CP. He congratulated the people of West Bengal on their heroic struggles against such a mini-front conspiracy. Comrade Krishnapada Ghosh, member of the State Secretariat of the CPI(M), warned the Central Congress Government that there would be massive battles if President's rule is imposed on West Bengal, without asking the largest party to try to form a Government and allowing the Assembly to test majority support behind it.

Mighty Protest Strike Rocks West Bengal on March 17, 1970* Disruptors Woefully Isolated

*In Gross Betrayal to the United Front Government
and the People of West Bengal, Ajoy Mukherjee,
Chief Minister, Tendered Resignation on March 16,
1970 and Dislodged the United Front Government*

The democratic masses of West Bengal have given a mighty rebuff to Ajoy Mukherjee's heinous betrayal of the United Front. They have administered a tremendous slap in the face of Dr. Ranen Sen, the Right Communist leader and the motley crowd—the SUC, the Forward Bloc, PSP, etc. —which joined hands with him in denouncing the call for a 24-hour strike given by the CPI (M), BPTUC, 12th July Committee, Federation of Mercantile Employees' Unions, State Government Employees' Co-ordination Committee and other mass organizations to record their protest against Ajoy Mukherjee's betrayal.

The Response to the strike was massive and spontaneous, paralyzing completely all business activities and movement of traffic in all the districts of the State. There was no transport in the streets. In Calcutta, the tramway and the State Transport workers had returned their vehicles to the garage on the previous evening as soon as Ajoy Mukherjee's resignation was announced over the radio. Not one plane took off or landed at the Dum Dum airport. No train left or arrived at Howrah and Sealdah, for lack of staff who notified their decision not to work. The shops had put down their shutters. There were no vendors in the markets. Schools and colleges

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were closed. There was a massive turn-out of volunteers before the banks, government offices, mercantile firms, mills, and factories, to ensure complete success for the strike.

The Right Communists, SUC, Forward Bloc, PSP had campaigned against the strike and had brought out processions on the previous day. Delhi had obliged Ajoy Mukherjee by sending CRP battalions to create panic and terror. But the people of West Bengal took all this in their stride and foiled all attempts at disruption. The isolation of the Right CP and company was evident for all to see.

However securely ensconced in their party offices, these so-called 'mass' leaders purveyed a stream of lies, which cannot deceive even a credulous child, to cover up their defeat. Right Communist M.P., Indrajit Gupta said, 'the strike was partially successful'. Dr. Ranen Sen, their State Secretary, went a little further. He said the call for strike and hartal 'has substantially failed'. One self-styled leader of dock workers claimed one hundred per cent attendance.

But unfortunately all these lies were exploded by the press reports and even AIR bulletins. The Commissioner for the Port of Calcutta said that work was completely paralyzed in the docks and the port. According to the "Statesman" (March 18), "According to the port authorities with the clerical and skilled workers totally abstaining from duties, very little work was done. No work was done at Central and State Government offices and even the Central Telegraph was closed in the morning. The General Post Office was closed throughout the day.

The situation was almost the same in the districts. According to industry sources, only four of the 64 jute mills in the Jagatdal and neighbouring areas were able to carry on normal work... In the engineering industry which employs 400,000 workers, all units except for two in Howrah were closed."

Despite the claim of Kalyan Roy, the Right CP M.P., that not even one per cent of the workers responded to the strike call, more than 90,000 workers were on strike in the colliery

belt. CPI(M) leader Robin Chatterjee complained that the SSP leaders had set on fire several houses belonging to the CPI(M) supporters.

These are very incomplete reports, but even the monopoly papers, which highlighted the clashes and the loss of lives, could not hide the fact that the strike was a complete success in spite of the active opposition of the Right CP, SUC, Forward Bloc, PSP, SSP in certain areas, and the Congress, aided and abetted by the owners and professional goondas and strike-breakers.

P.B. Greets

In its statement issued on March 17, Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) congratulated the workers and people of West Bengal on the mighty successful strike to protest against the treacherous resignation of Ajoy Mukherjee.

The statement said, "The total strike in factories, workshops, railways, transport and Government services, banks and mercantile firms, educational institutions, in towns and rural areas, constitutes the most effective democratic verdict against the betrayal of the United Front by the leaders of the Bangla Congress. It has given a rebuff to the leaders of the Right Communist party, the Forward Bloc and the SUC who have been working against its success and screening the betrayal.

The Strike has given a fresh mandate to all progressives, all parties, to remain loyal to the united front and carry out the pledges given to the people.

The Polit Bureau congratulates the people on their disciplined conduct of the strike in spite of violent provocation from interested parties, and the extremely provocative speech by the Chief Minister. It expresses its profound sorrow and grief for those who lost their lives during the course of incidents engineered by elements hostile to the strike.

The Polit Bureau thanks the people of West Bengal for expressing their confidence in our Party's policy and assures

them that the Party will always be with them, come what may. The Polit Bureau is confident that the heroic people of West Bengal will continue to carry forward the struggle in defence of democracy and defeat all attempts to impose the President's Rule or a Congress-inspired mini-front Government.

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), in another statement issued on the same day said:

The West Bengal Secretariat of the CPI(M) congratulates the workers, employees, students, teachers, shopkeepers, traders, peasants and the people in general of West Bengal for their magnificent response to the call of general strike and hartal to protest against the treachery of Sri Ajoy Mukherjee, the leader of Bangla Congress and to support the formation of a new U.F. Ministry. The strike has been a complete success inspite of the bitter opposition of the leaders of some parties and in face of worst gangster methods resorted to by the leaders of Congress, the Right CP, and their allies to break the strike. We pay our homage to those who have been killed by the anti-strike gangsters.

The success of the strike call proves that many of the cadres and supporters of the Right CP and their allies do not agree with the disruptive anti-CPI(M) game of their leaders. It is worth noting that the workers and employees of many factories and establishments where the unions are controlled by the Right CP, SUC and others have joined the strike inspite of the opposition of their leaders.

When the Bangla Congress leaders decided finally to break the U.F., the CPI(M) in order to carry out the mandate of the people, had expressed its firm desire to form a new U.F. Ministry in co-operation with the rest of the U.F. But the Congress, the Right CP, and the leaders of some other parties have come out openly to defeat this attempt and have banded themselves together to form either a mini-front ministry or to impose President's rule in West Bengal. The Congress leaders, both at the Centre and in the State, who so

long tried to mislead the people by professing neutrality, have expressed their determination to fight against any attempt to form any U.F. Ministry headed by us. The leaders of the Right CP and their allies have also joined the chorus. The conspiracy is clear. But the CPI(M) cannot take it for granted that all cadres and MLAs of these parties can agree to follow the suicidal anti-people path of these leaders.

The CPI (M) warns the people about the conspiracy to form a mini-front government in alliance with Congress or to impose a President's rule and to frustrate the attempts to form an alternate U.F. Ministry. The CPI(M) wants to make it clear that the strength of a U.F. Ministry can only be judged on the floor of the Assembly. We appeal to all parties of the U.F., their MLAs, cadres and supporters to join us in carrying out the mandate of the people. There is still time. We urge upon the people to be ready for the next round of struggles against all sorts of conspiracies against the United Front."

In Calcutta, the moment the people came to know in the evening of the 16th of the treachery of Ajoy Mukherjee, all buses and trams began returning to the depots. All passengers got down, shops and markets closed down. Volunteer squads paraded the streets. The whole next day, identical was the picture of Calcutta. This is in a way unprecedented in the annals of general strike and hartal in West Bengal. Adjoining Kidderpore area struck all work. Cossipore industrial area had exactly the same picture. Not a soul could be found in the Gun and Shell factory. In all the south and north Beliaghata factories, there was perfect quietude. Even in Metiabruz, the strike could not be prevented. Whole Calcutta was outspoken in protest against the black traitors.

You go to any part of 24-Parganas, north or south—everywhere the strike was an immaculate success. In Diamond Harbour, Laxmikantapur, Canning, Sonarpur, Amtala, Bishnupur, and all other places in the south, the hartal had its all-pervasive sway. In Behala, Mahestola, Budge Budge, Garden Reach, the entire working class joined in. Nothing different was the story anywhere in the north. In Dum Dum

Jessop, HMV, ATB, Aluminium, Hindustan Steel, and all the rest were silenced (Hindustan Steel Union is under revisionist leadership). All along Jessore Road, Dum Dum Road, leading to the north of the district, all working people struck in toto.

You go to Howrah district and everywhere same is the extent of success of the day-long hartal. All jute mills were closed and work stopped in all industrial concerns. The Light Martin Railways lay as idle as dead. In Hooghly district also all jute mills had their gates closed. In Serampore, everything was at a standstill. Throughout Burdwan district in Asansol, Durgapur, Ranigunge, Burnpur, Barakar, Chittaranjan, everywhere the strike was an all-inclusive success. Thousands and thousands of colliery workers of the area joined in.

The hartal permeated every area of Purulia, Bankura, Murshidabad and adjoining districts. The strike waves extended massively also to the North Bengal districts. In Maldah, West Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling, every sort of activity came under the strike. Work in all tea gardens ceased for the day. Shops closed down even in the distant Darjeeling town. All these in spite of opposition from a section of the Gorkha League leaders.

And in the teeth of these massive strike efforts of the people of West Bengal, the revisionist leaders and their accomplices abetted by goondas tried to break the strike. But they were all silenced by the workers, employees, teachers and students and youth. But even in factories and offices where the unions are led by them, the ordinary workers and employees did not pay heed to the disruptive call of the revisionists and company. To cite only a few, in Shalimar Paints, Shalimar Works, Shalimar Rope, Hindustan Steel, etc. Not more than 200 workers attended the Guest Keen factory where the revisionists claim sway over its 4,000 workers. This is a striking feature of this strike. Ordinary workers under revisionist leadership are questioning the bona fides of their treacherous leaders.

This is because the rank and file of these parties saw with their own eyes their own party bosses with red festoons in hand busily trying to break strike, beat the striking workers, assailing upon them bestially with bombs, and daggers, spears and swords, rifles, revolvers, and sten guns. And in all these heinous anti-worker crimes, the revisionists and their allies are employing anti-social hirelings and hoodlums. During the 24 hour hartal, these elements have maimed and murdered dozens of workers. In Kesoram Rayon Factory, in Tribeni, Hooghly district, the security force of the Birlas along with the revisionist gangsters murdered five workers with gunshots and spears. Police did not intervene. Among the dead is Comrade. Nani Debnath, Secretary of the CPI(M) unit of the factory. The workers of the Hukumchand Jute Mills, 24-Parganas, were attacked jointly by the revisionists and Congressmen. Three workers were murdered. The blacklegs murdered in cold blood two in Cooch Behar and three in Burdwan district. Workers of the Gauripur Jute Mill were assaulted and five murdered. Even the hired goondas tried to kill Comrade Gopal Basu, the local CPI(M) MLA. In Howrah, Comrade Patit Paban Pathak, a CPI(M) MLA, was assaulted by goondas employed by Forward Bloc. Gangsters activated by one SSP faction killed one CPI(M) worker in Baruipur in 24-Parganas. Goondas inspired by SUC workers took three lives in Dum Dum and one in Tangra.

In addition, to these murders, goondas and their mentors belonging to the Right CP, Congress, Forward Bloc and the SUC leadership assaulted the peaceful workers in Bongaon, Batanagar, Tindalbagan and Belgachia Road of Howrah, Habra, Tangra, Chittaranjan and many other places. Mining workers were also the target of attack, particularly in Sripur Colliery by SSP gangsters.

The people of West Bengal were extended revolutionary greetings on the consummate success of the 24-hour protest general strike and hartal by the RCPI, Workers' Party, the BPTUC, 12th July Committee and others. Contrariwise, with limitless comical effect, the Right CP leader, Ranen Sen,

Bangla Congress traitor, Ajoy Mukherjee and SUC have claimed failure of the strike. People have noted that this triple alliance have issued statements that are perfectly alike those past Congress bosses B.C. Roy and P. C. Sen issued on similar occasions. Accordingly, West Bengal people have thrown away the gibberish trash of Ranen Sen and his fellow traitors with the contempt it is worth. The CPI(M) and others have urged the people to remain ready for even greater and longer struggles ahead against the traitors and their Congress abettors.

Industrial Relations Show Signs of Improvement under U.F. Government in West Bengal*

**Budget Speech of Krishnapada Ghosh,
Labour Minister of West Bengal : 1970-71**

That the United Front Government of West Bengal will continue to support the workers' struggle against automation, nationalization, mechanization etc., was reiterated by Comrade Krishnapada Ghosh, Minister for Labour and Employment, while presenting his budget for 1970-71 in the State Assembly on March 4. He said :

In the annals of trade union movement in West Bengal the year 1969 will be treated as a landmark for the glorious achievement in consolidating working class unity. In three major industries—jute, tea plantations and cotton textile—nearly 4.5 lakh workers of all trade unions stood unitedly and through peaceful strike most successfully wrested from the employers considerable gains in interim wage rise. Most peaceful condition prevailed during the entire period of strikes and non-interference of State police proved the correctness of the U.F. Government's policy and helped to maintain peace.

This achievement surpassed all past records and revealed the entire gamut of toilers' unity and consciousness fostered and nourished by the gains realized through the formation of the United Front Government.

In 1968, jute workers were refused even an ad-hoc onetime payment of Rs.24; in 1969 they achieved a monthly (interim) wage rise of Rs.30 through united strike action. In the tea gardens, besides interim wage rise, nearly 10,000 new employment

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provisions were made following the strike and in cotton textile industry the ad-interim monthly wages rise is Rs.20.

Inspired by the success of jute and tea garden workers' strikes, the workers in engineering industry were able to achieve wage rise ranging from Rs. 27 to Rs.47 per month and a minimum bonus of 4 per cent plus half a month's wages. The central trade unions took a unified stand during the entire negotiation in this wage settlement. This settlement proved that the strike could be averted by conceding the legitimate demands of the workers well in time.

Unparalleled Gains

Nearly 7.5 lakh workers were benefited in these four industries to the extent of more than Rs. 20 crores. In these settlements the workers' gain exceeded the scope of Wage Board's recommendations. This is a new feature and has no parallel in any other State. These settlements have set a pattern and will re-orient wage structure of all other industries in the State paving the way to more stable industrial relations.

The forces of unity are gaining ground and its message has reached the grass roots sweeping aside the off-shoots of sectional approach.

Wage Still Inadequate

The wage is still very depressed in West Bengal. Wages in jute, coal and tea plantations in West Bengal were far below the subsistence level and the wage pattern of these industries to a great extent influenced and determined the wage pattern of other industries in the State. The workers are still suffering from this legacy, they are still deprived of a need-based minimum wage necessary for a modest existence. Dearness Allowance paid to the workers does not neutralize the rise in the cost of living and the pay rise that the workers have achieved does in no way help them to fill up the gap. In a number of industries like glass, ceramics, rubber, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, hosiery, power-loom, motor transport, etc., there is wide disparity in wages. Uniformity of

wage in these industries is essential. This being the major trend, the issue of wage has come in the forefront and the workers in pursuit of their legitimate aspiration will continue their struggle for an equitable wage. In this struggle the United Front Government will stand firmly behind the workers.

It is in this perspective one should judge the entire activities in the sphere of industrial relations of the State in 1969.

During the year under review, 766 strikes and 137 lock-outs took place involving 6,08,882 and 76,111 workers and 79,52,434 and 20,18,955 man-days respectively. Of the total work-stoppages (strikes and lockouts) of 903 involving 6,84,993 workers and 99,71,389 man-days the average duration was 14.56 days compared to 25.52 days in 1968. This was due to the fact that 760 such disputes involving 6,64,100 workmen were expeditiously settled by the end of the year and in most of the settlements the workers were benefited.

During the year 1969 altogether 164 units were closed affecting 33,774 workmen of which 64 units employing 12,075 men were re-opened subsequently, and 18 units employing 1,185 persons were permanently closed. Closure of remaining 82 units affecting 20,514 persons continued beyond December 31, 1969.

These closures were mainly in medium and small units unable to recover from the aftermath of the crisis. Lack of orders, paucity of financial resources, shortage of raw materials, etc, are the major factors leading to these closures. It is to be reckoned here that Mr. J. M. Parsons, President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industries, in his presidential speech, said on February 20, 1970:

“Most engineering factories are more active and hopeful than they have been for several years, and indeed their main problems at present arise from raw material shortages.”

Signs of Improvement

This being the state of affairs, it would appear that industrial relations in the State have shown signs of improvement.

Admittedly, however, lot more is necessary for the welfare of labour.

But some people find nothing in what the workers have achieved during the year under review. They try to be over-zealous in blaming labour and still talk of "gherao", when even employers' representatives admit that "gherao" is no longer "the menace that it once was"

As a matter of policy the Government gave maximum emphasis on effective negotiations at bi-partite level. This policy yielded result insofar as lesser number of disputes were referred to Labour Directorate in 1969 compared to 1967 and 1968. Consequently, the number of disputes referred to industrial tribunals and labour courts came down substantially.

Employment Position Alarming

The employment position in the State continues to be alarming. The menace of reduction in employment due to mechanization, rationalization, reorganization and automation still confronts the workers. In pursuance of the 32-point programme the United Front Government will support the workers' struggle against these measures of the employers and for their job security. The Government will also support the workers' struggle against worst labour exploitation through casual and contract labour.

The failure of three successive Plans, dependence on foreign loans and assistance and subservience to feudal and monopoly interests has dragged the country to its economic ruin. Its most glaring manifestation is seen in West Bengal. Most wilful neglect of the economy of the State by the Congress Government at the Centre since 1947 has also its bearing on the unbearable state of affairs the people of the State are trying to change. The critics of United Front Government are oblivious of these facts.

The Government is aware of the sufferings of the unemployed people. An unemployment benefit scheme is being evolved to provide some relief to the unemployed persons.

At the end of September, 1969 arrears due to default in Provident Fund dues by the employers mounted up to Rs. 2.53 crores; in case of ESI contribution this amount is still Rs. 90 lakhs. It is clear that the employers have not very much changed their attitude. The existing penal measures to stop such practices are inadequate. The Government is seriously considering the scope for their improvement.

Medical Insurance benefits under Employees' State Insurance Scheme are also too meagre and its functioning is not free from public criticism. An Enquiry Committee has already been set up with representatives of the Central Trade Unions, Indian Medical Association etc., headed by Sri Nikhil Das, MLA, to look into the affairs of ESI (M.B.) Scheme and to recommend measures to ensure better benefit and to eliminate the source of corruption, if any. After long delay the Standing Committee has decided to release Rs. 2 crores sanctioned earlier for construction of two ESI hospitals in the State but the allocation has still not been received by the State Government.

One of the most salutary measures taken by the Government is setting up of a commission of enquiry under the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1952 to investigate into the affairs of the jute industry in West Bengal and to recommend measures in the interests of jute growers, jute workers and national economy. The terms of reference to this Commission are very comprehensive and it is hoped, co-operation from all concerned will fulfil the purpose of setting up the Jute Commission of Enquiry.

More Trade Unions

During 1969 a total number of 828 new trade unions were registered with a total membership of 70,933. Registration of 85 trade unions were cancelled during the year with a total membership of 9,374 workmen. The total number of registered trade unions at the end of the year 1969 was 4,395 as against 3,653 unions in 1968.

During the year under review two Labour Bills—The West

Bengal Payment of Subsistence Allowance Bill and the Trade Union (West Bengal Amendment) Bill—were adopted. The first Bill has already obtained the required assent and is being enforced from March 1, 1970. Enforcement of the second Bill is still pending.

During the current year a few more legislative measures are contemplated. A Bill will be moved seeking improvement and alteration of various provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act to place labour on a better footing. Two other Bills—Introduction of Compulsory Gratuity and Compulsory Recruitment Through Employment Exchanges are already in the drafting stage.

Jyoti Basu Demands Allow CPI(M) to form new U.F. Ministry in West Bengal*

Statement issued in Calcutta on March 17, 1970

Comrade Jyoti Basu has issued the following statement to the Press on March 17 :

After the resignation of the Chief Minister and the unilateral decision of the Bangla Congress to quit the U.F. and dissolve the Government, the CPI(M) declared its intention to save the U.F. and its ability to form a Government which will receive the confidence of the Assembly. Accordingly, I met the Governor today to seek his authority to proceed to constitute a Ministry, but the Governor informed me that leaders of several parties like the Congress(R), Bangla Congress, the Right CP, Forward Bloc, SUC, etc. have informed him in almost identical language that they are opposed to any Government being formed under the leadership of the CPI(M). These parties are of the view that, if I am permitted to form a Government, I may through various means secure a majority and their parties may break up. This is a frantic appeal to the Governor to save the unity of these parties by denying me the right to form a Government, as they fear that many of their MLAs will desert them because of their anti-people stand.

The leaders of these parties are not only opposed to the formation of a Government led by the CPI(M) but they are also against immediate elections. Hence it is clear their objective is to form a mini-front Government with Congress support.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 22, 1970. Refer Document covered under Item No. 40 of this Volume.

It is regrettable that the Governor has accepted the appeal of the above parties. He was of the view on receipt of letters to the above effect that the CPI(M) must prove to his satisfaction by submitting names or parading the MLAs before him that it could command a majority in the Assembly before he can authorize me to form a Government. But I made it clear to the Governor that I was willing to prove my majority on the floor of the Assembly and not before the Governor. From contacts with various parties and their MLAs, I was confident that a large number of the MLAs were eager to save the U.F. and will not abide by the decision of their leaderships to vote against such a Government. I strongly protest against the attitude of the Governor and demand that even now he must adopt a correct procedure and permit the formation of a Government on the initiative of the largest single party, i.e., the CPI(M).

I appeal to all sincere members in these parties to repudiate such conspiracies and declare their open support for an alternative U.F. Government and demand that the Governor should ask the largest single party to form the Ministry.

Fact Finding Mission Reports Unheard of Atrocities in Kerala*

A ten-member delegation, on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) West Bengal State Committee, went to Kerala on a fact-finding mission regarding the wanton police repression and torture let loose by the Achutha Menon Ministry after it assumed office on November 1, 1969, on the democratic movements of workers, peasants and other sections of the toiling masses of Kerala. These tortures occurred in course of police action to suppress the protest movement against the fall of the U.F. Government headed by Comrade E.M.S., peaceful general strike, hartal, and picketing in connection with the transport workers' agitation against retrenchment and the movements of the hutment-dwellers, agricultural workers and tea estate and rubber plantation labourers.

The delegation led by Comrade Bijoy Modak, M.P., consisted of Comrade Krishna Chandra Halder, Minister for Excise, West Bengal Government, Comrade Prasanta Sur, Mayor of Calcutta, Sri Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal, an eminent advocate and political leader of West Bengal, Comrade Rabin Mukherjee, MLA, M.A. Sayeed, MLA, Prof. Satyasadhan Chakrabarti, Comrade Santosh Bhattacharya, Comrade Biman Basu and Comrade Ramayan Pandey. The members of the delegation were drawn from the trade union, kisan, students' and teachers' movement of the State.

The delegation reached Trivandrum on March 1, 1970.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 22, 1970.

Then, divided into three groups, the members toured over all the ten districts of Kerala for a week and held a Press Conference at Ernakulam on March 8.

The delegation held a Press Conference in Calcutta on March 14 and issued a Press hand-out.

In Kerala, lakhs and lakhs of agricultural labourers have been fighting for wage increase and tenancy right over land and against eviction for years together. They have a very powerful and mighty organization of their own. During the tenure of the E.M.S Ministry the police never interfered with their legitimate and just struggles against the landlords. There was no police intervention also on the democratic movements of workers and other sections of the people in Kerala at the time of the E.M.S. Government.

Indiscriminate Assaults

But from the very day Achutha Menon's mini-front Government came to office, a reign of terror was let loose on the people of Kerala. Not only the members and supporters of the CPI (M), but others belonging to the SSP, KSP, and KTP also were subjected to inhuman police torture. In a number of cases even some Right Communists, Muslim Leaguers and one or two Congressmen and Kerala Congressmen were victims of police repression. Hundreds of innocent persons were brutally assaulted by the police and goondas even when they were standing on the road-side or sitting in a shop or sleeping at home. Not to speak of police and goonda attacks, on ten lakhs of hutment dwellers, exercising their own legal rights as per law, even some land-owners who came to a settlement with the hutment-dwellers and allowed them to possess ten cents of land in the villages, build hutments, put fencing around the land and pluck cocoanuts from trees within the area according to the provisions of Kerala Land Reforms Act, passed by the E.M.S. Ministry were taken into custody and subjected to police torture.

The delegation described the present Government in Kerala as not only anti-people but barbarous and uncivilized. Even

the worst days of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's rule in former Travancore had not seen such brutal police atrocities.

300 Huts Burnt

The delegation went to 150 places, met the victims of police repression, both men and women, old and young. The delegation also heard reports of goonda assault in connivance with and with actual participation of the police on workers and agricultural labourers, leading to the death of 18 workers. It also collected evidence of rape and molestation of women, and looting of articles from the houses of poor agricultural labourers and workers. The members saw with their own eyes 300 huts burnt by the goondas of landlords, belonging mainly to the Kerala Congress and Congress, in the Kuttanad area of Kerala.

40,000 Criminal Cases

The delegation has got the report that nearly 40 thousand persons have been involved in cases in connection with the above movements. There were innumerable cases of lathi-charges on peaceful demonstrations and picketing. Even people shouting slogans were not spared. Members of the delegation met Sri A.S.N. Nambessan, MLA, at Trichur Hospital on March 4, 1970, and heard about the cruel assault of the police on him in the police van after he was taken into custody while offering peaceful picketing at the Trichur Bus Station on February 16, 1970.

Atrocities In Police Custody

In most of the cases there were merciless beatings on persons, after arrest, in the police van and lock-ups. There were also several acts of unprovoked police firing. Even ordinary canons of justice were not respected and provisions of the Indian Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code were violated and persons after arrest were not produced before the court before three, four or five days. They were kept in the police lock-up and subjected to inhuman tortures before being produced. The local police, SAP, and CRP were all involved in these atrocities, particularly the CRP taking the leading part. The delegation also met the

representatives of other democratic parties like the KTP, KSP and SSP in the districts and was told that their members and sympathizers too were not spared from police brutalities.

The delegation was of the opinion that the entire thing was pre-planned. The delegation called upon the people of West Bengal to protest against the tyrannical regime of Achutha Menon and extend their support to the valiant struggle of the agricultural workers, and other sections of the toiling masses of Kerala. The delegation also demanded immediate and unconditional release of all arrested persons, withdrawal of all cases, punishment of the guilty goondas, policemen and officers, impartial inquiries in all cases of police excesses and withdrawal CRP from Kerala.

A Few Of Brutal Police Repression

1. At Palghat, police upon fired peaceful picketers and killed four persons. Eight persons were hospitalized due to bullet injuries.

2. One person was seriously injured due to firing at Calicut.

3. Brutal murder. Varghese was taken into police custody. His hands were tied to a pole. He was brutally tortured for seven hours and then in cold blood, he was shot at and killed.

4. Raping of women and pushing pointed lathi into the private parts of a woman.

5. Batting the penis of men. Penis was also forced into the mouths of children.

6. Forcing persons to eat human flesh: Place : Perambra, in Kozhikode district. Names of persons : (1) M. C. Pacher (35), and (2) K. Narayanan (34).

7. Stabbing by the goondas.

At Nilambur, in Malappuram district, Poulouse was stabbed to death by the Muslim League goondas in presence of the Police Minister and police officers.

At Pachakanam, in Kottayam district, Anthoniraj, a tea-garden worker was murdered by the goondas belonging to Congress.

President's Rule in West Bengal : Its Political Implications*

M. Basavapunnaiah

This is the second time since the Fourth General Elections of 1967 that a popularly elected legislature and its Government is denied administration of the State, and President's rule is imposed over the fifty million people of West Bengal. So, for sixteen months out of the last thirty-seven months, the rule by elected representatives was denied to the people and Presidential rule or the Congress -PDF puppet Ministry's misrule was perpetuated. There was no difficulty in finding one pretext or the other. It is anybody's guess how long the present spell of President's rule will last and what is in store for the people.

Such has been the plight of our "great Indian democracy" and the rule by elected representatives, under the leadership of the bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties, chiefly the Congress party, holding power at the Centre. Thus the deepening political crisis is tearing the mask off the fake democracy which is idealized by the wealthy capitalists and landlords, and applauded to the skies by their petty-bourgeois stooges, who had been always sneering at proletarian democracy—the real democracy for ninety per cent of the people, the democracy without the big money bags and rich landlords.

For this tragic story and murder of democracy no other single political party can be held mainly and principally responsible than the ruling Congress party at the Centre.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, March 29, 1970.

And this was so when it was divided into the so-called Syndicate and anti-Syndicate wings. This party having held its unchallenged monopoly rule for over full twenty years, both in the States and at the Centre, pursuing the bankrupt path of capitalist development and practising policies that squeeze the poor and fatten the rich, lost the hold on the popular masses. In its effort to desperately cling to power, it is discarding faith in democracy and the democratic verdict of the people. It has become corrupt in every sense of the word— political, economic, ideological, and in every other ethical code of public conduct.

It was this party and its controlled Central Government, instead of gracefully accepting the defeat at the polls in 1967, had assiduously cultivated the leaders of the Bangla Congress, and undermined the U.F. Government in 1967. It was this party which corrupted the legislators with promises of favours and offices, and engineered the defection of some MLAs from Bangla Congress, PSP and others, and intalled the puppet Congress PDF Ministry, which was kicked out of office in a couple of months, followed by the imposition of the President's rule for full twelve months. For all these misdeeds of the Congress party and machinations of its Central Government, the people of West Bengal during the mid-term poll had punished this party, reducing it to the strength of a bare number of 55 in the Legislative Assembly of 280, while securing a massive victory for the U.F. for having fought the Congress party and its foul machinations. Not merely that. The CPI(M), which was made the principal target of attack and was subjected to a systematic slander, hate and maligning campaign by the Congress party and by all other anti-Communist forces, backed by the entire Big Business-controlled Press, was elected by the people as the single largest party of 83 MLAs in the State, doubling its previous strength. One expected that some sense would dawn on the ruling party.

Congress Wire-Pulling

But the disease of anti-Communism and the real class philosophy of the vested interests that corrupted the ruling Congress party's mind to the core are not so easily curable. Once again, immediately following the mid-term poll results, the Central Congress leaders and their other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois stooges, contrary to all their professions of democracy and respect to the democratic verdict of the electorate, started conspiring against the CPI(M) to deprive it of its legitimate democratic right of assuming leadership of the new Government. They began encouraging and inspiring the leaders of the Bangla Congress to bid for its leadership, even though it commanded less than half of the members of the CPI(M) in the new legislature. In the interests of preserving the unity of the U.F. and in the hope that the other U.F. constituents would correct their anti-Communist prejudices, and with the keen desire to give some relief to the common people through the U.F. Government, the CPI(M) conceded this absolutely undemocratic demand for the Chief Ministership to the leader of the Bangla Congress. This concession was given despite his notorious conspiracy of October 1967 and quite aware of the massive defection and betrayal of the U.F. by its members in 1967, besides his known anti-Communist proclivities.

Conspiracy Again

Hardly within six months after the formation of the second U.F. Government and its beginning of the implementation of its electoral promises to the people, the new conspiracy of the Central Congress leaders had begun. The leadership of the Bangla Congress once again offered its services to the Central Congress leadership and agreed to act as its Fifth Column in the U.F. and its State Government. If, earlier in the first U.F. Government, Ajoy Mukherjee, both as the Chief Minister and Home Minister, was echoing the slandering cry of the reactionaries and anti-Communists about "law and order being in danger" because the CPI(M) was one of the

constituents of the U.F., once again as the Chief Minister he actively initiated and directly led a satyagraha movement against the U.F. Government and its police policy. He was calling it “barbarous” and “uncivilised”, slandering the CPI(M) as a party of dacoits, murderers and fascist and conspiring to form another mini-front Government as the puppet of the ruling Congress party, excluding the CPI(M), the single largest political party in the U.F.

He had been shameless enough to level the accusation that the police department was used for the partisan ends of the CPI(M) in the face of the facts that most of its officers are pro-capitalist, pro-landlord and anti-Communist in their mental make-up and training, and they had openly raided the Legislative Assembly and assaulted its members in July 1969. As every political observer in the country noted, this cry of “law and order in danger” was raised to its high pitch, during both the U.F. Governments of 1967 and 1969, conspicuously enough, only in the months of October-November, when police protection was denied to the landlords to loot the crops of the poor tenants, and every form of assistance was assured to the struggling peasantry.

Deliberate Evasion

The interesting part of the story is that despite the CPI(M) and the Deputy Chief Minister in the U.F. Government, Comrade Jyoti Basu, repeatedly offering to discuss the charge of the partisan use of the police in the U.F. meeting, neither the leaders of the Bangla Congress nor its accomplices in this slander ever dared to accept this challenge and to take it up on the agenda, and always dodged the issue. This evasion was not accidental, but deliberate, since they knew that they could not prove the charge, and it would only recoil on the parties that were levelling this false charge. All the same, there was the Big Business-controlled ‘free Press’ to readily place its services at the disposal of these Bangla Congress leaders to systematically play up false stories of lawless activities by the CPI(M) and the breakdown of law and order in West Bengal!

Every politically conscious worker and decent-minded democrat in our country knows that this totally false cry of breakdown of "law and order" by the bourgeois and their Press had always been a handy weapon for anti-Communist slander. It was raised during the period of Communist-led State Government in 1957-59 in Kerala while law-breaking was actually organized and led by the ruling Congress party and its allies; then it was raised in 1967 against both the U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala, attributing it to the CPI(M); again it was raised in 1967 about the West Bengal U.F. Government even though the police portfolio was handled by the then Chief Minister, Ajoy Mukherjee; and in still more a vociferous manner, it was again raised in the year 1969, when the Home portfolio was in the hands of the CPI(M) representative. The reality had been that the presence of these U.F. Governments, with the CPI(M) as one of its powerful constituents, had proved a great hindrance to the capitalists and landlords for their 'lawful and orderly' exploitation and loot of the workers and peasants. It prevented the use of police machine from assisting this 'lawful and orderly' exploitation and oppression. Hence, the logic of the bourgeois-landlord democrats is, that the CPI(M), even if it is democratically elected by the people, should not be allowed to administer the State and Government, no matter whether such a stupid stand is democratic or not. Anything that does hinder the capitalist landlord exploitation is no 'democracy'!

Not Surprising

There is nothing for a Communist to be particularly perturbed about this role of the bourgeois-landlord leaders of the Congress party, or about certain other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political parties which play the role of its appendages. Similarly, there is nothing surprising about their deep anti-Communist prejudices, nurtured over the years, fortified by their basic class outlook and reinforced with the powerful links they have forged with the vested interests.

Right CP Plays as Congress Tout

The shocking part of the story is that the entire direction and enactment of the opening scene of this counter-revolutionary drama was taken charge by the Right Communist Party, both in Kerala and West Bengal. It was this party that provided the ideological cover for all the bourgeois-landlord conspiracies against the U.F. Governments, supplying all the necessary ammunition for the foul and slanderous propaganda and agitation against the CPI(M). It was this party that opted out to play the role of a tout to the ruling Congress party for rallying several break-away groups from the Congress and some petty-bourgeois parties around the ruling Congress party and its Government at the Centre in order to pave the way for the success of forging an anti-Communist front, and to blow up the Left-oriented United Fronts of Kerala and West Bengal. It is this party that is eager, on the one hand, to claim the major credit for the forging of these U.Fs and for the numerous gains secured by the workers, peasants and middle classes under the U.F. Governments, while simultaneously on the other, taking all the lead in maligning the U.F. administration, accusing it of lawlessness and disorder and in spreading every kind of vile slander, thus supplying grist to the mill of anti-Communist reaction.

While breaking away with the Dangeites in 1963-64, our Party had characterized the Right Communist leaders as crassest class collaborationists who had broken away with Marxism-Leninism and betrayed the cause of the revolutionary working class. Several uninformed Communists and Communist sympathizers thought that our criticism was too harsh and might not be well-founded. But the developments in Kerala and West Bengal during the present political crisis nakedly demonstrate as to how the Right Communist Party, in league with every bourgeois and petty-bourgeois party, had blown up the U.F.s, which were forged to fight the bourgeois-landlord policies of the Congress Government. It is organizing anti-Communist fronts in alliance with the ruling

Congress party and with the blessing and support of its Central Government. Its politics of class collaboration and total rupture with the cause of the working class stand glaringly revealed when it had chosen to act as the unashamed strike-breaker on March 17 in West Bengal, when the masses in their millions were solidly protesting through a peaceful strike against the defection of the Bangla Congress leaders and their betrayal of the U.F. Government, at the behest of Central Congress leaders. It was revealing its ugly face when in Kerala by instituting a terror rule of the police, imprisoning hundreds, involving about fifty thousand people in false cases, it was drawing admiration from every reactionary and counter-revolutionary quarter in the country without exception.

Panic in Enemy Camp

Friends and foes alike, including the avowed anti-Communists and counter-revolutionaries, admit that the Communist Party of India (Marxist) had made big advances among the people of both West Bengal and Kerala during the last three years. In fact, this advances among the workers, peasants, and sections of the urban middle classes is the cause of panic in the enemy camp, and it has become an eye-sore for several other petty-bourgeois parties which are losing their hold on the masses because of their unprincipled and opportunist somersaults in the midst of the political crisis that is unfolding rapidly. Nothing will be more monstrous and absurd a lie than to say that these spectacular advances registered by the CPI(M) are due to its erroneous and sectarian policies. Even if one-hundredth of the scurrilous accusations levelled and filthy attacks directed against the CPI(M) by its opponents, and persistently campaigned by the 'free Press' in the country were true, it would have by now liquidated itself among the people. All its political opponents and enemies would then have been spared the trouble of ganging up to conspire and fight against it. Nowhere in the world the revolutionary working class party has so far escaped these filthy accusations, foul conspiracies, and hate-campaign at the hands

of its political enemies, and there is no reason why the CPI(M) should entertain any illusions on this score. It boldly faces all these, and is quite confident of defeating them. Past experience of ours teaches us and the history during the last six to seven years specifically confirms the same.

What Next?

The enemies of the U.F. and their State Governments in Kerala and West Bengal are jubilant. They are heaving a sigh of relief that the U.F.s forged against the bourgeois-landlord Congress Government and its anti-people policies had collapsed. They fondly hope and dream that thereby the perpetuation of the big bourgeois-landlord rule is ensured, that the unity of anti-monopolist and anti-landlord classes and their political parties is frustrated and prevented, and that the CPI(M), which spearheaded this unity of the democratic classes and parties is, once and for all, isolated. Yes! God bless such hallucinations and day-dreams of theirs.

Such attempts at 'isolating' the CPI(M) and sabotaging the unity of the democratic forces and the formation of the U.F.s to fight the reactionary rule of the bourgeois-landlord Government had always been there. And yet, neither the unity of the democratic forces and their united struggles could be prevented nor the disintegration of the Congress and its class rule averted. Repeated attempts to divide the democratic forces, to disrupt their U.F.s by purchasing some through bribes and sops of offices and to topple the U.F. Governments were made. And yet the bourgeois-landlord classes and their political parties could not escape from the deepening economic political crisis and its undermining effects on the decaying bourgeois-landlord order. The foul attempts at denigrating and slandering the CPI(M) as the agent of foreign powers, as the agent of Chinese and Pakistan Governments, as a party that is wedded to violence and bloodshed and collecting arms to stage an armed revolt etc. were there to isolate it from the people. Following every such heinous attempt and its seeming success, it was found that

the CPI(M) was far from being 'isolated and smashed', instead it was more and more ended and strongly entrenched in the minds and hearts of the common people of our country.

The Prospects

Every democratic party and group that was scared and unwilling to unite with the CPI(M) at one stage or the other to fight against the Congress party's misrule, was compelled to abandon this stand and agree to unite with it or face the prospect of losing its democratic image and its mass following. This had happened in 1964-65, in 1967, and in 1969. We have now entered another phase of serious political development and are found at another turning point of history in the forward march of the revolutionary movement.

The CPI(M) and its close allies are 'isolated' — of course, not from the people but surely from some of the democratic parties and groups whose leaders now have chosen to line-up behind the 'democracy' of the ruling Congress party and its Government at the Centre, in preference to the popular democracy that the CPI(M) upholds. This evidently is not a happy development, but the CPI(M) is not frightened by this momentary set-back and is confident of regaining the unity of the democratic forces, on a far higher level and with greater striking power, in the not too distant a future ahead.

Whatever happens, the CPI(M) is determined to frustrate the conspiracies of the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes and their other accomplices to bring about a political polarization of forces around the two projected bourgeois-landlord political lines and alliances. It is of the considered view that these alliances by the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate wing of the Indira Gandhi Congress, are aiming at the polarization of political forces around them with a view to squeezing out and isolate the revolutionary working class and to roll back its democratic struggle that is afoot for ending of the capitalist path and for ushering in a people's democratic path. It,

while, unreservedly pledging to fight against the threat of the Syndicate alliance at every step, and for this specific purpose shall unhesitatingly join hands with all the political forces that are genuinely interested in this struggle, shall never permit itself to become the camp follower of the ruling Congress party and its Central Government, and thus assist the consolidation of the bankrupt bourgeois-landlord rule under the signboard of Indira Gandhi's 'Socialism'.

This determination and decisions of ours is not born out of our subjective desire, but based on the entire course of objective political developments in the country. The bourgeois-landlord classes, under the leadership of the Congress party and Government unitedly failed to resolve the economic crisis and escape from the consequent political crisis. It is utterly illusory on the part of a broken wing of the Congress party under the leadership of Indira Gandhi to succeed in sustaining either the unity of the ruling classes or perpetuating their class rule, let alone its success in mobilizing and consolidating the democratic parties and groups behind its bourgeois-landlord rule. That era of monopoly rule by the Congress party had ended as early as 1967, and every device attempted at restoring it has boomeranged. Its persistence in future to resurrect such a monopoly rule is bound to end in a fiasco.

Inspiring Confidence

It is this reality that inspires confidence in the political line of our Party, the line of frustrating the attempts of the two ruling class-led blocs or alliances to polarize the political forces behind their respective camps and to boldly fight for uniting the democratic classes and sections, their political parties and groups, into a united democratic front clearly demarcating from the two bourgeois fronts led by the Syndicate and anti-Syndicate wings of the divided Congress party.

The CPI(M) is hostile to the 'mini-front' strategy of the Right Communists and others under its evil spell not simply because it is conceived against the CPI(M), but primarily because by its very nature, class character and composition,

it is a handmaid of the ruling Congress party, totally dependent upon it and paving the road towards coalition and collaboration with it.

Expose the Conspiracy

The crisis engineered for the U.F. Government in West Bengal by the deliberate step of resignation of Ajoy Mukherjee and the defection of the Bangla Congress from the United Front, the blatant refusal of the leaders of the Right Communist Party, the Forward Bloc and the SUC to co-operate with the CPI(M) to continue the U.F. and constitute the U.F. Government, the refusal of the Governor to allow the CPI(M) to form the Ministry and test its majority on the floor of the House, the imposition of the President's rule without dissolving the Assembly and ordering of a fresh poll and the abandonment of the neutralist pose by the State wing of the ruling Congress party and its open declaration of hostility to a U.F. Government under the leadership of the CPI(M)—all these are different links in the chain, namely, the forging of an anti-CPI(M) front and Government together with the ruling Congress party. This whole conspiracy must be exposed before the people, the entire game can and should be frustrated and the future advance of the democratic struggle depends on how dexterously, tenaciously and confidently we carry on this struggle in the weeks and months ahead.

Let every class-conscious worker, fighting peasant and member of the CPI(M) come forward with courage and conviction to accept this new challenge and pledge to fight for frustrating the mini-front conspiracy, for the speedy ending of the President's rule and for forcing the Central Congress Government to order an immediate, free, fair and fresh poll.

Plot to Kill Jyoti Basu in Patna*

Friends of the CPI(M) in Calcutta and elsewhere heaved a sigh of deep relief when the news was broadcast over the radio that Comrade Jyoti Basu had escaped literally by a hair's breadth the bullet from the revolver of an unknown—and, till the time of going to press, untraced—assailant at Patna on the morning of March 31, 1970.

In Calcutta trams and buses were stopped by the workers the moment the news of the attack reached them. Schools and colleges were closed as pupils and teachers came out on the streets. In Baranagar, the constituency Comrade Basu has been representing since 1952, a spontaneous hartal was observed. In some areas of Calcutta some factories had to stop work for the day as workers downed their tools. Some Government offices and mercantile firms also had to down their shutters as the employees left to join the demonstrations moving around in every locality. A one-lakh-strong demonstration—at the call of the 12th July Committee and Federation of Mercantile Employees' Unions—paraded the Dalhousie area and later met the Governor to hand him a Memorandum. Movie-houses and theatres suspended their shows.

Similarly, in Patna, all schools and colleges were closed for the day immediately after the news of the dastardly attack was known. A 15,000-strong demonstration which had 1,000 women in it paraded the streets.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, April 5, 1970.

in a communique strongly condemned "the dastardly and murderous attack on the life of Comrade Jyoti Basu at the Patna Railway Station at 8 a.m. today, when he alighted from the train from Calcutta. It is a sheer accident that the bullet aimed at him killed Sri Ali Imam, an LIC employee who came to receive him and was accompanying him. The P.B. conveys its deep condolence to the family of the bereaved."

"This cruel and cowardly attempt to assassinate Comrade Jyoti Basu, no matter who the yet undisclosed assailant is, is a ghastly political crime to be squarely placed on the heads of the vicious class enemies of our Party who have been incessantly carrying on a campaign of hate and violence against it and its leaders. The so-called 'free Press', monopolised by the Big Business in our country, is playing no small part in stirring up bestial passions against our Party and inciting violence against our leaders. They cannot escape their share of moral and political responsibility for this murderous attempt on the life of Jyoti Basu, one of the topmost leaders of our Party and beloved and respected leader of the millions of toiling people of West Bengal.

"The P.B. calls upon all the working people, the members and sympathisers of the CPI(M) to launch their determined protest, and to draw necessary lessons from this grave incident, and alert themselves for defending the Party and the life of its leading cadre from such murderous attempts.

"The P.B. appeals to all the democratic forces in the country to unequivocally protest and condemn this outrage, and also denounce the deliberate hate campaign unleashed by the big bourgeoisie and landlord forces to incite violence and bloodshed against the CPI(M)."

The bullet that was fired at Comrade Jyoti Basu near the gate of the Patna Junction station fatally injured Syed Ali Imam, a Field Officer of the LIC. A long-time sympathiser of the Communist Party, he had gone to receive Comrade Basu along with other leaders of the Bihar State Committee of the CPI(M). An M.A. of Cambridge University, 45-year old Syed Ali Imam leaves behind a 18-year-old daughter—

a Senior Cambridge student—and a 9-year-old son whose mother preceded the father two years ago.

In the evening, Comrade Jyoti Basu addressed a 40,000-strong meeting at the Gandhi Maidan, Patna.

A hero's welcome was accorded to him at the Dum Dum airport at noon on April 1. Comrade Jyoti Basu also addressed another meeting—called by the Calcutta District Committee on March 31—at the Shaheed Minar maidan on the same evening. Called only 24 hours before, the two lakh people gathered there demonstrated once again how they love and cherish the CPI(M) and its leaders.

40,000 Hear Jyoti Basu at Patna on March 31, 1970.*

Protests Against Plot to Kill Basu

Gandhi Maidan, Patna was a seething mass of humanity, on March 31, 1970, who had turned up to hear Comrade Jyoti Basu, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M), speak to them, after the abortive attempt on his life earlier in the day at the Patna Railway Station by some cowardly agent of the reactionary forces. Relief at the escape of the popular leader of the fighting masses, contended in their hearts with the feeling of profound grief at the loss of Comrade Ali Imam, a close friend of CPI(M) and deep indignation against the plotters of such a diabolical conspiracy.

The Bihar State Committee along with the Bihar State Kisan Sabha had, according to previous decision, planned to hold on March 31, a mass demonstration of toiling peasants, agricultural labourers, industrial workers and office employees and other sections of the democratic masses before the State Assembly to press forward some of their most urgent demands, which included a new ceiling act on land-holdings (15 to 30 acres per family of five, depending on fertility, irrigation facilities), stoppage of all evictions by promulgating an ordinance, grant of homestead rights, a minimum wage of Rs.3 per day for agricultural labourers, release of and withdrawal of cases against Comrade A.K.Roy, MLA, and others arrested in connection with the democratic movements in the State, implementation of the assurance given to the striking workers of Jamshedpur, fulfilment of the de-

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mands of the non-gazetted State employees, free education up to the Matriculation standard. etc.

Comrade Jyoti Basu had been invited to address the meeting.

Responding to this call, *jathas* organised from different parts of State had begun to pour into the town from even the previous evening.

On the morning of March 31, about eight hundred people had assembled on the railway platform to give a rousing welcome to Comrade Jyoti Basu, who arrived by the Howrah-Delhi Express, when the dastardly attempt on his life was made.

The reactionary forces and opponents of the CPI(M) fondly hoped that after this attempt on Comrade Jyoti Basu's life panic will prevail and the entire programme and demonstration and public meeting will flop.

But the demonstrators, overcoming their anger and passion, marched from Gandhi Madian, waving their red flags and placards and warning the enemies that such cowardly attacks on individual leaders could not halt the onward march of history. The demonstrators were more than 15,000 in number. They had come from distant areas as north-eastern parts of Purnea and Saharsa and the south-western parts of Bhabhna (Sahabad district). Several thousands had come from Bhagalpur, Purnea, North Monghyr, South Monghyr and Patna itself. There were *jathas* from Champaran and Sahabad. Smaller *jathas* came from other districts. No part of the State went unrepresented. For the first time, contingents of workers, numbering several hundreds, came from the far-off industrial areas of Ranchi, Dhanbad and Jamshedpur.

The public meeting, according to most conservative estimates, was forty thousand-strong. Comrade Taqui Rahim, a State Committee member and veteran Communist leader of Patna, presided. At the outset, Comrade S.S. Srivastava, Secretary, Bihar State Committee, moved a resolution condemning the dastardly attack on Comrade Jyoti Basu and condoling the death of Syed Ali Imam, who was a sympathiser of the Party. The entire audience stood and observed one minute's silence in honour of the departed comrade.

Comrade Uma Shankar Shukla, State Secretariat member, gave a report on the talks the delegation had with the Chief Minister on the demands referred to above.

Comrade Jyoti Basu addressed the public meeting in Hindi. Comrade Basu said, attacks on individual leaders cannot isolate the CPI(M) from the people. The Party has attained its present position in West Bengal as a result of its devoted and untiring championship of the people's cause and service to the people

Describing the achievement of the U.F. Government in West Bengal, he said: During the U.F. regime, nearly Rs.50 crores have been snatched from the unwilling hands of the monopolists and gone to the workers in the jute, tea, textile and engineering industries in West Bengal, as rise in their salary and D.A. The peasantry has been able to recover 3½ lakh acres of benami and other lands which had been illegally occupied by the landlords.

This has been possible owing to the policy of the U.F. Government that the police should not intervene in the legitimate struggles of workers and peasants.

These achievements have created panic in the hearts of parties like Bangla Congress, representing the vested interests. Even after their betrayal there could have been a U.F. Government. The CPI(M) gave a call to form a new ministry with the other parties, but the Right Communist Party, and others jealous of the CPI(M), sabotaged this move. They are raising the false cry of law and order in jeopardy. While I was the Home Minister, I offered to discuss the entire issue. I waited for five months, but none came forward for they had nothing to say. They only wanted to utilise this as a propaganda to defame our Party.

Referring to President's rule, Comrade Basu said: President's rule is nothing but indirect rule of the Congress, whom the people of West Bengal had decisively rejected at the mid-term poll. The suspension of Assembly is a dirty trick to allow time for the formation of mini-front Government. The people of West Bengal will not tolerate it.

Class Politics Behind the Murderous Attack on Jyoti Basu*

M. Basavapunnaiah

On hearing the news of the murderous attempt, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) categorically characterised it as a ghastly crime, politically motivated; Jyoti Basu himself, immediately following the attack, stated clearly that it was a politically motivated crime, and he had no personal enmity with whomsoever, even to remotely suspect any foul play from any such quarters. None in the country, so far, has denied that it is political, not even the most venomous critics who have tried to mischievously explain it was an inevitable outcome of the alleged policy of violence by the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

The entire country is shocked at this reported news, and all the political parties, and most of the newspapers have condemned it, and warned against this dangerous trend of political assassinations. While expressing gratification at this spontaneous protest, from both our Party's friends and political opponents, we cannot stop at that. We will be failing in our duty to the working class and the democratic future of our country if we hesitate to unmask the cruel class politics behind some of the hypocritical protest statements over this grave incident. Some editorials, in notorious organs and mouth-pieces of blood thirsty Big Business, such as "*The Statesman*" and "*The Times of India*", had the cheek and temerity to come before the public with statements that "the prime responsibility here is that of the C.P.M... which has been

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recklessly encouraging lawlessness under the pretext of mass mobilization”.

Incitement of Violence

It is in fact such reckless and wild slanders, manufactured and systematically spread by the paid pen-pushers of big moneybags in the country, that are criminally responsible for inciting hate, violence and bloodshed against the working class and the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Most of the monopolist-controlled Press and newspapers, far from providing the public with authentic news and thought-provoking views, have degenerated into large-scale factories to regularly manufacture lies, especially on the revolutionary working class parties and their leaders. They are outrageously abusing the term “free Press”, only to freely and widely propagate lies of all sorts. The blood-sucking moneybags had long ago lost their political, ideological and programmatic battle with the Communists, and are left with nothing at their disposal to defend their decadent and rotting, exploiting social order except lies, slander, deceit, demagoguery, violence and war. If there is one mainspring of hate and violence, it is the bourgeois-landlord politicians and the monopolist Press they have built up and that is building them up. If incitement of hate and violence is a crime to be punished by law, the first accused in it should be the bourgeois-owned and run ‘free Press’ in the country.

Lenin on “Free” Press

The bourgeois-landlord Government of India, ironically enough, wants to parade itself as one honouring Lenin, by issuing a postal stamp on the occasion of Lenin’s Birth Centenary, on April 22, 1970. It was no other revolutionary leader than the immortal Lenin, who castigated the so-called ‘freedom of the Press’ under bourgeois-landlord rule, and here are his comments:

“All over the world, wherever there are capitalists, freedom of the Press means freedom to buy up newspapers, to

buy writers, to bribe, buy and fake 'public opinion' for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. This is a fact. No one will ever be able to refute it."

He further observes: "A popular method always used by the bourgeois Press in every country with unerring effect is to lie, scream, raise a hullabaloo and keep on reiterating lies on the off chance that 'something may stick'."

Every syllable of these utterances of Lenin is demonstrating its correctness and truthfulness in our country, with our depraved bourgeoisie and its lie-producing 'free Press', as a large-scale industry.

The 'free Press' was freely disseminating the news, columns after columns, for more than a month, that under Comrade Jyoti Basu's stewardship as Home Minister, thousands of women were molested, lorry loads of women's sarees and brassieres were heaped on the roads around Rabindra Sarovar Stadium, and thousands of gold ornaments lost—all because of the CPI(M) representative holding the Home portfolio. What else is it than incitement of hate and venom in the minds of the uninformed public against the CPI(M) as a political party? Why was this 'free Press' not doing one-hundredth of such propaganda about the New Year day mass molestation and revelry at Connaught Place and assault on girls and women at the Commonwealth Youth Conference in Delhi? Utter lies about the Rabindra Sarovar Stadium incident stick, and the truth of the Delhi scandal is easily forgotten! All this, one should note, on the morrow of Jyoti Basu assuming the responsibility of handling the police portfolio.

Vicious Slander Campaign

The respectable 'free Press' in the shape of "*The Statesman*", Calcutta, features a story that somebody's wife was snatched away to be again safely returned to her husband after forty-eight hours and to add some more pep to this rumour, it also freely writes that women are not stirring out of their houses in Calcutta after evening, since they were feeling insecure under the U.F. Government, with the police

portfolio in the hands of Jyoti Basu. May we ask the learned editor, if such was the public panic and scare created under the “goonda” administration of the U.F., how was he able to so freely and nonchalantly disseminate all such rubbish against the Government and its law and order policy?

A wanted person against whom the Government and the police, long before the U.F. Government took office, were levelling serious charges of decoity and murder, was smoked out of his den, and was killed in the encounter between the public and the police on the one hand, and the wanted man shooting with his revolver on the other. This man Hena Ganguli suddenly was owned up by some “respectable” parties and persons as a great revolutionary, who was cruelly killed by Jyoti Basu’s police and his alleged Party following. ‘Free Press’ was so free to serialise Ganguli’s so-called life sketch lionising him as a great public figure and revolutionary. The Right Communist leader, Bhupesh Gupta, was chivalrous enough to recommend to the Home Minister and Sri Chavan readily agreed to the granting of a lumpsum to the family members of the late Ganguli! Do all these show any genuine respect for ‘law and order’ or do they only crudely demonstrate political spite against the CPI(M)? If these are not deliberate incitement of hate and violence against Jyoti Basu and his Party, what else can be called incitement to political violence?

Ajoy Mukherjee, the leader of the Bangla Congress and ex-Chief Minister of the U.F. Government, who puts up the pose that he is the incarnation of Gandhism in West Bengal, carries on a slander campaign for months, and the ‘free Press’ freely puts its services at his disposal giving banner headlines. He maligns the CPI(M) as a party comprising of thieves, dacoits, murderers, fascists and men who kidnap and rape women. If all this is not intended to rouse bestial passions and political violence against the CPI(M) and its leaders, for what else is it meant?

Encouragement to Assassins

A U.F. Government was popularly voted into office twice within two years since 1967, only to be conspired against

and toppled, first after eight months, and the second time after 13 months, for no other crime than that the CPI(M) happened to be a key constituent in these Governments. What was the role played by the great 'democratic and free Press' of the country? There was utter contempt for the democratic verdict of the people, and the 'free Press' was freely, systematically and without a pause, carrying on the most vicious slander campaign to destroy the fair image of the U.F. and its Government, make the CPI(M) the central target of attack, with the intention of inciting hate and violence against it. If it was dinned into the minds of the uninformed public, by the 'free Press', day in and day out, that 'law and order' had collapsed, that women's honour was in jeopardy, that peaceful pursuit of occupation and life for the citizen had become impossible, that daylight murders were being encouraged in hundreds, that the CPI(M) was perpetrating all these in order to destroy other parties etc., is it any wonder that bestial passions are stirred among, at least, sections of the following of our political opponents, that it gives rise to assassins of the Patna Railway station type?

An erratic and thoroughly misguided person was alleged to have made an abortive attack on the person of the Kerala Home Minister, Mohammed Koya, and the man was denounced and expelled from our Party, on learning the incident. And yet, political leaders of S.A.Dange's fame had come out with most mischievous and vicious statements, attributing the crime to the politics and tactics of the CPI(M) and depicting it as a party wedded to the cult of violence against the leaders of its political opposition. The 'free Press' wrote big editorials and freely circulated reports along the same vicious lines, though knowing fully well that the CPI(M) and its political line has absolutely nothing in common with such a cult of individual terrorism. Is there anyone stupid enough to believe that all this was done to uphold the democratic values and a decent code of conduct among political parties, and not with the devilish intention of defaming the CPI(M), depicting it as nothing but a gang of murderers, to be countered with murders?

Their Political Bankruptcy

The CPI(M) is fully aware that its political opponents and class enemies have become politically bankrupt and are unable to meet the challenge of the political and programmatic line of the CPI(M). This political bankruptcy on the part of the bourgeois-landlord class enemies has led them to more and more rely on lies, slanders, deceit corruption and violence in their fight against the CPI(M). Not to speak of the distant past, the utterly false story of the contemplated sabotage of defence during the India-China border war to arrest and detain our Party leaders, the notorious 'White Paper' of Sri Nanda with cooked-up reports of our Party's active preparation for armed rebellion and collection of arms, and the constant putting out of concocted stories that the CPI(M) was collecting arms to stage an armed revolt against the Right Communist-led State Government of Kerala, etc., emanate from the same dirty arsenal.

Political murders and attacks on individual leaders are not entirely new in our country, there have been any number of these incidents, perpetrated against our Party by its class enemies, though the attempt on Comrade Jyoti Basu's life at Patna Railways Station falls in a category of its own, symptomatic of the present phase of our political life. It was only last year that Comrade Kunhali, who was a prominent trade union leader and MLA of our Party in Kerala, was shot and killed. There had been scores of such political murders of our leaders by our political opponents, particularly by the people who called themselves men belonging to the ruling Congress party. A truthful compilation of these political murders, during the past, particularly in the last three years, would demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt that the overwhelming majority of these heinous crimes were committed by the bourgeois-landlord parties against our Party, and on none else. In West Bengal alone, the figure stands at 100. It is no secret that in Andhra, Kerala and other places many such murders have taken place. In January

1969, the landlords in Tanjore, had committed the ghastly crime of burning 40 agricultural labourers alive.

Violence of The Ruling Classes

The decadent bourgeois landlord classes and the political parties that represent them in our country had long ago adopted the cult of political violence against our Party, its leaders and cadres. This is an established fact, and no amount of crocodile tears on the attempted assassination of Jyoti Basu or hypocritical protest statements for public consumption can hide the ugly face of political violence that is whipped up against our Party and its following in the country. Some political parties, particularly the ruling Congress party, and the fascist-oriented anti-Communist forces in the country cannot escape their responsibility for this cult of violence against a party of the revolutionary opposition. The 'free Press' as the mouth-piece of arch reaction and counter-revolution is guilty of fanning the flames of political violence against the CPI(M), since the big moneybags and the wealthy landlords who own it clearly see in the CPI(M) the surest grave-digger of their blood-thirsty rule of exploitation and plunder.

However, it is futile to argue with the barons of the 'free Press' or the bourgeois landlord political leaders and convince them of the criminal nature of the activities they are perpetrating, and cure them of the malignant malady of anti-Communism with which they are deeply afflicted, and which becomes increasingly acute in proportion to the increasing popular support secured by the CPI(M).

Lenin's Warning Fifty Years Ago

The intensification of the economic-political crisis, the accentuation of the class struggle, the correct political line adopted and the militant leadership provided for the oppressed working class and the toiling peasantry, and the big advance made by the CPI (M), during the last three years, particularly in West Bengal and Kerala, are driving our political opponents

to anti-Communist frenzy, to indulge in crimes of violence and murder against the CPI(M) and its leaders. It is not to be forgotten that Lenin had given a warning to the proletariat as far ago as 1920 and we should remind ourselves of it :

“In the concrete situation created throughout the world, and above all in the most advanced, powerful, enlightened and free capitalist countries, by militarism, imperialism, the oppression of colonies and weak countries ... The very idea of the capitalists peacefully submitting to the will of the majority of the exploited, the very idea of peaceful, reformist transition to Socialism is not merely sheer philistine stupidity but also downright deception of the workers, embellishment of capitalist wage-slavery, and concealment of the truth. That truth consists in the bourgeoisie, even the most enlightened and democratic, no longer hesitating at any fraud or crime, even the massacre of millions of workers and peasants, so as to preserve private ownership of the means of production.”

The events that are unfolding in our country and the dastardly manner in which the bourgeois-landlord classes are resorting to violence against the common people and their political representatives, once again, confirms the correctness of Lenin's warning, shattering any illusions on this score.

The more our Party and its leaders are endeared to the workers, peasants and other toiling millions, the more we are earning the inveterate hatred of the exploiters, and it would be a crime to expect any mercy and protection at the hands of the bourgeois-landlord State and its leaders, no matter what their pretensions.

People Are Vigilant

The mass indignation and the massive protest actions in Patna on the spot and in Calcutta and throughout West Bengal assure us that the working people are seized of this cruel conspiracy against the CPI(M) and its leaders, and are alert to meet them and defeat them. Such criminal attempts on the lives of our Party leaders and cadres, instead of cowing

our spirit of dedication in the service of the people, would only redouble our determination to shed the last drop of our blood for the cause of the emancipatory struggle that the present epoch has pushed to the forefront. The bourgeois-landlord classes are shouting "thief" when they desperately attempt to depict the CPI(M) as a party wedded to violence, bloodshed and destruction of democracy while hiding the fact that it is they who have been building and perfecting the monstrous machine of violence against the exploited masses in innumerable forms, spending thousands of crores of rupees for the same. History tells us, and we are quite conscious and confident that this ultimately will boomerang against the exploiting and oppressing ruling classes, and that time is not too far off.

Regarding the enemies' slanderous accusation against Communists for their views on violence, we can only, for their benefit, repeat that violence is alien to the ideals of Socialism and Communism, and that Socialism and Communism are opposed to violence against men in general and also against nations. What all Socialists and Communists maintain is that while striving their best to achieve the revolution by peaceful and democratic means, they must be always prepared to meet the monster of violence at the hands of the bourgeois-landlord classes with revolutionary counter-violence to end all violence against humanity, violence practised for ages by the propertied classes and perfected into a monstrous art of manslaughter by the modern bourgeoisie.

Party members and sympathisers, conscious workers, the fighting peasantry and other progressive forces should draw the correct lessons from this dastardly attack on the life of Comrade Jyoti Basu and pledge to do everything in their power to defend the party and the life of its leaders and defeat the cruel game of violence and murder by the degenerate and desperate class enemies.

A New Trade Union Centre Has Become a Historical Necessity*

B. T. Ranadive

The working class of India is today passing through a new phase of their movement after the toppling of the United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal.

The two Governments were formed when the Congress was routed in the general elections and were committed to a programme of defending the interests of the toiling masses...

After detailing some of the achievements of the working people under these two Governments, Comrade Ranadive said:

The vested interests in West Bengal, Kerala and all over India got frightened at the progress of the working class, peasants and other masses. They knew that if this continued the masses in other States could forge unity and the ruling classes would be faced with united resistance all over India. The Indira Gandhi Congress and the Syndicate were in panic and they found readymade allies in the leaders of the revisionist party, Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, Muslim League and the RSP. These leaders only talked about the welfare of the common man to get his vote. But in reality they pursued the interests of the capitalists and the landlords.

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A Temporary Setback

Every conscious worker must realize that the disruption of the United Fronts was a plot of the capitalists and landlords to undermine the growing power of the working class and democratic movement against the Congress regime. He must also understand the role of treason and betrayal played by the leadership of the revisionist party, of the Muslim League, of the Bangla Congress. This toppling of the United Front Ministries is the first step in the general attack which the capitalist-landlord clique is planning against the workers, peasants and the democratic forces. Day by day, these elements are demanding more and more attacks against the militant masses, new powers to crush the movement and safeguard the profits of exploitation.

The Syndicate wing of the former Congress has been openly demanding a ban on the CPI (M) with a view to attacking the democratic masses. It has openly joined hands with the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and other reactionary forces and its avowed aim is to crush the democratic movement and take India towards American imperialism, and make way for growing exploitation of India by foreign capital. This wing is supporting the Indira Gandhi Congress and the Right Communists in Kerala and West Bengal to disrupt the United Front.

The Indira Gandhi Congress, equally determined to uphold capitalist-landlord rule, talked about nationalization of banks, etc., but was equally determined to break up the U.F. Its aim was to isolate the CPI(M) and it took a lead in toppling the Kerala and West Bengal Ministries, helping the repressive regime in Kerala and launching repression against the people in West Bengal.

The State Governments under the Syndicate and Indira Gandhi wing have passed Preventive Detention Acts, embarked upon anti-working class legislations and are using the police to suppress the peasant movement by terror.

It will be suicidal for the working class to ignore the fact

that the Syndicate is conspiring to launch a widespread attack on all democratic liberties and suppress the trade union movement; it will be equally suicidal to have any illusions about the Indira Congress which has taken a lead in disrupting the United Fronts, the only challenge that the Congress faced from the people.

It must be realized that the break-up of the United Fronts is a temporary set-back for the working class and the democratic movement. It has split the ranks of the people opposed to the Congress. To defeat the capitalists and landlords, to defeat the Congress, it is necessary to reunite the people by isolating the treacherous leadership of the revisionist and other parties, by uniting the workers and other sections in the common struggle against the Congress, the landlords and capitalists...

Only if we succeed in achieving this in West Bengal and Kerala, we will be able to foil the game of the capitalists and landlords all over India — a new concept of united front which steers clear of all opportunist leaderships, a united front in which the main mass organizations of the people, the trade unions, the kisan sabhas, the students' organisations, the teachers' organisations will play a prominent role. The present concept of united front confined only to a few political parties must yield place to a new concept which should give due weight to mass organizations also. It is absolutely necessary if the united front is to be an instrument of struggle and not only of electoral alliance.

The experience of West Bengal and Kerala has once more taught the working class what Lenin taught, that the fundamental problems of society — the problem of poverty and unemployment, of land, of a decent standard of life — cannot be solved unless the working class aided by its allies captures political power in an open class combat and vanquishes the oppressors, that they cannot be solved through elections within the framework of the Constitution. Events have once again showed that the Constitution is a bourgeois-landlord Constitution and that its corner-stone is the

fundamental right of property-holders to exploit the people. This is virtually borne out by the Supreme Court judgement on nationalization of banks. Unless this Consitution goes lock, stock and barrel, unless the power of exploiters which it enshrines is liquidated, there is no freedom for the Indian people...

A New Offensive

In recent years, the strike struggles of the working class have developed and many successes have been won. The working class has been facing a severe attack because of the recession. Though now the Government claims that recessionary conditions have ended, this is only partially true with regard to certain industries.

The Central and State Governments have been launching one attack after another on the rights of the workers.

Comrade Ranadive referred to some of their anti-working class measures and the trick of appointing a National Labour Commission and continued : Instead of exposing this fraud, Dange cooperated with the Commission in its anti-working class designs, sent his own nominees on the various sub-committees. The INTUC and other central organizations along with the AITUC betrayed the working class and joined with the Government and the employers in suggesting anti-working class measures, banning of strikes, etc. Not one of these so-called representatives of the trade union movement condemned the repressive policy of the Government, its anti-working class acts and police measures. They all joined the Government and the employers' representatives in screening the real labour policy of the Government — that of repression and with rare exceptions they were unanimous notes along with the Government and employers' representatives...

Need we therefore wonder that the National Labour Commission has come out with avowedly anti-working class suggestions to ban strikes, and other measures? The Commission is quoting the support of these traitors in its nefarious recommendations. The working class must fight against the

by the main political parties of the front to fight back with mass mobilisation when the puppet Gill Ministry was installed and it functioned for more than six months, the manner in which the front Ministry in Bihar was allowed to be toppled, the Paswan Ministry was installed, and the opportunist rallying of parties again around it without bringing the masses into the field for effective mass intervention, speak eloquently for the fiasco of these parties and fronts in this crucial regard. The whole drama was enacted by parties and their leaders behind the scenes and not before the people and on the open political stage, with issues sharply posed before the people. The contemptuous bourgeois concept of these parties that people are to be called into action when their votes are to be cast, and after that, political parties and their leaders are free for their opportunist political games, unconcerned with the people, has played havoc with the democratic movement, its progress and consolidation in these states.

However, a cursory examination of the mass ferment and struggles in all these three states would reveal that the anti-Congress discontent of the people is steadily growing, and the Congress is unable to reverse this process, in spite of its disruption of the anti-Congress fronts and the toppling of these non-Congress state Governments. Its experiment of setting up puppet regimes has not succeeded nor is it able to escape the political ordeal of seeking the verdict of the electorate once again, within twelve to fourteen months after the general election.

To conclude, the two different types of united fronts and non-Congress Governments in states, demonstrate two totally different political results, during the last eighteen months, the fronts preponderantly democratic are able to with stand the Congress attacks and progress, while the fronts with reactionary parties dominating and democratic parties allying with them opportunistically, are disintegrating and playing a diversionary role.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), therefore, urges all the democratic parties of our country to seriously note

policies Comrade Ranadive said : The trade union movement has to seize hold of the fact that their daily struggle is not only against this or that employer but is a part of the struggle — the people's struggle against the social system — the rule of landlords and the capitalists; that it must direct its fire against the imperialists who are trying to enslave our people, against the monopolists and landlords who control the main economic resources, against the State of the capitalists and landlords. In the immediate future it becomes a political struggle to liquidate the rule of the capitalists and landlords, to liquidate the growing power of imperialism, and replace it by a State of People's Democracy led by the working class. Here the main driving forces are the working class, the mass of poor peasants and agricultural workers, and peasants. Without this the working class cannot get rid of the monopolists nor successfully defend its own daily interests. The working class must lead the struggle for People's Democracy if it wants to emancipate itself.

Fight For Socialism

Socialism is the declared aim of the trade union movement. The poverty, unemployment, exploitation of the working class and society cannot be eliminated unless the banks, factories, workshops, means of transport and distribution, all means of production — mines, etc., are owned socially and run for social needs and not for private profit. This means that private property in the means of production must be abolished, must be replaced by social property. This can be done only by a State of the working class which has captured political power and can suppress the resistance of the exploiters. This is totally different from the bogus nationalization by the Government which is intended to benefit the capitalist State.

Has the trade union movement, its leadership, remained true to this declared aim—the aim of liquidating capitalism, establishing Socialism, an aim which requires ceaseless fight against the capitalist-landlord State? Has it taught and trained the working class in the politics of the capture of political

power, of alliance with the peasants, of championing its cause and leading the democratic movement, of heading the demands of all downtrodden sections of the people—peasants, petty-bourgeoisie of city and villages?

The leadership of the INTUC, the HMS, the AITUC have instead sought every opportunity to dull the consciousness of the workers, seen to it that the trade union struggle remains confined to only economic demands. In contrast to unions led by our Party, the leaders have done their best to depoliticalise the trade unions, and transform the working class and trade union movement into an appendage of the electoral machine. They are creating illusions about the Constitution, about elections, while talking about Socialism. This is nothing but a trap to betray the workers and keep them imprisoned within the capitalist-landlord State. They are being taught to believe that without bitter class struggle, through elections they will reach their goal of Socialism. They are being asked to look only to themselves and forget the common struggle against the present misrule.

In the economic struggle, they are being confined mainly to courts and conciliations, and divested of all consciousness about class struggle and finally they are betrayed by the leaders by signing anti-working class agreements. Socialism has no chance unless the trade union movement repudiates this treacherous leadership and carries on its activities on the basis of class struggle, unless the trade union movement moves out of its narrow economic groove and allies itself with the wider political movement to lead an assault on the citadels of political power.

This same reformist and revisionist leaderships of the various central organizations have divested the trade union movement of another basic principle — its international solidarity and outlook. The struggle of the working class, the struggle for Socialism is an international struggle in which the worker in each country must be helped by the workers of all countries, in which the workers of all countries must defend the gains of the movement achieved through

the formation of the Socialist States in one-third of the world, and in which the latter must extend every help to the struggling workers of the capitalist countries. The struggle is directed against the common enemy — the main enemy being American imperialism.

But the reformist leadership is doing its best to snap the common international bond and join hand with notorious American organizations whose main business is to fight Socialism, international working class. Financed by them, they carry on activities against the Communists and militant unions in our country.

The revisionists, the Dange group, also while paying lip homage to internationalism follows a chauvinist policy. It is indifferent to the fight against U.S. imperialism, joins in the hate campaign against China; does hardly anything to spread internationalism and help the fighting workers of Vietnam. The WFTU supports this anti-working class band and attending its meetings is their only claim to internationalism.

What is the internationalism of the trade union movement worth if the working class of our country is not taught to intervene directly to help the great struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S imperialism, a struggle which is defending the freedom of all Asian countries? It is this struggle that is proving to be the turning point in the gigantic battle between Socialism and imperialism on a world scale and the trade union movement in this country will only betray itself if it does not stand in its defence. Similarly, all talk of Socialism is meaningless if we do not stand in defence of the Socialist revolutions already achieved — the Soviet Union, China, North Vietnam, etc.

That is why the working class of India, the trade union movement in this country, while watching every step of the bourgeois-landlord Government, must particularly watch its foreign policy and struggle against all betrayals. The Indira Gandhi Congress Government continually yields to American pressure and this policy the working class must defeat if it seeks to fight the American imperialism and see the triumph of Socialism in the world.

Against Communalism And Chauvinism

These reformist and revisionist leaders not only betray internationalism, they are also betraying the unity of India's working class. In recent years, the ruling class in this country, helped by organizations like the Jana Sangh and RSS, has started resorting to inhuman methods to divide the working class. One of their favourite weapons in Northern India is to foment Hindu-Muslim riots in which the poor of the minority community are hunted down, their houses burnt, their families often killed in large numbers. The most diabolical riot was staged in Ahmedabad in which two to three thousand Muslim workers were reported to have been killed under the Syndicate Congress Government...

Have the trade union reformist leaders fought against these riots, this method to divide worker and worker, this method to ask one worker to kill another worker? The INTUC controls the trade unions in Ahmedabad. How did it happen that such a monstrous riot took place in spite of the INTUC? Because the INTUC leaders do not teach class struggle, do not teach unity, are not free from communal bias.

In contrast, consider what happens in West Bengal and Kerala, where our Party leads the unions. Here the workers themselves—and when the U.F. Government under our leadership existed, the Government—defeated the rioters and proclaimed working class unity to be their sacred trust.

Apart from Hindu-Muslim riots the Indira Gandhi Congress relies on linguistic chauvinism to create disruption among the workers so that the capitalists' profits are kept safe. The Shiva Sena in Bombay which arose with the patronage of Chavan and the Congress Ministry, was used to create riots between Malayalee and Marathi workers; between Tamil and Marathi workers. And now the Shiva Sena attacks Muslims; but its main attack is against the Communists and the trade unions led by them. The Dange group boasts of influence in Bombay. Did it fight the Shiva Sena? The PSP and SSP joined hands with it. The Dange group recently supported

the chauvinistic call of the Shiva Sena for a Bomaby Bandh on March 2 last on the border issue instead of exposing it. That is how reformists and revisionists are helping the Congress Government and the capitalists to disrupt the unity of the workers.

We must take this new weapon of the ruling class seriously and proclaim that we will defend working class unity at all costs; that for us the common bond of exploitation is much higher than other bonds and the Red Flag of unity will finally protect the solidarity of the workers. We will help the workers of Bomaby fight Shiva Sena; we will help the workers of North India fight the communalists; working class unity will triumph as is shown in West Bengal and Kerala.

Rising Wave Of Strike Struggles

It is under these difficult circumstances of constant attack by the vested interests, fratricidal conflicts and continuous betrayal by the reformist and revisionist leaders of the trade unions, that the trade union movement and the working class had to carry on their struggle for wages, for jobs, for better living conditions, for more democratic rights.

Behind the figures of millions of days lost and lakhs of workers participating, stands the tale of distress, starvation and heroic resistance and unity under conditions of betrayal by the leadership. The bitterness of the struggles is seen from the fact that strikes began to be more and more prolonged. The year 1968 saw many strikes which lasted for more than two or three months, some lasted for four and half months. During these strikes, starvation forced members of workers' families in some cases to commit suicide; some went mad because of privations and yet the workers continued to maintain their solidarity and unity. Never since 1929-30, had the strike borne such a prolonged and protracted character. During these struggles, the Congress Government did everything to suppress the workers. This tale of heroic resistance brings to our mind what Engels wrote about working class strikes of more than hundred years ago. "It is

in truth no trifle for a working man who knows want from experience to face it with his wife and children, to endure hunger and wretchedness for months together, and to stand firm and unshaken through it all, what is death, what the galleys which await the French revolutionist, in comparison with gradual starvation with the daily sight of a starving family, with the certainty of future revenge on the part of the bourgeoisie — people who endure so much to bend one single bourgeois will be able to break the power of the whole bourgeoisie." It is out of this fine heroic stuff that our trade union movement is moulded.

After referring to some of the outstanding struggles of the period, Comrade Ranadive continued :

In this period, not only the working class has shown great activity, but also employees in banks and commercial firms. State Government and Central employees, school teachers, professors and doctors have moved into repeated actions. Our special weapon of strike had to be increasingly used by these sections. In many States, the State employees waged a determined struggle facing jails and victimization. The Central employees also waged a bitter struggle through their strike which the Government sought to belittle and crush by brutal methods. The solidarity of these sections with the trade union movement has grown. The trade union movement also recognizes its own responsibility to help and fight for these sections. In West Bengal, the 12th July Committee has developed fraternal relations with other sections of the trade union movement. Every effort should be made to draw these employees in a common struggle. There is no reason why employees and workers should not come under one common trade union organization.

After referring to the struggle against automation, Comrade Ranadive continued : The strike struggles of the working class took place in the midst of the offensive of the capitalist class when lock-outs and mass retrenchment were on the agenda; when unemployment had reached unprecedented heights and in many industries the capi-

talists had already succeeded in effecting mass retrenchment....

It is in the midst of this situation that the workers had to wage a battle not only for their jobs but for wage arrears, for adequate D.A. and bonus, against the delaying and procrastinating tactics of the Government and the employers and for trade union rights. The workers were now being taught that Wage Boards were mere devices to delay decisions over years; that promises of retrospective effect, cheating; that tribunals and adjudication courts were mere delaying devices. The entire labour legislation now stood exposed as a weapon of cheating and deceiving the workers and the Dange group and the reformist leaders would not move beyond it. While prattling about industrial peace, the Government systematically sabotaged all legislation for recognition of unions—a right which would have compelled the employers to negotiate with the workers.

A special feature of some of these big struggles was the urge for unity among the workers belonging to different unions and central organizations. It has been our policy to promote such unity and united action so as to mobilise the full organised strength of the workers against the capitalists. In the recent struggles our initiative often met with full response. In the Madurai and Coimbatore textile strikes, all unions including those belonging to the INTUC, HMS, DMK and the AITUC joined together to present a united front to the employers. In West Bengal, in the jute, textile, and tea garden strikes, all unions — AITUC, INTUC and HMS and UTUC joined hands, all workers came together to secure brilliant successes, and beat back the capitalist offensive. United action of the working class and its unions in the daily struggle is absolutely necessary to defend our common demands and living standards.

Reformist And Revisionist Sabotage

However, the reformist and the revisionist leaders believe more in sabotaging the unity of the workers. The despicable

role which the leadership of these central organizations have played in the recent period when the working class was waging a heroic struggle is there for all to see. United action could be realized where unions committed to class struggle and led by our Party could take the initiative. Where the reformists and the Dange group claim more strength, no united action has taken place.

It is necessary to understand what the leadership of these central organizations, including the Dange leadership of the AITUC, has been doing, when the entire working class of India was passing through endless suffering, faced with the most monstrous offensive. Was it not the duty of these leaders to give a call for united all-India action? Or to come together for such action and unite the workers? Did they give a single call for an all-India action? Did they even support the fighting workers? They did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, they took particular care to see that the struggle of the workers did not spread from one State to another. They did not organize even solidarity actions in other States. They left the fighting workers to themselves so that the capitalists and Government could easily crush them.

The dominant AITUC leadership led by Dange did its best to sabotage all struggles. A resolution moved by us to meet the crisis offensive was passed in the General Council but sabotaged in action. Holding the office of the AITUC in hand this group sabotages every all-India action in order to help capitalists and the Government. No wonder the Government gives it as much importance as the INTUC in Tripartite Conferences. Both are useful for cheating and robbing workers.

The Dange group boasts that it has a large number of textile unions in the country under its control. It particularly boasts of its strength in the textile workers of Bombay. And yet when nearly a hundred mills were closed, did Dange give a call for solidarity for any movement? When the Maharashtra Government decided to drastically cut down the D.A. of textile workers when it took over the closed

mills, did the Dange group give a call in Bombay to fight the offensive? The entire struggle was paralysed by the Dange leadership of the AITUC. No wonder the Shiva Sena is prospering in Bombay.

The same line of sabotaging the struggle is pursued by the Dange group elsewhere...

The dominant leadership has not only betrayed struggles, it has started disrupting militant trade unions and packed the AITUC with its bogus unions. In Kerala, more than a lakh of organized workers have been kept out of the AITUC. In Tamil Nadu, nearly 70,000 have been kept out. In West Bengal, they accept fake unions and start rival unions to those already existing. Everywhere they disrupt unions and when asked to face the ballot of the workers, they run away. The meaning is plain and simple. They want the AITUC to be a show-piece of the Government — a stooge of the bourgeois landlord Government and they do not want fighting unions inside. In fact, the AITUC leaders are trying to convert the organization into a prop of the government as the INTUC is. They therefore sign anti-working class agreements; they sponsor Government's proposals as the workers' demands. Dange tried to betray the steel workers by starting the demand on a low basis with further intention to compromise. The Durgapur workers exposed this treachery and secured more interim increase than what Dange had initially demanded.

Anti-Working Class Line

This openly anti-working class line has now been seen in what the Dangeites have done in their association with the National Commission on Labour. While the workers were facing the onslaught of the capitalists, facing starvation and bullets, the Dangeites were conspiring with the representatives of the employers and the Government to undermine workers' right to strike and forge new weapons of attack.

Comrade Ranadive then mentioned the anti-working class role played by the revisionists in the Study Groups of the National Labour Commission and added : It will be seen

that all the Dangeites have covered up Governmental repression, have not said a word against anti-working class character of official legislation and a number of them have demanded further attacks on the right to strike. Need we wonder that armed with the support of the INTUC and the AITUC representatives, the National Labour Commission has come out with an open demand to ban strikes? This is how the Dange clique has betrayed the workers and when protests are coming in they want to expel these unions and militants who fight against the betrayal and who do not want the AITUC to be an unofficial wing of the Labour Department of the Government of India as the INTUC has become.

It is not possible to deal in detail with all the harm done by the Dange representatives on these Study Groups. The most shameless among them have demanded ban on strikes; but all have joined the capitalists and the Government in screening Government repression as if that is not a part of the labour policy of the Government. They all have joined the employers in by-passing the question of need-based minimum wage : they have put the responsibility of industrial strife not on the employers, but on the workers; like spokesmen of the capitalists they have held both responsible for the present state of affairs; they have praised the labour code though it is a one-sided code to tie down the workers; they are unwilling to expose that it is mainly because of the management's refusal to recognize genuine unions that multiplicity of unions arise — thus on almost every question affecting the trade unions they have taken a class collaborationist line.

AITUC — Instrument of Class Collaboration

All this clearly shows that the dominant leadership of the AITUC has become class - collaborationist and that under its leadership the AITUC cannot play the role of a unifier of the working class struggles. And without an organization based on class struggle and devoted to the cause of the fighting unity of the working class, the trade union movement cannot

march ahead, the full force of the working class cannot be pitted against the capitalist class.

That is why as many as forty members of the General Council of the AITUC met last month in Goa and decided to call a conference of all trade unions from May 28 to 31, to decide on the next step. A new central organization, taking initiative for united action and helping the masses to overcome the resistance of the reformists and revisionists, is absolutely necessary. It must be based on class struggle and fight class-collaboration. All workers must support the formation of this new organization and rally behind it.

The formation of such an organization means that the forces of unity will no longer be obstructed by the Dange leadership in their struggle for trade union unity; such an organization will approach all workers, all unions, all central trade unions for common action; it will have the initiative in its own hands and will strive for common actions over the heads of the reactionary leaders. This struggle for unity demands patience to win over the workers belonging to all organizations. We have no quarrel with the exploited workers; we are opposed to the treacherous policies of the leaders. The struggle for unity must lead to the strengthening of working class forces in each factory. The unity of all fighting unions should be preserved and strengthened; rival unions should be united on the basis of democratic principles and by taking the ballot of the workers; rights of the minority should be protected; unions and the central organizations should function democratically. The Dange group does not hold elections of State Committees for more than a decade. Such bourgeois practices should be eliminated. With increasing unity from below supporting the new central organisation, the latter will become a rallying point for the militant trade union movement and for united action of the working class.

Working Class Will Triumph

The world has recently celebrated the Birth Centenary of the mighty proletarian giant Lenin. This great giant whose

teachings — Marxism-Leninism — have already liberated one-third of the world, which is today free from all exploitation, unemployment and poverty and which shows the victory of Socialism over capitalism — this great giant taught the working class to struggle for the capture of political power and establish its own State with the support of the oppressed peasant and other masses; he taught that the trade union movement by itself will never end the slavery of the working class unless out of this movement the working class struggle for power develops; in conducting the trade union movement he asked every worker to remember the struggle for power and direct the trade union movement towards that single aim; he asked the working class to join the party based on Marxism-Leninism and understand its vital importance in the struggle for emancipation; he asked the working class not to be fooled by elections and Ministries but only to use them as weapons of rousing the people; he asked the workers to secure the alliance of the peasants and other oppressed masses; he told them that this struggle for Socialism was an international struggle; that this struggle to abolish all exploitation was the common struggle of the working class of the world; that the working class movement was an international movement and that the great camp of Socialism was the bastion of world revolution and its defence and strengthening was the common task of all workers of all lands. It is necessary to master his revolutionary teachings and use them for the liberation of the Indian masses.

Welcome Speech of Jyoti Basu, Chairman of The Reception Committee

**All India Trade Union Conference,
Calcutta, May 28-31, 1970***

Comrades of the Presidium, Comrade Delegates,

I consider it a great privilege to welcome you all to this All-India Trade Union Conference on behalf of the Reception Committee at "Lenin Nagar".

The venue of the Conference commemorating the name of the Great Lenin bears a special significance in his Birth Centenary year.

The convening of the Conference in Calcutta is a great tribute to the working class of West Bengal which has a long tradition of glorious struggles and immense sacrifices.

At this historic session we remember our departed comrades who have sacrificed their lives for the cause of the working class. We remember also the departed comrades who spent their whole lives for trade union struggles and specially Comrade Bankim Mukherjee, a pioneer working class leader of India, whom we lost in 1962 and whose name the arch at the entrance to the Conference bears.

We have assembled here from all parts of the country to take decisions which are going to be of vital importance to the future of the trade union and working class movement in our country and the most important of these decisions will be the one for the setting up of a new All-India Trade Union Centre. Considering the multiplicity of trade union centres

*Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) was formed in this All India Trade Union Conference in 1970. Refer Documents covered under Item No. 27 and Appendices (ii) and (xv) of this Volume.

already existing in India the setting up of another centre may seem to be a divisive act. But, on the contrary, such a centre has now become a historical necessity as a rallying organization for the militant working class of India. The AITUC which we all helped to build up with hard work and great sacrifices of our ordinary comrades has been transformed into an instrument of surrender to the bourgeoisie and a drag on determined militant struggles by the revisionists who have seized its leadership and made it their special preserve by undemocratic methods of functioning and keeping out representative unions over which they have no control.

Reformist trade union leaders and trade union centres have always tried to hold the trade union movement within the confines of economic struggles. Today, the revisionist AITUC centre is following in the same footsteps. The revisionist leaders of the AITUC have eschewed the working class stand-point and politics and can never prepare the working class for either militant working class struggles or for the political struggle against the ruling class. Once a trade union leadership abandons this task it cannot but degenerate into an appendage of the bourgeoisie. The leadership of the AITUC daily and hourly attempts to infuse into the working people their policies of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and acceptance of their leadership.

We have been passing through a period of intense economic crisis, the worst victims of which have been the workers and other sections of the working people. Yet no attempt has been made by the dominant revisionist leadership of the AITUC to mobilize the workers for militant struggles against the crisis and the perpetrators of the crisis. In fact, struggles have been fought despite the revisionist leadership of the AITUC.

Is it any wonder that a leadership which has given up revolutionary trade unionism and even militant economic struggles has interested itself in coming to anti-working class agreements with the employers behind the back of the workers? The record of the present AITUC leadership is replete with such betrayals of the workers they claim to lead.

Not only have they betrayed workers in individual establishments by such anti-worker agreements, but these leaders have also been responsible for wholesale betrayal of the working class of India by the treacherous role they have played in Government-appointed tripartite and other committees. Now the ruling classes find the AITUC leadership co-operative and willing to do any of the dirty work they want to be done. These leaders are readily appointed to various committees where they go as representatives of the workers only to prove their loyalty to the employers and the ruling classes. From Dange's own performance in the Bonus Commission to the performances of the various leaders of his group who were appointed on the Study Groups of the National Labour Commission, it has been one unbroken chain of betrayal of the working class. His lieutenants in the Study Groups acquiesced in the whole anti-working class policy of the Government, did not oppose the anti-worker measures proposed by the employers and, in many cases, themselves put forward proposals harmful to the workers like taking away the right to strike in certain industries, etc. It was the helpful services these revisionist leaders rendered that emboldened the National Labour Commission to come out with a series of anti-working class recommendations. Now if these leaders put up a pretence of opposing these recommendations it is only to throw dust into the eyes of the workers—after having done the dirty work of satisfying the employers and the Government.

Comrades, we have always understood that the working class is not national in the bourgeois sense, that the working class is international. But it has been the effort of the revisionist leaders of the AITUC to keep the working class of India away from this consciousness of internationalism. Whether it is in India's conflict with neighbouring countries or whether it is conflicts within the country between the bourgeoisie of various regions, the revisionist AITUC leaders have always striven to rally the workers behind the ruling classes or the bourgeoisie of the area to which they belong against the workers of other countries and other regions.

They do not feel the necessity of educating the workers in our country against the menace from U.S. imperialism to India and the need to fight it as well as the policies of the ruling classes which make it possible for U.S. imperialism to make more and more inroads into our economy and political and social life.

All this is not fortuitous. As I mentioned earlier, these revisionists have abandoned the working class stand-point and political line. Their political line is one of class-collaboration, they have already accepted the leadership of the bourgeoisie. And imposing this political line on the AITUC, they have made it an appendage of the ruling classes.

But these revisionists could not do it without protests and opposition from the ordinary workers and militant sections of the trade union cadres. They revolted in various places and threatened the positions of the revisionist leaders. If democratic procedures had been allowed, the revisionist leaders would have been consumed by the wrath of the Indian workers. But they were bent upon keeping the organization in their pockets and democracy inside the organization became the first casualty. Wherever the workers threw out the revisionist leaders, they disaffiliated those unions and formed rival unions. In other cases, for years, they refused to hold conferences and elections for fear that they would be thrown out, forcing the militant workers to go out and form their own unions to carry on the struggle. Keeping out of militant workers and their unions, formation of bogus paper unions, packing conferences with their yes-men—these are the practices which the revisionist leaders of the AITUC have been following to keep the organization as their safe preserve. The report and documents that have been circulated to you give innumerable instances of all these anti-working class policies and activities of the revisionist leadership of the AITUC.

This is the situation which has forced the need for a real, democratic and revolutionary trade union centre which will lead the working class into militant economic struggles and simultaneously politicalise them and prepare them for the

struggle for power and rally them to support the anti-imperialist struggles in all parts of the world.

Such a revolutionary trade union centre becomes all the more necessary if we look at the situation in the country.

It has only been a few months since the United Front Governments of Kerala and West Bengal were toppled. The working people looked at these Governments as their own Governments which could to a certain extent protect their interests against the exploiters and ensure their democratic rights. When the U.F. Governments were in office, the police were not used against them and their struggles; they won significant economic concessions. The jute, engineering, textile and other workers of West Bengal won Rs.50 crores as annual wage-increase; above all, working people and democratic sections all over the country began to look more and more on the policies of these Governments as the genuine alternative to Congress policies.

All this was possible because the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was a major force in these two United Fronts and United Front Governments and could decisively influence the shaping and implementation of their policies. This became all the more clear when, unnerved by the growing popularity and the influence of the United Front and U.F. Governments, the ruling classes decided to topple them and certain parties of the U.F. betrayed the common people and went to the help of the forces of reaction to overthrow the two Governments.

The subversion of these two Ministries presages a general attack on the working people and democratic forces. The demand for this attack is being raised everyday by the forces of reaction. If the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine is making this demand more outspokenly, the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress is no less interested in breaking up the U.F.s, isolating the genuinely Left parties and forces, using some so-called anti-Congress parties in its own interest and launching repression on the people—all with the aim of perpetuating the present exploitative regime.

Repression is resorted to by the ruling classes because

despite the tall talk of having come out of the recession and economic crisis, the reality is that the crisis is as acute as ever, getting more and more acute day by day. Production might have picked up here and there, but that has not stopped the growing unemployment, retrenchment of those already in jobs, cut in emoluments of workers, a rising price-spiral, mass evictions of the working peasantry, growing pauperization in the rural areas and so on.

This is inevitable because the crisis is not the product of the weakness of this or that aspect of Government policy, but is born out of the capitalist path of development which the Indian bourgeoisie has embarked on in alliance with feudalism and in collaboration with foreign imperialism. Either the crisis continues or this path must be given up—these are the alternatives. Conciliatory talks and gestures may be resorted to as a part of the manoeuvre for tactical reasons. But in reality the ruling classes will by no means give up this path and will impose heavier and heavier burdens on the common people and resort to all sorts of repression at the least sign of popular resistance.

The only way out for the working class and the oppressed people is to throw out this bankrupt path of capitalist development along with the present ruling classes who refuse to give it up. The rapid organization of the working class and its unification for struggle, mobilization of its allies under its leadership to shoulder this historic responsibility — this is the crucial task which we face today to which this Conference will give its attention.

Comrades, many of you are coming with experience of big struggles fought in the recent period. You will help the delegates to understand the situation. Through your reports and deliberations we shall, I am confident, arrive at a unified understanding of our tasks. Permit me to refer to you the rich experience of the working people of West Bengal. They looked upon the U.F. regime as their own and as an instrument of struggle. They played a significant role in the formation of the Government and rout of the Congress. During the

existence of the U.F. Government there was a rapid growth of trade unions and switch-over of many company unions to genuine working class unions. For the first time, despite limitations, the Government machinery was used in the interest of the workers and the police were held back from interfering with working people's movements. Thus as a result of unprecedented unity and organization of the workers speaking various languages and the help rendered by the Government big concessions were wrested from the employers. Where the employers refused to listen to reason, strikes had to be resorted to, sometimes for brief, sometimes for long periods, and in every case, in sharp contrast to the past, Government support to the strikers who fought for legitimate demands was assured. Not only on economic issues but on political issues as well the working class went into action on a number of occasions culminating in the mighty general strike and hartal of March 17 when defying the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders who actively and ferociously opposed the strike, the workers joined the protest action against the betrayal of the people by some parties of the United Front.

The working class movement received a tremendous boost as a result of the formation of the U.F. Government. The workers understood through their experience that there was no place for complacency because of the existence of the U.F. Government which had only limited powers. They realized that they must take full advantage of the existence of such a Government in order to strengthen their unity and organization for determined struggles against the vested interests and the Central Government.

The U.F. Government, in contrast to the past, developed friendly relations with the 250,000 Government employees and teachers and conceded many of their democratic rights and economic demands and promised to further improve their conditions of life after the publication of the award of the Pay Commission which included a leader of the Government employees. The Government supported the struggle of the L.I.C. employees against automation which would have

led to loss of employment and employment potential, and as a result the L.I.C. authorities agreed to remove the machine which had been brought to Calcutta for installation. Over three lakhs of Central Government employees also looked upon the U.F. Government as a champion of their rights.

The West Bengal Subsistence Allowance Bill adopted for the first time in India by the U.F. Government ensured a minimum subsistence allowance to workers during the period of suspension. The U.F. Government also approved a scheme to grant some token unemployment relief to the workers. It incorporated in a Bill the principle of bailion in determining the recognition of a union. But the Government of India has refused so far to give assent to it because such a democratic practice is alien to it. Of course, the Dange leadership of the AITUC is also opposing it though it was passed unanimously by the West Bengal Cabinet.

The mighty strike struggles of workers in textiles, the jute industry and tea plantations and long-drawn struggles of engineering workers during 1969 in Bengal have won substantial wage-rises. The jute workers achieved an interim wage increase of Rs. 30 while the rise in textile industry was Rs. 20. The workers in the engineering industry were able to obtain wage-increments ranging from Rs. 27 to Rs. 47 per month plus half a month's wage as bonus in addition to what was being paid earlier. The workers in tea plantations have also received a wage rise of 20 paise daily which is significant in view of the extremely low wage level prevailing in the tea gardens. It is estimated that about seven and a half lakh workers in these four major industries in the State alone have thus been able to push the annual wage bill by more than Rs. 20 crores.

A significant feature in these strike struggles was the unity of workers from below which brought all the trade union centres together for the joint battle of the working class.

These unique struggles had their impact outside Bengal also. The militant struggles of engineering workers in Jamshedpur, Hyderabad and Ranchi were fought in the

background of the West Bengal settlement in favour of the engineering workers. These struggles have further focussed the attention of the entire working class on the fact that without unity and united actions no struggle would achieve success and be able to snatch concessions from the bourgeoisie.

Among other notable struggles during the last year, mention must be made of strikes in the Baranagar Jute Factory, Metal Box, Hind Motors, Dunlop Rubber and Durgapur Projects. There were series of departmental strike actions in IISCO while several plantation workers had to stop work to press for various industrial demands.

Several long-drawn struggles were launched by the workers during the recent past lasting for several months which bring into sharp focus the growing determination of the working class. In most cases successful culmination of the strikes was brought about with the help of the Government.

During this period, workers also resisted several lock-outs which lasted for months. Notable among them are lock-outs in the Guest Keen Williams, Texmaco, Agarpara Works, Oriental and Electric Engineering Company, Oriental Steel and Wire Products, Howrah, etc.

In these protracted struggles the unions in other industries expressed their solidarity which kept the morale of the fighting workers high. Despite starvation and privations the workers maintained the fighting traditions of Bengal. It is necessary, however, to develop more solidarity so that such workers can fight more effectively and defeat the game of employers to impose long-down struggles with a view to tiring out the workers.

The peasantry also moved forward with equal strides. Using the United Front Government, the landless peasants took possession of 350,000 acres of vested and 'benami' land yielding a produce of 50 lakh maunds of paddy. In this struggle for land they unitedly fought against the landlords and the vested interests in the rural areas of West Bengal. There was a great awakening, not seen before and the peasants fought boldly to acquire their rights. This eventful change

took a historic turn in the growing alliance between the peasants and workers.

This peasant awakening equally frightened the reactionary and the vested interests and some elements within the U.F. who most desperately tried to slander the peasant movement and raised the clamour of law and order.

Since imposition of President's rule severe attacks are being made on the peasantry to snatch away the land acquired by them. The working class must play their historic role in standing by the peasants and strengthening the bond of working class-peasant alliance to fight back the attacks of reaction. It is heartening to note that the BPTUC has been trying to rouse the workers to forge a living link with the struggling peasants.

It is, therefore, ridiculous to say that the U.F. Government blunted the edge of class struggles. Such arguments only help reactionaries who were raising a hue and cry about the so-called unfair industrial climate in the State.

The big business houses, both Indian and foreign, who had a great stake in Bengal were no doubt scared by these developments. Many even started talking about flight of capital from the State, and Congress leaders in the Centre were only echoing their sentiments whenever they got the opportunity to do so.

During all these struggles the BPTUC emerged as the leader of the working class and champion of trade union unity. The strength of this most powerful State unit of the AITUC has increased immensely during these struggles and its membership has now reached the half-million mark. The BPTUC is the major source of strength of the Rashtriya Sangram Samity which has organized several solidarity actions in the recent past. In co-operation with the 12th July Committee and similar other fighting mass organizations the platform of the Rashtriya Sangram Samity was further widened resulting in the creation of formidable unity of the working class and salaried employees in Bengal to fight against every onslaught of capital. I have no doubt that this powerful fighting unity will be further strengthened despite the revisionist attempt to sabotag_e it.

When the conspiracy to topple the U.F. Government was becoming clear to the working class of Bengal, the Rashtriya Sangram Samity and the BPTUC gave a call for mighty demonstrations in protest against the conspirators. The decision to hold such demonstrations was not only criticized by the bourgeois Press but became a target of attack by Dange and company of the AITUC who openly condemned the BPTUC and the Rashtriya Sangram Samity. However, several massive demonstrations were organized throughout the State to warn the conspirators against the U.F. Government.

The glorious success of the strike throughout Bengal on March 17, after the conspiracy to bring down the U.F. Government materialized, has only convincingly proved that the working class is solidly rallying behind the BPTUC and its allies.

The U.F. Government's policy of police non-interference in industrial disputes met with stiff opposition from the big bourgeois Press and the Congress. They raised alarm over the so-called breakdown of law and order in the State. Slandorous accusations were hurled at the unions conducting the strike struggles and deliberate attempts were made to provoke clashes during strikes. On several occasions employers went to the extent of obtaining injunctions from the courts for police protection.

When the employers and the Congress party were attacking frontally the policy of non-interference by the police in industrial disputes, some parties in the U.F. joined them in denigrating the Government. Alarmed at the upsurge of the people and deepening influence of the CPI(M), they levelled false charges against the Home Department to the effect that it was being utilized to serve the party interests and yet they avoided any discussions in the U.F. as demanded by the CPI(M). The Right Communist Party and the AITUC leadership took recourse to open slanders in their journals against the Home and Labour departments but without adducing any proof.

Only those who have lost faith in the working class and

the people can think that the Government machinery strengthens one's party. The Congress party despite its rule in West Bengal for over two decades could not claim the support of the majority of the workers. Such arguments are advanced only to cover up their growing isolation from the working class and the mass of people.

When the BPTUC, with such a glorious record of struggles recommended that the AITUC session should be held in Calcutta, Dange curtly rejected the offer by saying that the majority in the BPTUC would resort to gangsterism, and the police under the U.F. Ministry would side with these alleged gangsters.

This despicable slander against the U.F. Government and the BPTUC and its valiant cadres and the militant working class of West Bengal is in keeping with the revisionist policies of the dominant leadership of the AITUC. Such slanders may gladden the hearts of big business and all the enemies of the U.F. Government but the working class of West Bengal has given a fitting rebuff to these camp-followers of the bourgeoisie by holding the session in Calcutta.

After the gross betrayal of the people of West Bengal by the Bangla Congress, Right Communists and others and handing over of the U.F. Government to the Congress Government at the Centre, an offensive of the vested interests, repression and violence against the people have started. But there is no doubt that the working class of West Bengal will play a worthy role in meeting the challenge and once again defeat the reactionaries and conspirators.

Comrades, I welcome you all once again on behalf of the Reception Committee and wish success to your deliberations. Workers everywhere, crushed by the burdens imposed by the exploiters, frustrated by the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders in their struggles, are looking to the decisions of this Conference to open a new glorious chapter in their movement.

*Long Live The All-India Trade Union Conference !
Long Live Working Class Unity !*

Report of P. Ramamurti to All India Trade Union Conference*

**‘Lenin Nagar’, Ranji Stadium, Calcutta,
May 28-31, 1970**

Comrades,

This Conference is being convened by the decision of a meeting of 150 leading trade union functionaries – members of the Working Committee and General Council and of the State Executive and Councils of the AITUC – which took place at the Harbour Town of Vasco-Da-Gama, Goa, on April 8 and 9 last. These comrades are not ordinary functionaries, but they are the leaders of unions which lead most of the militant struggles of the working class in recent years. They had faced heavy repression, privation and hardships in building the movement. After mature consideration they decided to convene this Conference, and to recommend to the delegates that a new All-India Trade Union Central Organization be formed which will carry forward the glorious traditions of the Indian working class—traditions of unity and united struggle.

This decision was not an easy one. It was necessitated by the developments in the country, political and economic, and the role that the existing trade union centres, including the AITUC, had played and are playing in these developments.

I must first turn to the economic background of these developments.

*This was the main Report before this Conference on the basis of which deliberations were made by the Delegates. Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) was formed in this Conference. In this connection refer Documents covered under Item Nos.27 and Appendices (ii), (xv) and (xvi) of this Volume.

The working class has been facing continuously ferocious attacks from the employers and Government. Despite increase in total production and productivity, their real wages have been continuously falling.

With regard to the productivity of workers the Report of the National Labour Commission had to admit that "production per worker has increased by about 63 per cent between 1952 and 1964" but "real earnings have remained almost static during this period".

The real wages continued to fall even after 1964. According to the statistics compiled by the Labour Ministry itself the real wage index taking 1961 as the base year came down to 80.9 in 1967. The gradual fall in the real wage standard of the working class can be easily seen from the following statistics published from year to year in the Indian Labour Statistics :

<i>Index of Real Wages</i> (1961 = 100)	
1964	94.9
1965	96.8
1966	91.3
1967	80.0 (P)

The official data for the later period are not yet available. However, the continued rise in prices clearly indicates a further fall in the real wages of the workers. Facing heavy repression, they have been fighting and even when they have secured some wage increase, spiralling prices have eroded their real wages. Retrenchment and rationalization and automation, have led to colossal growth of unemployment. The number of registered unemployed has already reached four million.

As for the peasantry, and agricultural labourers, their appalling conditions are admitted even by Government. A document of the Home Ministry circulated in a meeting of the Chief Ministers called by the Prime Minister in December last says:

"As of now, the land reform measures have not benefited the actual tiller in all cases. There is considerable concentration of ownership. Much of the land is cultivated in small holdings by tenants and sharecroppers who lack security of tenure and who have to pay exorbitant rents. Inequalities in land holdings have persisted because of the failure to implement ceiling laws. The programmes so far implemented are still more favourable to the larger owner-farmer than to the smaller tenant-farmer. As for the share-cropper and the landless labourer, they have been, more often than not, left out in the cold. In consequence of these factors, disparities have widened, accentuating social tensions."

Millions of artisans, such as handloom-weavers and other handicraftsmen are being thrown out of their avocation unable to face competition from the mills without any prospect of alternative employment. The remaining who ply their trade are being squeezed dry under the impact of extremely low incomes, high prices of food and raw materials and burdensome taxes.

Declining real income and high cost of living are the lot of the urban middle classes, too. With growing automation, they are thrown out of employment constantly. No wonder that middle class unemployment has grown on a colossal scale. The fact that every industry is started on the basis of collaboration with foreign monopolists, that even technical know-how is constantly imported has left no opportunities of scientific and technological research. As a result, most of our scientists, engineers and technicians find no scope for their talent and are frustrated. Many of them are lured to the USA, Britain and West Germany, where their talents are utilized in research and technology. No wonder that the student community is in deep ferment, seeing no future before them.

Actually, however, this path of development had led the country into the morass of an economic crisis. Instead of a prosperous, industrialized country, our dependence on aid has grown year by year. Even for running the existing industries, we have to import a lot of industrial raw materials

and spare parts. The foreign exchange deficit has grown year by year and hence even for maintenance imports, the country has to rely on increasing foreign aid, particularly American aid.

One has only to contrast these developments with the rapid growth of the economy of countries like China and North Korea to see the bankruptcy of the capitalist path of development that our rulers have embarked upon. China was more backward in 1949 than India was in 1947 when it achieved independence. It certainly received valuable technical assistance in the initial years from the USSR but since the relations between the two countries deteriorated, such assistance has ceased altogether. But standing on its own feet by unleashing the creative energies and talents of its working people, China has today become a mighty power in the world. Explosion of the atom and nitrogen bombs and the latest launching of the space satellite by China have been breath-taking achievements. It has no foreign exchange crisis, but a growing foreign trade with a favourable balance of payments. It owes no debt to any foreign country.

In these conditions, it was the task of the working class movement to mount a continuous offensive against the entire path of development that our rulers have embarked upon, rally the peasants and the people and fight for an alternative path. But what did the trade union movement do?

One can understand the role of the INTUC, for it was created by the bourgeoisie with the specific purpose of weaning away the working class from the path of class struggle. But what did the AITUC, which has inscribed on its banner the aim of Socialism, and class struggle as the means to achieve it, do?

The dominant leadership of the AITUC joined the chorus and asked the working class to support the plans "in the interest of the nation". In one meeting of the trade union functionaries, Dange specifically stated that we have to support the development of capitalism because historically there is no alternative open to the country. Of course, brave resolutions

were passed against the attacks on the working class and it was asked to defend itself against attacks on its wages and living standards. But with this basic attitude of collaborating with the bourgeoisie in its plans of building capitalism in the country, even the economic struggle naturally got weakened and blunted.

No wonder that the AITUC leadership agreed to “rationalization without tears”—of course, in national interest! No wonder it eulogised the tripartite conferences, the Wage Boards, etc., specifically set up by the Government to blunt the edge of class struggle, as great achievements of the trade union movement! Is there any wonder that using the pretext of the three weeks’ conflict with China in November 1962, the leadership agreed—long after the withdrawal of the Chinese forces—to an indefinite industrial truce, thus eschewing even economic struggles by the working class!

At the Bombay Conference of the AITUC itself, inflated memberships of all unions controlled by the Dangeites were admitted without question. Our plea that the constitutional provision that membership would be admitted strictly as shown in the last audited return submitted to the Registrar of Trade Unions was rejected.

In the interest of trade union unity, we put up with all these, concentrating our energy in fighting the class collaborationist line. Com. P. Ramamurti moved the resolution on “The Platform of Unity and Struggle”.

The Dangeites dared not oppose the resolution and it was unanimously adopted by the Conference. But the dominant leadership took no step to implement the platform. They did not even popularize it among the workers, let alone mobilizing them behind the platform and thus sabotaged the most important resolution unanimously adopted by the All-India Session of the AITUC.

Instead they took to the path of disrupting trade unions at the base. In many unions, they held no elections for fear of losing in the elections. Many were the anti-working class agreements they had entered into with the employers behind

the back of the workers—not informing even the executives of the unions concerned. When the majority of workers found that all democratic methods were barred, and convened their own meeting and held elections, the Dangeites refused to accept them, calling them rival unions.

In many unions when they were thrown out in open elections, they immediately formed rival unions, which were given affiliation to the AITUC.

In many unions, they wholesale suspended branches and summarily removed office-bearers who refused to toe their line and opposed their deals with the employers. This they did even against the provisions of the constitution. When these workers had no other go but to form another union, they refused affiliation, calling them rival unions. But they had no compunction in affiliating rival unions formed by them when they were not elected in the already affiliated union.

Once again, we tried to stop this disruption and tried our best for unity. In December 1966, at a meeting of the General Council of the AITUC, Com. P. Ramamurti moved a resolution which demanded the amalgamation of all rival unions on the basis of elections with proportional representation which would be supervised by both parties. The resolution further had stated that democratic functioning of unions should be guaranteed by the State and All-India Executives of the AITUC, that no agreements should be entered into by any official without the authority of the Executive Committee and in matters affecting workers, without the ratification of the General Body of the union concerned.

No democrat, no trade unionist could take exception to these principles. The AITUC itself, from 1952, had been making these proposals to all the other All India Trade Union Centres such as the HMS and INTUC. The dominant leadership dared not oppose the resolution and it was passed by the General Council unanimously.

But once again, as in the case of the Bombay Session resolution on the Platform of Unity and Struggle, the leadership

sabotaged this unanimous resolution of the General Council — the highest body in between two sessions — in practice. Repeated efforts made by our comrades in various State Committees were thwarted. In a number of meetings of the General Council we pleaded for the implementation of the resolution. Our pleas fell on deaf ears.

In August 1969 we had personal talks with Dange and his group representatives in which we pleaded again for its implementation. But again there was no firm commitment. The correspondence that followed that meeting between us and the Dangeites would clearly establish that we were pressing for unity of the trade unions, and the Dangeites everytime evaded this crucial question. For what is the use of a facade of unity at the top level if at the base the workers are divided and their trade unions are disrupted ? Such disruption harms the cause of workers, hampers united struggles against the employers' offensive, and if unity were established at the base on the basis of democratic elections with proportional representation, the Dangeites would be seriously hampered in pursuing their line of class collaboration. That would also lead to a position where they could no longer command a majority in the AITUC on the basis of their faked membership. That is why the Dange group doggedly refused to implement this resolution.

When they decided to call the session of the AITUC in January 1970, Com. P. Ramamurti wrote to Dange pleading with him that the session should go down in history as the session of unity, and urged upon him that serious talks should be held for implementing the General Council Resolution on Unity of the Trade Unions and if for any reason, these talks should get delayed, the session itself might be postponed. Again, Dange evaded the question.

Unilaterally, and without any authority from the General Council, Dange issued a circular giving practically no time for new unions to apply for affiliation. At the Council meeting, we again urged upon them to agree to implement the General Council resolution on unity. And once this determi-

nation to unify the trade unions at the base is there, all unions that apply for affiliation should be affiliated, for when they are all going to be united at the base after the session, why should the fighting workers be denied representation and participation in the session and in shaping its policies? Com. P. Ramamurti moved a resolution to this effect. This was also rejected by the Dangeite majority.

That was why most of the affiliated unions present here decided to boycott the Guntur Session in protest.

The session was held with great fanfare of publicity of huge membership of the affiliated unions. How bogus these claims are can be seen from the fact that there are a number of unions, whose members are supposed to be workers in some factories. But the factories themselves have ceased to exist for years. Applications for an affiliation have been rejected on the ground that a union in such factory has already been affiliated. But no unions other than those whose applications were rejected exist in fact. Many of the affiliated unions lost completely in the elections to the Works Committees and other statutory bodies to the nominees of unions which are denied affiliation as rival unions, and yet membership of huge majority of the workers is claimed for such affiliated unions which are rejected by the mass of workers. The Girni Kamgar Union, which did not conduct a single struggle during the last few years, which cannot find a worker to defend its office when repeatedly attacked by the Shiv Sena, and which has remained closed for over a year, is given a membership of 50,000.

We had hoped that our boycott would have some effect on the Dangeites and realizing the seriousness of the situation they would agree to mend their ways. But Dange in his report to the Conference, as General Secretary, only expressed hypocritical concern about unity. He would not place before the session the proposals we have been making consistently and how they were thwarted, he dared not reveal these facts for that would shatter their pose of unity. With a view to appearing before the workers as people who desire unity,

they elected all those members of the General Council and Working Committee and other office-bearers, who had boycotted the session.

Immediately after this, Com. P. Ramamurti wrote to Dange that it was not the question of the number of seats in the Council and other bodies of the AITUC that bothered us, but we were concerned with the question of unity of the unions at the base. He therefore asked Dange if he was even now prepared to implement the November 1966 resolution on unifying the split unions on the basis of democratic elections and for this purpose whether he was prepared to enter into discussions. Dange curtly replied that there was nothing to talk.

It must be stated, Comrades, that in hoping that our boycott of the Guntur Session would have some corrective effect on the Dangeites, we had underestimated the depth to which they had sunk in their line of class-collaboration.

During all this time, they went on merrily with their disruption of the trade unions at the base and in utilizing their majority in the General Council and Working Committee to place generally their nominees on all Government Committees and Wage Boards. Most of these so-called representatives of the working class had no compunction left in them in joining hands with the representatives of the employers and Government and taking naked avowedly anti-working class positions on crucial questions affecting the working class movement such as the right to strike, and wages and other emoluments.

Dange & Co as Shameless Class Collaborators

Several avowedly anti-working class agreements have been signed by Dangeite leaders behind the back of the workers all over the country which clearly brought them into sharp focus as shameless class collaborators. It is not possible here to deal with all of them, but some of the glaring examples will be sufficient to understand the depth of their degradation.

In Indian Oil Corporation, the Dange group and INTUC leaders signed an agreement in which, in return for some monetary concessions, they agreed to abide by Government's decision on automation, agreed to barter away a worker's right to collective bargaining by giving a final say to the management in settlement of all grievances. They have further helped the management in clearing the way for mass retrenchment and accepted onerous terms in standing orders which were worse than the notorious "model standing orders". To impose the agreement on the workers, it provided that increased wages would be given only to those workers, who give in writing that they accept the agreement. Even the Labour Department did not approve some of the clauses of this obnoxious agreement.

In Bombay, G. Sundaram, AITUC Working Committee member along with INTUC leader Raja Kulkarni accepted "re-organization" and "early retirement scheme" which virtually paved the way for retrenchment of hundreds of oil workers. Both leaders also signed a special agreement with Burmah-Shell accepting "special release terms" for the workers who would be declared "surplus" by the management.

In Delhi textiles, the dominant leaders of AITUC along with INTUC signed an agreement in which they gave an undertaking that they would not demonstrate before the office or residence of the manager and would not resort to agitational approach during negotiations. They further gave their consent for reduction in festival holidays and agreed not to press for higher bonus than provided for by the Bonus Act.

In Tamil Nadu, in Gomathi Mills in Tirunneveli district a workload agreement which was found to be impracticable due to excessive load and stayed by the employer himself was earlier signed by the Dangeite unions. They also agreed to a wage-cut of Rs.25 per month for forty months, in favour of purchasing shares in a closed mill named Thaayuthu Ganapathi Mills as a condition precedent to its re-opening. The AITUC leadership further agreed to effect a cut in

to the extent of 3 paise per point in the Madurai Raja Mills. In the Balaram Varma Mill, Shencottiah, they agreed to give up lay-off arrears to the tune of Rs 750 per worker. In the same mills, even in the teeth of opposition from the INTUC and the DMK Unions, the Dangeite leadership with the help of the police and revenue officials, permitted the employer to remove yarn bales which the workers had till then successfully blocked.

In Andhra, the AITUC union signed an agreement with Imperial Leaf Tobacco. Company which included clauses like giving up the workers' right of weekly holiday, by accepting additional payment for the work done on such holidays. The agreement further provided for giving up tea break of 20 minutes and accepting additional nominal payment. It also conceded the right of the management to remove any worker from service on the plea of low production after imposition of increase in workload. The comrades who opposed this obnoxious agreement had to face disciplinary actions. In Singarenni Collieries, a public sector undertaking, AITUC and INTUC leadership by an agreement gave their consent to the retrenchment of more than 2,500 workers. The unions even undertook the responsibility of collecting signatures on the so-called voluntary retirement forms and even surpassed the Company unions in this respect. There is no wonder that this AITUC union enjoys the patronage of recognition of the management under the notorious Code of Discipline.

In West Bengal, the Dange group lent their support to the introduction of labour saving devices in Indian Oxygen by an agreement in return for some monetary concessions. As a result of the agreement, the management introduced a modern card punching and data processing machines.

The role of the AITUC representatives on the Wage Boards for Heavy Chemicals and Fertilizer Industries and for Road Transport Industry was anti-working class from A to Z. In both the Wage Boards, the AITUC nominees signed with the representatives of employers and the Government in deny-

ing the workers need-based minimum standard accepted by the 15th Tripartite.

G.Sundaram, who was AITUC representative on the Wage Board for Heavy Chemicals and Fertilizer Industries joined hands with employers in excluding a large number of factories from the purview of the Wage Board. Then he conspired with them in recommending wages far lower than the existing wage in several chemical and fertilizer units and shamelessly justified employers, argument that industry had no capacity to pay need-based minimum wages. He even went to the extent of agreeing with the employer that the wages of workers in this industry should not be more than 10 per cent of the total sales and virtually accepted a limit to the wage rise of workers. To carry favour with the capitalists the AITUC representatives agreed that the wage rise should not be paid immediately but should be spread over a period of five years.

K. M. Sundaram, another Dange protege on the Wage Board for Road Transport Industry, accepted Rs. 125/- only as the minimum wage while the workers in many states are already getting higher wage scales. The Report of this Wage Board had such a mockery of the wage rise that most of the AITUC unions in Road Transport rejected it and even AITUC leadership was forced to come out with a statement demanding higher wages than recommended by the Wage Board.

In both the Wage Boards Dangeites have won laurels from the capitalists for the defence of the interests of the employers. The Congress Government also got the confidence that their representatives are prepared to sell out working class interests and stab them in the back.

Indrajit Gupta, who was a member of the Jute Wage Board earlier, supported all the arguments of employers in denying decent wage standard to jute workers on the plea of foreign competition, need for modernization and national development. He opposed payment of night allowance, and cent per cent D.A., while defended employers by accepting their argument that they have no capacity to pay need-based minimum wage.

Thus the AITUC representatives on the Wage Board virtually gave up the norms laid down by the 15th Indian Labour Conference and forced the workers to accept the starvation living standard. As members of the Wage Board, AITUC nominees have proved not to be different from INTUC.

When the Central Government announced a rise in D.A. after the Central Government Employees' strike in 1968 another AITUC Secretary, K.G. Srivastava, said in a special interview to '*Patriot*', that for the first time, the Government employees got rise in D.A. without struggle thus totally undermining the fact that the concessions was only a by-product of the glorious one-day strike of the Central Government employees.

The Dangeites have also helped the bourgeoisie by raising only that much demand which the bourgeoisie is ready to offer. Thus Dange demanded only Rs. 30 as wage rise to steel workers with the idea of compromising for only Rs.15 or so. The insistence of workers to fight for more defeated their game. Later on, they agreed to settle at Rs. 28. However, due to the pressure exerted by Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union, Durgapur, the workers could get Rs. 33 - Rs. 3 more than what Dange demanded earlier. The steel workers would have got more had the leadership of central T.U organizations stood firm during negotiations and loyal to the workers' cause.

The Asian Trade Union Seminar organized by the AITUC only highlighted the rank opportunism of Dange group. Apart from the fact that the representatives of big business like Union Labour Minister, Regional Director, ILO, Chairman and Secretary of the National Labour Commission, the AITUC leadership invited most reactionary ICFTU trade union leaders from Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, etc. The trade unions of Indonesia, China, North Korea, Vietnam, etc. however did not participate. It is no wonder that the so-called Asian Seminar has no word to say about the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialist aggression. The Dangeites have lakhs of rupees to spend on such bogus seminars but

had no funds to contribute during long-drawn strikes of workers in W. Bengal, Kerala and other States.

The AITUC leadership has been giving full co-operation to the Government-sponsored workers' education scheme in which the employers' representatives also give lectures to the workers. This scheme is to all practical purposes at the mercy of the employers since they provide accommodation, they are associated with the selection of trainees and even act as examiners, before awarding certificates to workers. The syllabus of the training scheme is entirely against the workers and is productivity oriented. The scheme openly propagate class collaboration and opposed strikes while the dominant leadership of AITUC give a helping hand to the bourgeoisie in preaching these anti-working class theories at all stages.

The collaboration of AITUC with the National Productivity Council is also another instance of boosting the interests of the capitalists. The AITUC also participated in a committee on sharing the gains of productivity in which the AITUC nominee along with the Secretary of National Commission on Labour appended a note advocating the need for increase in productivity but asked only for a higher share than suggested by bourgeois representatives. The AITUC representatives faithfully participated in various programmes on NPC and asked workers to increase productivity in return for a paltry rise in emoluments. The experience of productivity movement convincingly shows that the major gains of productivity have been misappropriated by the capitalists and the AITUC leadership only connived at them in this task.

The Code of Discipline is unilaterally binding on the working class while employers are free to evade all the obligations. The Dange leadership which was a party to the Code later on began speaking against it when the workers found that they had been bound hand and foot by the Code. However, in practice, the AITUC leadership has written no letter to the Government rejecting the Code while AITUC representatives attend all the meetings of Evaluation and

Implementation Committee of the Code of Discipline. Dange's occasional outbursts against the Code therefore are meant only for the consumption of the workers while the Government is fully aware that the group is doing everything to implement the Code.

Perhaps the anti-working class role of the AITUC leadership was most glaringly seen in their performance as members of various Study Groups constituted by the National Commission on Labour. In these reports, the Dangeites joined hands with representatives of Government and employers in undermining workers' right to strike and forge weapons of new attacks on the working class.

Balachandra Menon, Vice-President of AITUC, was a member of Study Group on Industrial Relations – Southern Region. Though he did not sign the Report he has nowhere denounced any formulation of the Report or appended any note of dissent. The Study Group while criticized the policy of the D.M.K. Government which in the early days of rule was not willing to suppress the workers, stated, "The main features of Government policy which have contributed to this unfortunate state of industrial relations are (a) failure of police effectively to put down the acts of violence and harassment of managerial staff, (b) constant and continuous interference at the ministerial level in labour disputes." The Study Group has further demanded open banning of strikes: "The authorities should have the right to ban a strike, lock-out even before taking for investigation, the dispute which may have caused the strike or lock-out". He, however, did not bother to oppose any of these conclusions.

Ranen Sen, another Vice-President of AITUC, took almost similar positions in the Study Group for Industrial Relations—Eastern Region. He, too, like all reactionaries, demanded ban on strikes in public utility concerns. The Report says, "In the case of public utility concerns, however, the present restrictions on strikes and lock-outs should continue as otherwise the normal life of the community may be frequently dislocated or endangered by hasty actions by the

parties concerned." Strangely enough, this was on the eve of brutal repression launched by the Congress Government against the Central Government employees' strike in September 1968 and passing of the Railways (Amendment) Act providing for brutal punishment to the railways workers who dared to fight against their exploitation. When the T.U. movement was fighting for scrapping these draconian measures, Ranen Sen was advocating banning of strikes in the name of preventing "hasty" actions.

Ranen Sen had no qualms to advocate further banning of strikes during pendency of the disputes before the Tribunals. The bourgeoisie has been consistently using this device to evade workers' demands and prolong legal proceedings for years and tire out the workers. Yet, Ranen Sen wants to tie down the hands of workers during all these years.

Another henchman of Dange, G. Sundaram had no word to say about the exploitation of foreign oil companies as a member of Study Group on Oil Refinery and Distribution. He did not raise his finger against the callous retrenchment launched by these companies after introduction of automation and other labour saving devices. He, however, demands, "Where strike in the oil industry or any section of it exists and no solution of industrial dispute through bipartite negotiations or conciliation appears likely", the "appropriate Government should have the power to enforce a cooling off period between the two parties. During this period strikes, including go-slow and lock-outs should be prohibited".

As a member of Study Group on Fertilizer industry, he once again joined hands with big business and advocated suppression of strike struggles. This is what the report says, "In some States, chemical fertilizer industry has been declared as a public utility service, under the Industrial Disputes Act which *inter alia* prohibits and penalizes industrial strikes and lock-outs. But in some other States it is not so. Fertilizer industry being a major essential industry vital for growing more food, it should be declared as a Public Utility Service."

Similarly, Homi Daji, and G. Sundaram have hailed the Draft Labour Code which was later on rejected by the entire T.U. movement. Homi Daji went to the extent of paying tributes to class collaborationist INTUC union at Ahmedabad and asked others to copy its model!

Other AITUC leaders like Y. D. Sharma, Sambal Chakraborty have also demanded restrictions on strikes. Indrajit Gupta appreciated the usefulness of Wage Board machinery. Sambal Chakraborty, in Study Group Report on Iron and Steel, slandered the struggles conducted by AITUC unions and praised Michael John's stooge union of Jamshedpur. Such anti-working class positions have enabled the National Commission on Labour to take most reactionary positions on various working class issues and the Chairman of the Commission was prompt in acknowledging the role of the Study Groups in helping the Commission to arrive at its conclusion. The dominant leadership of AITUC has thus endeared itself to the bourgeoisie.

It is such treachery of leadership of central T.U. organizations that has emboldened the Maharashtra Government to bring forward a Bill which imposes drastic restrictions on workers and virtually bans every strike. Recognized unions are prohibited from resorting to gherao, picketing, so-called irregular strikes which will reduce such unions into company unions. What, however, is most disgraceful is that INTUC, AITUC, HMS representatives who were members of a Committee on Unfair Labour Practice had approved all these nefarious measures and Government claimed unanimous support of all major central T.U. organizations in the country. It is only when the working class of Maharashtra strongly resented this conspiracy that some of these leaders have started opposing these reactionary measures.

The treachery of the dominant leadership of AITUC does not end here. Despite their class collaborationist policies, despite their attempts to sell the bourgeois policies of capitalist development as 'national plans', despite their determined efforts to lend support to the Congress party and

Government on the alleged ground of imminent threat of takeover by Right Reaction, the working class went into glorious struggles against the Government's policies. By 1965-66, these struggles embraced all strata — students, middle classes and peasants. They scored a signal victory in the 1967 General Elections by defeating the Congress in a number of States constituting the majority of the population of the country and seriously undermined its hitherto huge majority in Lok Sabha.

In Kerala and West Bengal, the advanced state of the working class and general democratic movement helped in the formation of United Front Governments, in which were found the most developed, self-sacrificing and doughty champions of the working class. In the face of the terrible anger of the masses against Congress misrule, for two decades, the group dominating the AITUC also joined these U.F. Governments.

It is true that by the end of the year, the W. Bengal ministry was toppled by the machinations of the Congress party and the Central Government and by the treachery of a number of members of the Bangla Congress. But when mid-term elections were held in February 1969, the U.F. emerged stronger with the Congress party reduced to 55 seats in a House of 280.

So long as these U.F. ministries lasted, they served the interests of the people, despite the severe constitutional limitations under which they had to work, and they were serving as instruments of struggle, against the exploiting classes. They were acting as the tribune of the people fighting against the injustices done to them by the Central Government. It was with this objective that the police administration was given a new orientation of non-interference in the struggles of the working people for their demands. This inspired the working people to organize themselves and struggle against their oppressors.

When the Central Government by an ordinance had banned the Central Government employees' strike, and when it let

loose a reign of terror in Delhi and Congress, Governments in Rajasthan and Punjab and other places had resorted to brutal methods, Com. E. M. S. Namboodiripad courageously refused to take action against the striking employees, despite threat of action by the Union Home Minister.

Helped by this policy, all sections of the working people in Kerala, including Government employees—above all the industrial, plantation and agricultural workers—launched struggles in order to secure their immediate demands. As a result all workers got an increase of 25 per cent in their wages; agricultural workers got a minimum wage of Rs. 4 to Rs. 6 per day; Government employees and teachers got benefits to the tune of Rs. 18.5 crores per annum.

The Agrarian Bill reducing the land ceiling for a family to a maximum of 12 standard acres, conferring ownership rights in homesteads to poor peasants and agricultural workers, conferring property rights on small tenants and reducing rents to one-fourth had been passed. The attempts of the leaders of other parties in the U.F. like Muslim League and the Right Communist Party to sabotage this measure were frustrated by the mass pressure worked up by the mass organizations.

In W. Bengal, the U.F. Ministry remained just for about a year. But this was an eventful year when the working people scored success after success. Helped by the police policy, the policy of no repression of the masses—the workers, peasants, students, teachers, all marched forward, organized themselves and secured big concessions. For the first time, in the last 30 years 2½ lakhs jute workers launched a general strike which resulted in interim wage increase of Rs. 30 per month per worker, this was followed by the strike of one lakh tea garden workers and in textile workers both of which resulted in success to the workers. Following this when the engineering workers prepared and gave notice of a general strike, the employers came to terms even without a strike and the workers won handsome wage increases ranging from Rs. 27 to Rs. 47 per month. The

State employees, school teachers and municipal employees won salary increases. All this meant that a sum of Rs. 50 crores a year was gained in wage rise.

All these were won without a single worker being jailed, or dismissed, without a single shot being fired, without any curb on the freedom of association and meetings of workers, thanks to the policy pursued by the Home Minister, Com Jyoti Basu.

On the other hand, when at the instance of the officials of the Cossipore Gun and Shell Factory run by the Defence Ministry of the Government of India, the jawans fired on the workers killing eight, Com. Jyoti Basu immediately ordered the arrest of the officer and others and charge-sheeted them for murder. This courageous action thrilled the entire working class and toiling people throughout the country, who got the confidence that here is a Ministry which would protect their interests at all costs.

The Labour Minister, Com. Krishnapada Ghosh used his powers to support the workers and saw to it that the negotiations between the employers and workers ended in favour of the workers.

For the first time, in India, the demand of the trade union movement that recognition should be granted to trade unions on the basis of strength ascertained by a secret ballot of all the workers in a factory or industry was accepted and a historic Bill embodying the principle was passed at the instance of Com. Krishnapada Ghosh.

All other sections of the population benefited. Above all, Com. Harekrishna Konar, the Revenue Minister, who was also the General Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha, unleashed the initiative of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers. A huge movement was launched for the seizure of vested lands and benami lands under illegal possession of the landlords. The peasants marched in their thousands and within a short period of six months, above 3½ lakhs acres of land were seized, occupied and cultivated by the peasants. The most downtrodden sections of the peasantry, the poor

peasants and agricultural labourers are the main beneficiaries of the land distribution.

These victories of the working class and the peasantry and the common people are significant not only for the fact that they had increased their incomes. Even more significant is the fact that precisely at a time when the employers and the Congress Government were pursuing the policy of transferring the burdens of the crises on to the shoulders of the workers and common people, these victories had been won. As noted earlier, the Dangeite labour leader Indrajit Gupta, himself had agreed with the employers, in the Report of Jute Wage Board, that no wage increase of more than Rs. 8 was possible in the jute industry. The wage increases in the tea and textile industries burned the tripartite agreements and the textile wage board recommendations.

Thus, these were victories which constituted a setback to the policy of transferring the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the working class.

Further, these victories were inspiring the workers, peasants and middle class employees throughout the country. Following the agreement on wages in the engineering industry in West Bengal, 40,000 engineering workers of Jamshedpur, the majority of whom were employed by the Tatas, went on a heroic strike which lasted for 48 days and ultimately Tatas who had doggedly resisted the demand for wage increase for three years had to agree and substantial wage increases were won.

In the face of this rising tempo among the workers, inspired by the victories in W. Bengal, the Government of India could not resist the demand of the workers in the Public Sector industries as well. Wage increases have been won in the Hindustan Aeronautics, Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi, Heavy Boiler Plant in Tiruchirapalli, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, H.M.T., Hindustan Shipyard and a number of other public sector industries. Government had to initiate negotiations for new Wage Scales in the steel industry—both Public and Private Sectors—and pending the conclusion

of the negotiations, an interim wage increase of Rs. 33 per worker was conceded.

It is natural that all this—the existence of these two U.F. Governments with their policies of protecting the working masses and serving as instruments of struggles against the bourgeois–landlord policies, and the rising wave of struggles resultant therefrom—sent a wave of panic among the capitalists and landlords who began to spread the myth that law and order had broken down. Parties with links with the vested interests in the U.F. also got panicky at these developments. They naturally were conspiring to topple these ministries. This is quite understandable.

However, they could not have succeeded, but for the part played by the Right Communist leaders, who are also the dominant leadership of the AITUC. They, in fact, played the biggest role in this conspiracy of toppling the two U.F. Ministries.

The Dangeites thus came out openly as the saviours of the bourgeoisie, which was facing the growing power of the working class and the democratic movement against the bourgeois–landlord rule.

The toppling of the ministry roused the holy anger of the working masses of W. Bengal who protested by a General Strike and Bangla Bandh on March 17, 1970. The BPTUC and the 12th July Committee, consisting of middle class employees' organizations had given the call for the strike. Even the INTUC could not and did not come out against the protest action. Such was the mood of the workers. But the Dangeite leaders of the AITUC, Dr Ranen Sen who was the president of the BPTUC, and others, came out against the strike. The decision of the organization of which he was the President did not deter him.

When the workers of even their own unions did not heed their advice not to join the strike, these people had no compunction in joining employers' goonda gangs in an attempt to break the strike. Thus they came out as scrabs and strike-breakers. When the complete success of the Bangla Bandh

had to be conceded even by the Indian Jute Mill Association and other employers' organizations, these servitors of the bourgeoisie made statements that it was a failure which were promptly broadcast on the AIR repeatedly!

Those who opposed the strike were the Big Business and their newspapers, the landlords and the Congress, Syndicate and Indira Gandhi wing, the Swatantra and Jana Sangh, the PSP, the Bangla Congress and all parties linked up with the vested interests. The leaders of the AITUC found themselves in this grand array of all the enemies of the working class and the toiling masses.

Is there any wonder that they have been applauded by the entire bourgeois Press, by all the reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh, Swatantra, the Syndicate?

Such is the depth of degeneracy of these people. Opportunism and economism, whose real roots are class collaboration, can mask its real face for some time in normal times, by posing for fight and securing some paltry concessions. But when the crisis for the bourgeoisie develops, and with the rising tide of mass struggles the crisis for the bourgeoisie intensifies, it can no longer mask its real face. The compelling necessity to save the bourgeoisie in crisis forces it to come out openly on the side of the bourgeoisie and take its place in the ranks of the enemies of the working class.

This is the historical experience of the labour movement all over the world, and this is what we are witnessing in India in the despicable role played by the dominant leadership of the AITUC.

Comrades, it is in these circumstances that the Goa meeting of the leading comrades decided that it is no longer possible to carry on the fight for unity and united struggle—struggle against the employer for immediate demands, as well as the struggle for replacing the bourgeois-landlord rule—by continuing in the AITUC. On the other hand, such continuance would only hinder the struggle. The dominant leadership has already reduced the AITUC into an appendage of the ruling Congress party.

The meeting therefore decided to recommend to this Conference that a new All-India Trade Union Centre be set up, which will carry on the class struggle in all its aspects economically and politically—and rally the entire Indian working class by its doughty championship of its interests and unswerving struggle for democracy and Socialism. I hope that this recommendation of the Goa meeting will be endorsed by the Conference.

Growing Crisis In The Economy

The Indian economic crisis, which was further deepened after devaluation surrender by the Indian Government at the dictates of World Bank tycoons, has been still haunting various sectors of industries. Despite tall claims by the spokesmen of the Indian bourgeoisie that the recession is over, during 1969 production of tea, cotton, cloth, matches, jute manufactures, industrial machinery and railroad equipment continued to show a declining trend. The Economic Survey 1969-70 released by the Government of India on the eve of budget this year, is compelled to admit the low rate of industrial investment when it noted, "figures of consents for capital issues and capital raised during the current year do not indicate a significant increase in investment expenditure over last year, when the outlook was not so good".

The unutilized capacity of many industries is still of a higher order. The textile machinery manufacturers have reported only 20 per cent utilization during 1969. The Engineering Association of India has reported unutilization varying from 40 to 60 per cent due to shortage of intermediary goods and market. The Economic Survey also has reported under-utilization in paper and paper-board, sheet glass, cement, tractors, bicycles, flour milling, fertilizer and dyes.

A recent report of the committee on Public Sector Undertakings submitted to Parliament has mentioned that utilization of capacity was as low as 15 per cent during 1968-69 in case of Heavy Engineering Corporation, Bharat Heavy

Electricals, HMT, Anti-biotics plant of the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals and Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation. The Report further pointed out that the utilization was varying from 50 to 68 per cent in case of Hindusthan Steel and 50 to 69 per cent in Trombay unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India.

The devaluation has made Indian economy more dependent on imperialist countries. According to the latest budget papers the outstanding foreign loans were Rs.2,590.62 crores in 1965-66 which went up to Rs. 6,659.37 crores during the current year. The loans from U.S. monopolists alone amount to Rs.3,634.64 crores. Apart from this the PL-480 deposits with the Government have added up to Rs.668.98 crores. Such phenomenal rise in our external borrowing has increased the burden of repayment also. India's repayment liability has gone up from Rs.164 crores in 1965-66 to Rs.375 crores in 1968-69. Indian bourgeoisie is compelled to export more at cheap rates as a part of the debt obligation. The Economic Survey admits, "Debt service payments this year amount to about 30 per cent of expected exports. This is a really high proportion and affects greatly the country's capacity to import."

The Fourth Plan is in complete doldrums. All the projects are dependant on foreign loans and other assistance. Nearly 50 per cent of the foreign loans will have to be utilized for payment of past debts only. The Plan will impose heavy burdens on the common man by imposition of additional taxation of Rs.1,375 crores by the Central Government and Rs.684 crores by the State Governments. It is further proposed to have a big dose of deficit financing to the tune of Rs.850 crores which will just put the prices to fantastic levels. By squeezing the people in this manner the Plan proposes to inject Rs.8,980 crores into the private sector and boost the big business houses still further. The Plan does not offer any benefits to the toiling masses and thus highlights the mockery of Indira Gandhi's claims of building Socialism.

The huge rise of defence expenditure has only added to

the gravity of the economic crisis. Before the India-China conflict the Defence Expenditure was Rs.289.54 crores which shot up to Rs.1,017.84 crores as per 1970-71 budget. The Big Business has also developed interest in high defence expenditure as it is a source of fabulous profit for them. The defence outlay during the next five years is estimated to be of the order of Rs.6,200 crores, out of which Rs.2,200 crores are likely to be spent on purchase of defence stores. Since foreign monopolies controlling the armament industry are also likely to get a part of the share in these stores, they are also keen to maintain tension on India's borders.

The Big Business houses are minting money despite the crisis conditions in the economy. As a matter of fact, the net profit after tax of 101 giant companies studied by the Economic Times shows a rise from Rs.102.9 crores during 1967-68 to Rs.112.33 crores during 1968-69, that is, a rise of 10 per cent in only one year. The following are some of the giant companies earning excessive profits.

Industrial Profits
(Rs. in crores)

		1967-68	1968-69
1.	Indian Iron	3.28	5.74
2.	Dunlop Rubber	5.81	6.49
3.	Phillips	4.94	5.16
4.	ESSO	2.77	3.22
5.	Burmah Shell	5.28	7.39
6.	Pfizer	4.22	3.59
7.	Good Year	1.79	2.87
8.	TELCO	8.36	10.16
9.	Tata Steel	11.68	12.94
10.	Imperial Tobacco	6.42	7.80
11.	Scindia	2.27	4.22

Despite the announcement of the new licensing policy Big Business houses continue to get the lion's share in licences to start new industries.

The Green Revolution which is being paraded today with so much fanfare and publicity has proved to be a sheer hoax. The official statistics itself shows that per capita availability of cereals in India came down from 14.03 ounces to 13.80 during 1969. In spite of the so-called green revolution per capita availability of cereals did not change materially since 1954 when the availability was 13.65 ounces per day per head. With regard to pulses conditions are still worse. The official statistics shows that during 1951 per capita availability of pulses was 2.13 ounces but it was only 1.64 ounces during 1969. When both the staple items in the food consumption show such a serious situation it is ridiculous to talk of Green Revolution.

Who are the real beneficiaries of this "Green Revolution?" It is better to read the opinion expressed by a person who hails from the land of dole-givers to the Government of India. Francis Frankel, U.S.A.I.D. official who visited some villages, where "Green Revolution" was in operation says :

"Farmers with 20 acres or more have made the greatest absolute and relative gains, partly by mechanizing farm operations to take up double multiple cropping, but also by diversifying their cropping pattern to include more commercial crops. All of these innovations have substantially increased the lead of larger farmers over small farmers."

Thus it is the landlords and the rural rich who are the real beneficiaries of the "new agricultural strategy" chalked out by the Government of India. It is only just an effort to overcome the agrarian crisis without introducing genuine land reforms. The mockery of the land reforms could be seen from the official admission in the official publication "Towards growth with Social Justice" which states that 76 per cent of the rural households own only 19 per cent of the cropped area in the country.

The crisis in agriculture further is creating bottlenecks in industry. The shortfall in supply of cotton and oil-seeds has posed a serious threat to cotton textile and hydrogenated oil industry while the country has to spend tens of crores worth

foreign exchange to import cotton and edible oil. The crisis in industry is therefore directly linked with the crisis in agriculture and no basic change in the industrial advance is possible without an agrarian revolution.

The nationalization of banks has not resulted in any reduction in the acuteness of the crisis. It continues to be more severe since it directly arises from the capitalist path of development of economy.

A New Offensive Against Workers

The big bourgeoisie with a view to passing the burden of economic crisis on the working class, launched a ferocious offensive in all directions. After devaluation it became more pronounced and ruthless.

The working class had to face closure of several factories particularly in textile and engineering industries. Nearly 100 textile mills were closed in 1968 and despite the formation of Textile Corporation by the Government of India, the number of closed units by the end of 1969 was as high as 85. In mills reopened by the Government workers were forced to accept cut in D.A. and basic wages. The courts in U.P. and Madhya Pradesh even justified non-payment of bonus as per Bonus Act to workers employed in mills taken over by the Government as a so-called relief measure. The workers of a textile mill in Highanghat (Maharashtra) were compelled to accept Re.1 as basic wage and another Re.1 as D.A.

Hundreds of engineering units were closed down in West Bengal and Maharashtra. Stoppage of orders for box wagons by railways resulted in large-scale retrenchment in that industry. Several lakh workers were laid off in these States on the plea of lack of orders and the number of workers laid-off in 1967 and 1968 was higher than any year since 1960. In West Bengal many engineering units even did not pay lay-off compensation due to workers under the law. The engineering industry in West Bengal affected the livelihood of more than 50,000 workers during 1967 and 1968 due to partial and full closure.

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The drive for the intensification of workload was also in full swing. According to official statistics, the output per man-shift of miners and loaders in coal mines which was 1.49 tonne in 1965 increased to 1.82 tonne in 1969. As a result of railways drive for increase in the work-load the employment in railways had gone down from 15.41 lakhs in 1966-67 to 14.45 lakhs in 1968-69. The official rules regarding hours of work were recklessly violated by the administration which can be seen from the fact that during 1968-69 the Central Industrial Relations Machinery detected more than 84 thousand irregularities! In engineering industry the intensification of work-load was resorted through various incentive schemes and overtime work. Despite expansion of capacity in steel plants the job potential has increased only nominally due to excessive rise in work-load.

A large number of rationalization, modernization and automation measures were forcibly introduced by business houses resulting in killing of jobs. The drive for introducing automatic looms in textile mills and broadlooms in jute mills was in full swing. The ordinary looms which became redundant after introduction of automatic looms were sold to powerloom factories without giving any protection to handloom industry. This created serious difficulties for the weavers who virtually became destitutes ! The mechanization process in mining is also going ahead resulting in retrenchment of several thousands of miners every year. Mechanization is also being introduced in port and docks and shipping creating a serious threat to job security of thousands of workers.

The Government has granted licence to manufacture of a hundred computers every year to IBM monopoly which will create a firm basis for further introduction of these job-eating machines. Besides, scores of computers have been installed in both private and public sector undertakings rendering large number of persons jobless. The foreign oil monopolies have further introduced automation measures, the banks have gone ahead with mechanization of accounting while the LIC is still conspiring to instal another com-

puter in Calcutta. A permanent threat to job security is thus looming large.

The unemployment problem, which was already acute, is now assuming alarming proportions. In cotton textiles, the total number of workers employed came down from 8.31 lakhs in 1964 to 7.01 lakhs in 1969. Similarly, in coal mines, the number of employed workers stood at 4.14 lakhs during 1964 which continuously showed a decline till 1969 when it showed the total strength of workers at only 3.72 lakhs! The employment of engineering workers is estimated to have gone down by about 50,000 during 1966-69 period, 80,000 *badli* workers in jute industry lost their source of livelihood during the last couple of years.

A general tendency of increase in unemployment among workers can be seen from the Employment Exchange Statistics itself. The total number of applicants on the live register was 26.22 lakhs in 1966 which increased to 34.25 lakhs by the end of 1969. The annual increase in the live register shows considerable rise as seen from the following table :

<i>Growth of Unemployment</i>		
Year	No. of live register (in lakhs)	Increase over previous year
1966	26.22	0.37
1967	27.40	1.18
1968	30.12	2.72
1969	34.25	4.13

Since all the unemployed persons do not register their names in Employment Exchanges it only gives a partial picture. Reserve Bank made a study of the backlog of unemployment in the country which shows that it was 9.6 million at the end of the Third Plan which has gone up to 12.6 million after the Three Annual Plans.

The rise of educated unemployment has been a new feature in the recent past. Over a million of registered unemployed are educated. Even highly qualified persons find it

difficult to obtain a job while according to a recent estimate by National Council of Applied Economic Reserach the estimated unemployment of engineers will reach a colossal figure of one lakh by 1973!

The working class was further directly fleeced by the capitalist-landlord Government through inflation and high taxation. In the absence of provision of cent per cent neutralization every price rise cuts into the living standard of the workers. The All-India Consumer Price Index Number for the working class, taking 1949 as the base year, stood at 184 in 1966. After devaluation it suddenly shot up to 209 in 1967 and further to 215 in 1968. The price index in March 1970 showed a further rise to 218.

Huge accumulation of arrears of Provident Fund contribution with the employers is also another index of further cheating of the workers. According to a recent report the total arrears of P.F. contribution have now crossed Rs.12 crores, while the number of companies whose accumulated arrears exceed Rs. One lakh is as high as 170 but the Government refused to move and take strong action against the employers. The national penalty provided in the Act is a handle used by employers.

The Report of the National Commission of Labour is an open declaration of intentions of the big business to launch further attacks on the livelihood of workers and deprive them of all the trade union rights.

The Report while expressing some lip sympathy to workers has created a full-fledged case to impose wage freeze and has given green signal to employers to go ahead with all measures of introducing job-saving devices. It nonchalantly advocated the total suppression of trade union rights by creating basis for stooge unions. It further imposes blanket ban on strikes with a view to ensuring uninterrupted working of factories. The Industrial Relations Machinery recommended by the Commission both at the Central and State level, will be heavily loaded in favour of the capitalist class. It has, instead of granting any benefit to the working class only

supplied new weapons to the armoury of the bourgeoisie to destroy whatever trade union rights the working class has secured through struggles in the past. A determined struggle against all the anti-working class recommendations of the Commission will alone defeat the game of the bourgeoisie to curtail their right to organize.

Rising Wave of Working Class Struggles

The working class did not take the offensive of the bourgeoisie lying down. A heroic resistance was given to these attacks and inroads in their living standards while brutal police repression failed to cow them down.

Despite the gross under-estimation of the magnitude of strike struggles, the official statistics show a remarkable upswing. The total number of industrial disputes during 1966 was 2,556 involving more than 14 lakh workers and the number of man-days lost was of the order of 138.46 lakhs. West Bengal led all other States in the total man-days lost (38 lakhs) closely followed by Maharashtra (37 lakhs). The man-day loss in Kerala amounted to 23 lakhs.

The industrial disputes in 1967 show a big jump. There were in all 2,815 disputes in which nearly 15 lakh workers were involved resulting in a total loss of 171.15 lakhs man-days. The total man-days lost was the highest in West Bengal (59 lakhs) followed by Kerala (23 lakhs) and Maharashtra (22 lakhs). A large number of man-day loss was recorded in engineering, textiles, coal mines, chemicals and electricity industries.

The upswing in the strike wave continued further during 1968 also when 2,776 industrial disputes were recorded involving nearly 17 lakh workers leading to loss in man-days as high as 172.44 lakhs. West Bengal accounted for the highest number of man-days loss (73 lakhs), this year also followed by Kerala (25 lakhs), Tamil Nadu (24 lakhs) and Maharashtra (17 lakhs). Industries which took major part in these struggles were engineering, cotton and jute textiles, chemical products, coal mines, road transport, water transport, port and docks and cinema establishments.

The latest annual report of the Union Labour Ministry has worked out provisional figures on industrial disputes during 1969. The figures show a total loss of 168.60 lakhs which is likely to go up when the final figures are available. West Bengal continued to lead this year also (98 lakhs). The number of man-days lost in Kerala and Maharashtra stood at 14 lakhs and 12 lakhs respectively.

It is clearly evident that more struggles were fought in West Bengal, and Kerala during all these years. It further underlines growing militancy of the T.U. movement in these two States.

The management several times declared lock-outs following the strikes. During 1968 in 144 strikes the management declared lock-out resulting in the loss of 35 lakh man-days. In 181 cases the dispute itself began as a result of lock-out wherein about 27 lakhs man-days were lost. This also indicates the growing tendency among the managements to prolong the disputes.

The workers also had to fight back with long-drawn out struggles. The strike of Bengal Immunity workers lasted for more than four months and ultimately the management was forced to withdraw dismissal and discharge notices. Other protracted strikes were fought by workers include those in Remington Rand (5 months), Binani Metal (8 months), East India Rubber Works (5 months), and Bharat Carbon (4 months). There were also long-drawn lock-outs in Guest Keen Williams, Texmaco, Agarpara Works, Oriental and Electric Engineering Company, etc. The struggles of workers in Indian Standard Wagon and Burn & Company, Howrah, lasted for 7 months. Both these struggles alone led to a total loss of man-days as high as 12 lakhs!

In Tamil Nadu, the struggle of Western India Match Factory workers for increase in wages and D.A. continued for 4 months. The strike of 6,000 workers employed in Textool Company, Ganapathy was also dragged on for four months.

A united struggle of Punalur Paper mills in Kerala demanding bonus and wage rise continued for five months.

Five thousand workers of New Victoria Mills, Kanpur had to fight against retrenchment for more than 3 months.

These are only some illustrative examples where workers have shown their determination to fight long drawn struggles.

We have already noted some major struggles of workers in West Bengal and Kerala which have pinpointed the growing desire among the workers to give a united struggle against the employers.

Among other notable struggles mention must be made of strike of firemen in Southern Railway for reduction in hours of work, Punjab and Haryana road transport workers' strike for higher wages and against victimization, Durgapur Steel Workers struggle against automation and for union recognition, struggle of textile workers in Coimbatore, and Madurai against closures, and lock-outs, strike of Bokaro Steel Workers, struggle of Modinagar workers for dearness allowance, and permanency, State-wide strikes of beedi and sugar workers in Tamil Nadu, textile and engineering workers in Rajasthan and cashew, coir, toddy tappers and plantation workers in Kerala, series of strikes organized by Colliery Mazdoor Sabha, Raniganj in the coal-belt and the strike of Neyveli workers.

During these strike struggles, the trade unions had to face growing repression of the bourgeois police force. Increasing use of C.R.P. in industrial dispute has been a regular feature of the repressive apparatus of the Congress Government. Undaunted by this repression the workers continued their struggles in several places. Trade union functionaries and militant workers have become a target of gangster attacks in coal mining belt in several strike struggles conducted in protest against non-implementation of Coal wage Board recommendations.

The glorious strike of seven and half lakh Central Government employees on September 19, 1968 had focussed the attention of the country on the question of need-based minimum wages and cent per cent neutralization in the cost of living. A peculiar feature of the strike was the firm determi-

nation of these employees despite promulgation of notorious Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance. The Government virtually treated the strike as a rebellion against the "established authority". Fifteen persons lost their precious lives in police firings while hundreds were wounded seriously. About 48,000 temporary employees received termination notices and the total number of persons arrested and prosecuted under the ordinance crossed the ten-thousand mark.

Government employees fought this repression bravely and unitedly. Government's conspiracy to impose scrab unions on employees failed miserably. Ultimately, step by step, Government was forced to withdraw most of the victimization measures.

The deep inroads in the living standard brought State Government employees in most of the State together and State-wide organizations were formed. Militant strike struggles were fought by NGOs in support of higher wages and dearness allowance at par with Central Government employees. The common demands brought them together on a national basis and all-India State Government Employees' Federation came into existence. A long-drawn struggle against victimization was carried out by this organization all over India. Six million Central and State Government employees were brought together for the first time on common issues when Anti-Victimization Day was observed on August 19, 1969.

The struggle of LIC employees against automation and in support of charter of demands evoked solidarity actions all over the country. The LIC employees in Calcutta valiantly fought against the conspiracy to install a computer by the management. With the help of other sections of workers in Calcutta, they have been able to defeat it successfully so far. The Caltex employees of Calcutta resisted the game of the management to close down the office and organize sit in-demonstration for more than 700 days !

The All-India strike of bank employees against section 36 D on the Banking Companies Act which imposed several restrictions of trade union rights was a complete success.

Several State-wide strikes of primary and secondary teachers for higher salaries and dearness allowance were organized during the last three years. In some places, even university teachers resorted to strike actions for higher salaries and against bureaucratism in colleges and universities.

The seven weeks' strike of the 12,000 employees of leading newspapers all over country during the middle of 1967 was another notable action of the salaried employees. For the first time such a powerful action was organized by the newspaper employees against Press barons which made a good impact on the people. The All- India Newspaper Employees' Association which led the strike against non-implementation of the Wage Board Report for non-journalists could also get support from working journalists, in some places. Though it was a declared policy of the Government that all the unanimous recommendations of the Wage Board would be accepted, on this question the Government refused to displease the Press monopolists. Ultimately the employers had to accept the payment of 75 per cent difference between the then existing wages and the Wage Board recommendations and reference of rest of 25 per cent to adjudication.

All these and other united strike actions of State-wide or all-India character have brought into the field lakhs of salaried employees. They have built powerful functioning organizations and showed courage in facing brutal repression. A notable feature of these struggles is that women have remained in the forefront in some of them.

Fight for a New Policy

Comrades, Socialism is the declared aim of the trade union movement. We cannot go forward towards our goal if the trade union movement forgets that its main struggle is against the social system—the rule of the landlords and capitalists. It must direct its fire against the imperialists and chiefly the American imperialists who are trying to enslave our people and impose on them neo-colonial slavery, against the

monopolists and landlords, who control the main levers of production. The daily struggles of the working class are a part of this general struggle.

If we have devoted so much space for the class-collaborationist activities of the dominant leadership of the AITUC, it is only because it is necessary to free the working class from these ideas so that the main struggle can be conducted effectively and successfully.

The developments in Kerala and West Bengal, after the formation of the U.F. Governments constituted a challenge to the ruling classes and created a crisis inside the ruling Congress party, which split into two wings. Fundamentally, the main difference between the two is of tactics, of how to meet this challenge.

The Syndicate wing has openly joined hands with the Jana Sangha and Swatantra and other reactionary forces and its avowed aim is to crush the democratic movement. When it comes to fighting the militant working class and democratic movement it has no compunction in joining the Indira Congress as is seen in Kerala and West Bengal.

The Indira Congress despite all its talk of Socialism was equally determined to break up the U.F. Governments. But for its support to the disruptors the U.F. ministries could not have been broken and the Menon Ministry will not continue even for a day. It seeks to strike a better image for the Congress by measures like nationalization of banks and some minor concessions to a broader strata of non-monopoly capitalists and rich peasants.

But its basic policies are not changed, as seen from the last Budget. The Fourth Plan it has placed before Parliament, despite some trimmings and dressing up here and there, shows that it is pursuing the same path of capitalist development as during the last 22 years. Nationalization of banks, though might make some credit facilities available to broader sections, it is not intended to attack the existing monopoly houses. The Prime Minister has declared that legitimate credit facilities for them will continue to be available.

The licence of the Goa Fertilizer Plant granted to the Birlas, to be set up in collaboration with a U.S. giant, the proposed grant of licence for another Fertilizer Plant at Mithapur to the Tatas, show that it is not intended to arrest the growth of the monopolists.

The Fourth Plan is based, as before, on dependence on foreign loans, especially from American imperialism, and on collaboration with foreign giants. Experience has shown that such collaboration and loans mean inflated capital cost of our industries from 50 to 100 per cent, and inflated cost of components and industrial raw materials. The working class and the people have to pay heavily for all this, and the living conditions are being constantly attacked.

The export promotion schemes, the scarcity of foreign exchange, are just expressions of the fact that India must sell her goods at low cost abroad in order to meet her loan obligations. For this, the working class will continue to be attacked more and more ferociously. Devaluation dictated by the Amercians had raised prices in the country without raising wages. All expectations of boosting up of exports proved a mirage.

Hence even the most backward worker cannot remain indifferent to the growing Amercian domination of our economy and through that also political domination.

The Amercian oil companies in this country had retrenched large number of workers and the government could do nothing.

Both the Budget and the Fourth Plan show that both the working class and the people will be fleeced through inflation, high prices and high taxation on consumer goods.

The perennial shortage of food and its high prices are the result of the land relations, under which the landlords monopolise the land. They extract a tribute of over Rs. 300 crores from the peasantry by way of usury alone. They extort hundreds of cores of rupees by way of land rent. The production raised under such onerous conditions is further garnered by the landlords, wholesalers and the speculators.

This compels the worker to spend a major portion of his income for food alone leaving scarcely anything for other necessities of life. Besides, so long as the mass of rural population is living under conditions of destitution, always available as a source of cheap labour power, the wage levels in industries cannot rise. Thus the problems of trade union movement, the defence of the daily interests of the working class and the struggle against the bourgeois-landlord rule are inseparable from the struggle of the peasants and rural workers against land monopoly, for distribution of land to the tiller and decent wages to the agricultural labourer.

In recent period the struggles of poor peasants and agricultural labourers have grown in many States — West Bengal, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat. The trade union movement must lend its fullest support and render all assistance to the fighting kisans and agricultural labourers.

The struggle of the working class, the struggle for Socialism is an international struggle, in which the workers in each country must be helped by the workers of all countries, in which the workers of all countries must defend the gains of the struggle achieved through the formation of Socialist States in one-third of the world and in which the latter must extend every help to the struggling workers in the capitalist countries. The struggle today is directed against the common enemy—American imperialism.

American imperialism has been fighting a brutal war to subdue Vietnam for the last seven years with all the most modern weapons of destruction. And yet the brave people fight on, inflicting blow after blow, to the invaders.

Today U.S. imperialism unmindful of the world-wide protest, and defying the growing opposition to the war in America itself, has extended the war to Cambodia and Laos. The heroic defence by the people of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos is the defence of not only their independence but of all Asia. It is this struggle that is proving to be the turning point between socialism and imperialism on a world scale.

The trade union movement will betray itself if it does not rally in its defence and mobilize the entire working class and the people against the American aggressors.

The Indira Government has not the courage to condemn the American aggression and demand the unconditional withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. It has not the courage to recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam. How can it dare to do so, while it all the while begs for aid from America?

The working class and the T.U. movement must defeat this policy.

Comrades, you are aware that in recent years, the ruling class in the country, helped by organizations like the Jana Sangh and RSS has resorted to inhuman methods to divide the working class and the toiling people. One of their favourite weapons in North India is to foment Hindu-Muslim riots in which the poor of the minority Muslim community are hunted down, their huts and houses are burnt and whole families butchered. The most diabolical riot was staged in Ahmedabad in which three thousand Muslims—all belonging to the working class families — were killed and their bustees razed to the ground. And two weeks ago, the poison had spread to Bhiwandi near Bombay and other towns in Maharashtra. The communal reactionaries also organized riots in Ranchi, Indore and Bhilai and other industrial centres where a large number of Muslim workers were killed.

Apart from communal riots, linguistic chauvinism is roused to create disruption among the workers. The Shiva Sena in Bombay, which grew with the patronage of Chavan and the Congress Ministry was used to rouse rabid chauvinism of the Maharashtrians and pogroms were conducted against the Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil working people. And now the Shiva Sena attacks Muslims. But its main attack is against the Communists and the trade unions led by them.

In contrast, when in Kerala and West Bengal, when these elements started riots, the workers themselves with the assistance of the U.F. Government, defended the Muslims, and

proclaimed working class unity to be their sacred trust and defeated the riotmongers.

The organizers of these riots pose a grave danger to the unity of the working class and unity of the toilers against their exploiters. Instead of the united working class and toiling masses facing and taking the offensive against the exploiters—the big bourgeoisie and landlords—the class it self is sought to be divided, worker pitted against worker, peasant against peasant, on the basis of religion, community and language. It is absolutely necessary for the development of the mass democratic movement that the trade unions play a foremost role in rousing the class consciousness of the workers and all toilers, so that unitedly they fight this menace.

Comrades, as already stated, there should be no illusions about the Indira Government or about the slogans of Socialism that her Congress raises from time to time.

The experience of Kerala and West Bengal has once again shown that the fundamental problems of society, problems of poverty and unemployment, of land and decent living standards and culture, cannot be solved unless the working class aided by its allies captures political power in open class combat and vanquishes the oppressors. They cannot be solved within the framework of the Constitution. Experience has amply shown that it is a Constitution to protect the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, whose corner-stone is the fundamental right of property holders to exploit the people. The recent judgments in the Bank Nationalization case and the earlier one in the Golaknath case by the Supreme Court amply confirm this.

This much vaunted democracy of the Constitution, is equally shown up for what it really is by the scant respect which the Central government and the vested interests has shown to the verdict of the ballot box. Further, the sabotage of democracy that is carried on by the irremovable bureaucracy. Unless this Constitution goes lock, stock and barrel, unless the power of the exploiters which it enshrines is liquidated there can be no real freedom and advance for the Indian people.

It must be clearly understood that the toppling of the U.F. ministries of Kerala and West Bengal is the first step in the general attack which the capitalists and landlords are planning against the workers. We have already seen the ferocious attacks launched on the workers, agricultural labourers and other toiling people in Kerala. In West Bengal too, the offensive has begun. The coming period will see the further intensification of this offensive throughout the country.

But the offensive can be met and thrown back by the united struggles of the workers and working masses. This requires, above all, all-out efforts in building the unity of the workers. The founding of this new All-India Trade Union Centre will serve no purpose if it does not address itself to these main tasks.

Let it be remembered that the unions represented here were those that had conducted most of the struggles during the recent period. They took the initiative in approaching the mass of workers belonging to other unions, on the basis of their immediate pressing demands, and despite the obstruction of the Dangeite and other leaderships, forged unity from below and often compelled the leadership also to join in.

Towards United Struggles

It was the initiative taken by our comrades and their persistent and untiring efforts that brought about all-in-unity among the jute workers, tea garden workers and textile workers in West Bengal. Ultimately, even the INTUC was brought into the united struggle.

In Kerala, we were able to build unity from below amongst plantation workers and launch an industry-wide strike.

In Tamil Nadu, the initiative taken by our comrades forged unity from below and the general strike of textile workers against closures took place.

In Madurai, we were able to bring about the unity of workers despite the opposition of other leaderships of other unions and forged strike or action committees of workers which conducted a number of strikes.

In the sugar industry, our efforts brought about industry-wide strike in which the DMK union also joined.

In Neyveli, despite the repeated clashes engineered by some DMK leaders, we were repeatedly able to bring about unity from below which compelled the DMK union also to ultimately agree and come into joint strikes.

In Rajasthan, we were able to forge unity from below and ultimately, the general strike of engineering workers of the whole State, in which we emerged as the leaders.

These are some of the examples.

In the coming period, such building of unity from below must be intensified hundred-fold.

Comrades, let us not forget that during the last many years, since the T.U. movement was being taken along the path of class collaboration, some bureaucratic tendencies have developed in some of the unions represented here. The bureaucratic tendencies must be firmly combated and the democracy in the trade unions must be everyday widened.

Our concept of democracy is totally different from that of the bourgeoisie. For the bourgeoisie, democracy consists in holding elections at stipulated periods, and then the masses have nothing to do with the shaping of policies and implementation.

Trade union democracy does not consist in holding annual elections and in holding periodical meetings of the Executive Committees. We have to draw in every worker in the running of the union, in the shaping of policies, in taking decisions and in implementing them.

For this purpose, factory committees, shift committees and departmental committees will have to be set up and activized. These committees alone can be in live touch with every worker, at the place of work, bring the reactions of the workers to the problems that crop up and help in proper decisions being taken by the union—decisions that will be in tune with the need and thinking of the mass of workers. Proper functioning and activization of such committees will draw greater and greater number of workers into trade union activity.

Similarly, during strikes, it is absolutely essential that

broad strike committees are set up, only then it will be possible to be in continuous contact with the workers, boost up their morale and determination to struggle. That alone will enable the leadership from committing mistakes in arriving at settlements. In united strikes, such broad-based committees alone will prevent betrayal of the strike by reformist leaders, who join the strike because of the pressure of the masses, but always seek out occasions for withdrawing.

Such broad-based organs during strike struggles and during the day-to-day functioning would enable the trade union to become a live centre of discussion of working class problem and of the general movement, drawing in hundreds of workers in every factory into activity. Only when this is done, the message of unity and united action can reach the widest mass of workers belonging to other unions, and the movement for unity from below will assume a mass character.

Comrades, as stated earlier, the setting up of this new All India Centre has become a necessity for carrying on the struggle for unity. The struggle for unity of the trade unions at the base level must continue with still greater vigour.

We stand for one union in one industry or factory. We do not want to divide trade unions on the basis of political affiliations. We seek to unite the workers in a common trade union because the interests of the workers as against those of the employers are common and they have to unitedly carry on their struggle.

We have proposed to the leadership of the AITUC that all unions be united on the following basis :

- 1) Elections be conducted by the joint membership of the existing unions on the basis of proportional representations;
- 2) Democratic functioning of the unions;
- 3) No decision or settlement be entered into with the management without the approval of the Executive Committee and on all issues affecting all the workers without the approval of the General Body.

We reiterate these proposals to the AITUC and declare that even now we stand by them.

We appeal to the other trade union centres also, such as the HMS, UTUC, HMP, and INTUC to accept these proposals.

We have seen that in the face of the offensive on the working class, the urge for unity has grown among the mass of workers. Life itself will make the workers realize more and more the need for unity in order to defend their interests.

We have to put these proposals constantly before the workers belonging to the other unions and point out the democratic nature of these proposals. If we are able to launch a movement for unity with greater and greater number of members of our unions approaching the workers of the other unions who are their class brothers and patiently explain them, the movement will gather momentum.

This also means that we do not start rival unions everywhere in order to get them affiliated. We have to function in all mass unions, whichever centre they may be affiliated to, and carry on the struggle for trade union unity, democracy and united struggles. Only when the mass of workers find in any industry that the union leadership has become a complete obstacle to defending their interests, and are convinced that they can advance their cause by another union we can start another union.

Comrades, every worker realises that the break up of the U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala is a setback for the working class and democratic movement. But this setback is only temporary. Those who broke the U.F. Governments cannot defend the interests of the workers and toiling people. On the other hand, they can only assist in unleashing offensive against the toiling people. The movement for unity unleashed on the lines outlined above can and will foil the game of the enemies of the U.F. and lead to the forging of a new U.F. on stronger foundations. It will be a U.F. in which main mass organizations of the people, the trade unions, kisan sabhas, students and youth organizations, teachers organizations, etc, will play an increasing

role along with the political parties. That will be the guarantee against its disruption by opportunist elements and leaders.

Such a U.F. alone will forge the weapon of mass struggle against the bourgeois-landlord regime and guarantee victory in the struggle for democracy and Socialism. The working class as the most advanced section in modern society play the leading role in forging this invincible instrument of struggle.

With unity, and united struggle, inscribed on our banner, let us march forward from victory to victory.

Onward to unity of the working class !

Onward to the unity of the toiling people !

Onward to the solidarity of our working class and people with all peoples fighting against imperialism !

Six West Bengal Parties Call for Joint Movement*

**Joint Statement dated May 21, 1970
issued in Calcutta**

Jyoti Basu (CPI-M), Jyoti Bhattacharya (Workers' Party), Sukumar Roy (Biplabi Bangla Congress), Bimalananda Mukherjee (RCPI), Ram Chatterjee (FBM) and Nepal Bhattacharjee (Bolshevik Party of India) have issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on May 21, 1970:

Conditions in West Bengal have steadily deteriorated since the promulgation of President's rule after the United Front had been broken by the Bangla Congress and its allies. The Bangla Congress would not have dared to break from the U.F. if it had not been assured by its allies that no other U.F. Government would be formed without the Bangla Congress.

The reactionary vested interests and anti-social elements have carried on a series of violent criminal attacks against the toiling people and their leaders; many have lost their lives; serious injuries have disabled many others. The police have reappeared as an instrument of brutal repression against the poorer people; hundreds and hundreds of political workers and leading workers of mass organizations have been put under arrest on fictitious charges, beaten up and tortured. Processes of law have been seriously interfered with, bails refused in almost all cases, and an atmosphere of prejudice and intimidation created in the Press to make fair trials impossible. The Central Reserve Police is being employed in large numbers and grounds are being prepared for

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introducing the Preventive Detention Act against political workers and democratic movements.

Not one step has been taken during this period to improve the lot of the people. Prices of rice and other food-stuffs are rising again; drought and near-famine conditions already prevail in some of the districts, especially Purulia and Bankura. Works of irrigation, arrangements for financing agriculture and helping the poor cultivators, and other advance measures for the next crop season are not being taken. It appears that conditions are being allowed to develop towards another serious food crisis in West Bengal.

The rights of the poor peasants, earned during the U.F. rule, are seriously threatened. Preparations are being made to deprive the poor peasants of land that they took and cultivated under the U.F. Government. The U.F. legislation providing homestead land to agricultural labourers has not been implemented. Once again eviction of bargadars has started.

No attempt has been made to reopen at least some of the closed factories. The U.F. scheme to provide some relief to unemployed persons has been completely neglected. Employers are violating industrial agreements and awards and launching fresh attacks on workers' and employees' rights and security. The U.F. Government's Trade Union Recognition Bill, which could help to build trade union unity of workers and remove many anomalies in industry, has been denied assent of the President. The Pay Commission's recommendation for some benefit to Government employees, teachers, and municipal employees have been put into cold storage. Education has almost collapsed, and no attempt is being made to build education at the base through free primary education for all children up to Class VIII, which was the policy of the U.F. Government.

These are some of the glaring activities and inactivities of the present regime, which is a regime of the Congress party and the anti-people top bureaucracy. The administration is also being disrupted by a witch-hunt against Government

employees and certain officers on the plea that they performed their duties under the U.F. Government, the objective being to gear up the entire administrative machinery against the interests of the people. This regime has also taken care not to dissolve the Legislative Assembly, so that machinations may continue for bringing a Congress-backed "mini-front" Government into office against the clear verdict of the people.

Such a situation cannot be permitted to continue. Only an organized, united and widespread mass movement can change the situation and ensure some progress for West Bengal. We, therefore, have decided to build up such a mass movement for the fulfilment of the following demands. We appeal to all democratic parties, mass organizations and progressive individuals to combine with us in this movement.

Demands

1. Stop police repression; withdraw the CRP, release all political prisoners: withdraw all cases instituted against workers, peasants and democratic movements; restore democratic and trade union rights.

2. Stop eviction of bargadars; protect the peasants occupying benami and vested lands; introduce ceiling on landholding on family basis: and distribute surplus land to the landless and poor peasants; enforce *tebhaga* for bargadars; implement U.F. legislation on homestead land, work, wages, and supply of foodstuff of agricultural labourers.

3. Immediate Presidential assent to the Trade Union Recognition Bill; unemployment relief; reopening of closed factories; gratuity for all workers; implementation of all agreements and awards; stopping of retrenchment.

4. Implement Pay Commission recommendations in consultation with the Employees' Coordination Committee, and organizations of teachers, municipal employees, etc.; stop political victimisation of officers and employees.

5. Introduce free education up to class VIII throughout the State.

6. Dissolve the Legislative Assembly forthwith, and hold a fresh election.

We shall hold meetings and demonstrations on the basis of these above demands. We shall meet from time to time to guide the campaign and movement jointly.

A Historic Conference to Shoulder a Historic Responsibility*

B. T. Ranadive

The Conference of Trade Unions which held its session in Calcutta from May 28 to 31 took the decision to found a new central organization— Centre of Indian Trade Unions — will go down as a historic gathering marking a new stage in the development of the trade union movement in India

The Conference was called to rescue the militant trade unions hitherto working inside the AITUC from the class-collaborationist grip of the Dange leadership. It was called to seize the initiative for developing trade union unity, united actions of the working class which were being disrupted and disorganized by the policies pursued by the dominant leadership of the AITUC. This policy based on class collaboration, on confining the trade union movement to economism, and parliamentary politics, on avoidance of mass actions and mass initiative, logically led to undemocratic functioning of the AITUC and its constituent unions. It led to open disruption of existing unions by the Dangeites and formation of rival unions without following and their affiliation to the AITUC to swell the strength of the revisionist group.

It led to anti-working class agreements by the revisionist leaders over the head of the workers; to making the AITUC a virtual appendage of the Government — its representatives

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and nominees on official committees joining hands with the employers and Government on several occasions to propose further attack on the workers' right to strike and penalise them for legitimate actions.

Militants' Meet

The tremendous response which the Goa Conveners got for the Conference showed that the anti-working class, class-collaborationist policies of the Right Communists have been understood by a vast number of workers and their unions.

The Conference attracted representatives of more than eight lakh workers from all over India. They represented the most active and fighting forces in the AITUC —unions and leaders that had led some of the most militant and protracted strikes of the recent period. From West Bengal, which is by far the biggest centre of trade union activity in India where the man-days lost in strikes numbered 98 lakhs in 1969 alone, representatives of more than four lakh workers attended the Conference. The mass jute workers' union— the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union, having an enrolled membership of more than 90,000, was prominent with its more than 400 delegates; the Tea Plantation Workers' Union, the engineering unions representing thousands of workers had sent their delegates to demand a new organization. The Hindusthan Steel Employees Union of Durgapur with a membership of more than 20,000, the Jay Engineering and Texmaco Workers' Unions, veteran of many a heroic battle; the coal mining workers' union for whose organization the workers had to shed their blood at every step to meet the combined offensive of the police, the owners' goondas, and the SSP and the revisionists, working in alliance with them to protect their tottering hold, was also represented by rank and file workers which included a number of women.

In the Conference were represented unions led by the Revolutionary Communist Party of India and the Forward Bloc (Marxist), two parties which form a common front with our Party in West Bengal and have boldly stood out

against the treachery of the revisionists and others. By their participation and contribution, they have strengthened the forces of unity.

From Tamilnadu, apart from the Madurai and Coimbatore textile unions, fighting unions of sugar, cement, engineering and other industries gathered at the Conference to pronounce their verdict on the policies pursued by the Dange group and the harm they had done to the movement.

From Kerala also the most fighting sections, involving the plantation workers, rayon, fertilisers, coir workers, boat workers, bidi workers, were represented, their strength reaching to one-and-a-half lakhs.

The Tamilnadu and Kerala unions affiliated have again been in the forefront of recent strike struggles, securing signal victories for the workers. The steady development of the coir workers union against all odds, its victories and consolidation in face of the revisionist sabotage is one instance in the point. In Tamilnadu several unions have conducted prolonged struggles and snatched victories despite prolonged starvation and repression.

Several unions in Rajasthan, Bihar, Bombay, Karnataka have been conducting strikes in recent months.

It is these fighting forces that gathered in the Conference, in reality, it is these forces that would have constituted the majority in the AITUC had the revisionist leadership not manufactured fake membership, and arbitrarily barred many of these unions from joining the AITUC.

That these unions formed the main fighting core of the AITUC can be proved from official figures. One has only to glance at the statistics of important strikes, for instance in West Bengal, and find out which unions conducted them.

Delegates Endorse

Discussing the Report submitted by P. Ramamurti the delegates from all parts of India supported the proposal to have a new central organization and shed light on the anti-working class and anti-democratic character of the Dange group.

They gave instances after instances to show that these leaders accepted no democratic norms in functioning the AITUC, the State Committees or the unions.

Apart from the arbitrary functioning of the AITUC, it was pointed out that the entire organization has been reduced to a farce. Most of the State TUCs controlled by Dange's partymen have not held a conference for years. Maharashtra has not held a conference for 11 years; Tamilnadu for ten years; Kerala for eight years. In the unions also the same practice is followed. A strategic union like the Bhilai Steel Workers' Union affiliated to the AITUC has not held its election for at least three years. It is reported that the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha, (Asansol) controlled by the revisionists which claims a membership of 16,000 has not held its annual meeting for the last eight or nine years. The Giridih Coal Workers' Union with a claimed membership of 20,000 has not held it for nine years. The Jamshedpur Union affiliated to the AITUC has not held its annual meeting since 1958.

Several other unions of the Dange group only submit returns to the Registrar without holding annual elections. The ordinary worker is deprived of all say in the union matters and the union bureaucrats continue to hold sway without any mandate. At the same time, they are always available to oblige the Government and the employers to sign anti-working class agreements on behalf of the union.

Under the revisionist dispensation neither the AITUC nor the State Committees could be a rallying point for unity of the workers, for organizing common resistance. This was emphasized by the delegates as their direct experience; they saw the organization sitting tight while thousands of workers were carrying on a grim struggle against mass retrenchment and unemployment. On the other hand, its representative on an official committee joined the representatives of the Government and the employers to suggest further curbs on the trade unions as condition for trade union recognition.

A Striking Contrast

The contrast between West Bengal and Bombay is most striking. The economic crisis had a terrific impact in both places. In West Bengal where we led the unions and the BPTUC, there was huge resistance against lock-outs and retrenchment; and it was in this period itself that the jute, textile and the tea plantation workers could secure through strike action an interim increase in wages ranging from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30. Besides, the engineering workers also could secure on their united strength a substantial increase in wages.

What has Bombay where the Dange groups has absolute control over the state TUC to boast of? What action did it take during the crisis to protect the workers? How many strikes did it organize? The textile industry was one of the worst sufferers under the crisis. The dominant leadership of the AITUC did nothing to organize the resistance of the textile workers or even organise a protest day when nearly eighty textile mills were closed down throughout India. The Dange group hardly organized any resistance in Bombay when the Maharashtra Government, while taking over some of the closed mills, cut the DA by nearly Rs. 50.

Our comrades in Bombay offered to work together in the Girni Kamgar Union, run common campaigns and rouse the workers. But Dange put his foot down on it, though his ranks appreciated our help and offer.

This was the common experience of delegates from all parts. Comrade Ramamurti in his Report mentioned a series of anti-working class agreements entered into by the revisionists. The delegates threw further light on these. The Kerala delegates told the Conference that the Right Communists there have treacherously agreed to link the DA of certain cashew nut workers with productivity. This has been the employers' demand and it has been unanimously rejected by the trade union movement.

It was further reported that the Right Communists are no longer supporting the demand for recognition of trade unions

to be decided by secret ballot. They have virtually joined hands with the INTUC which openly opposed this demand. And as usual with all reformists who are opposed to strikes, the Dangeites have supported the Governments's proposal to lay further curbs on strikes. Some of their leaders have further agreed to give up the workers' right to a need-based wage and accepted the employers' criterion of capacity to pay as the decisive factor in determining the wage.

Thus on every issue affecting the trade union movement directly, the group dominating the AITUC was found to be taking an anti-working class position, preventing the democratic voice of the workers from asserting itself, and utilizing the prestige of the organization to betray the workers. To continue to accept the position was to betray the unity and struggle of the workers that was the unanimous opinion of the delegates. That is why the resolution to form a separate organization was welcomed with thunderous shouts; it met the immediate need of the movement. Without it the paralysis and disruption of the trade union movement was bound to continue.

The Beginning

However it was realized that the formation of an independent organization was only the beginning of the struggle for unity of the struggle for effective resistance against the offensive of the capitalist class. The economic crisis, developing into an all-round political crisis, demanded a rapid reforging of unity in the ranks of the working class. In the fight against the recession, only where the united actions of the working class could be forged, it could stave off the attack or even secure additional gains. But where the reformist and revisionist leadership continued to undermine unity, the employers could pass on the burdens of the crisis to the workers.

This lesson was deeply imprinted on the minds of the delegates. The delegates were made keenly aware of the fact that the coming months are likely to witness a new economic offensive against the workers accompanied by repressive

measures. That during this offensive the reformist and revisionist leaders are bound to resort to disruption, helped by the employers and the administration and yet despite all this, the unity of action of the working class has to be forged if it is to defend its own interests. A unity reaching far beyond the influence of the former AITUC, an all-embracing unity drawing within its folds the vast mass of the unorganised, the sections belonging to all central organizations alone will meet the needs of the situation that is rapidly developing. The justification of starting a new organization precisely lies in its initiative, devotion and ceaseless work to develop and build such unity.

It will, however, be a folly under the present circumstances to ignore the influence of the reformist and revisionist leadership on the trade unions. Even where the organized influence is very weak, the ideological influence is sometimes strong. Illusions about the policies of the National Congress, illusions about the parliamentary path, absence of revolutionary outlook, linking the daily struggle with the inevitable struggle for power — all these continue to operate in favour of the reformist and revisionist leaders and hinder the process of the release of the masses from their influence. The few concessions that have been secured in an earlier period also contribute to the retention of this influence. No doubt all these illusions are rapidly cracking under the stress of the crisis, and repression. Yet it would be wrong to under-estimate the organized and ideological influence of the reformists and revisionists and start as if the new organization represents the overwhelming majority of organised workers, as if it has no need to approach the other organizations in the task of organizing united resistance.

The Conference fully realized its responsibility when it unanimously adopted the resolution on unity of action. That resolution warns the workers against the impending offensive; it describes how the workers gained when they stood united and lost where they were not brought into united

action; it exposed the reformist and revisionist leadership's policy of sabotaging struggles; it points out how the growing dependence of Indian economy on American imperialists is worsening the condition of workers, how the rise of monopolists is leading to brutal exploitation. And it calls upon all sections of the working class to fight against the unemployment and retrenchment offensive, against wage-cuts and raise the demand for nationalization of foreign monopoly concerns and nationalization of concerns owned by Indian monopolists.

It asks all central organizations to come together to defend the common interests and fight for the unity of the popular forces.

It assures the working class that out of these common struggles new bonds of unity will be forged leading to formation of single union in each industry, embracing all workers irrespective of their political affiliations and making the unity of the workers impregnable.

The General Council meeting after the Session lost no time in asking the constituent unions to observe united action week from July 13 to 19 to popularize the resolution.

Both the Conference and the General Council have shown their earnestness to grapple with the main task of building unity.

The Session passed several other resolutions. It drew the attention of the working class to the new weapon of disruption now frequently used by the ruling classes, the communal riots and linguistic conflicts inside the working class created by organizations like the Jana Sangh and Shiva Sena. It warned the workers that attacks against minorities constitute the beginning of attack on democracy itself; that this communalism and chauvinism are weapons of disrupting the solidarity of the working class; it asked all democratic forces to come together to face the challenge of the reactionary forces.

The Conference passed a resolution on Lenin Centenary hailing the great triumphs of Marxism-Leninism and asking

the fighting workers to master its lessons; it hailed the victory of People's China in sending a satellite into space; it greeted the people and working class of the USSR, People's China and all Socialist countries for their breath-taking advance; it sent its greetings to the international working class and the people fighting against imperialism for national freedom, and expressed its determination to fight against the danger of war and uphold peace.

It denounced American invasion of Cambodia and supported the struggle of the people of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos against American aggression. It praised the heroism of the Vietnamese people and expressed confidence that helped by the world movement against the Vietnam war, the peoples of these countries will soon be able to rout the American forces of aggression. It hailed the fight of Socialist Cuba, the revolutionary outpost in the Western hemisphere, against American provocations and greeted its economic development, its plan to produce ten million tons of sugar.

The Conference protested against the recommendation of the National Labour Commission; against the anti-labour bills in Maharashtra and Andhra; against the brutal repression of workers, peasants and students and democratic forces to fight the bourgeois-landlord regime.

The Conference sent its fraternal greetings to the peasants and agricultural workers fighting for land; it condemned the monstrous repression launched by the Achutha Menon Ministry in Kerala against the agricultural workers and condemned the class terror against the agricultural workers under which houses of harijans are burnt down and men and women are assaulted by the landlords' goondas.

The Conference passed a number of resolutions dealing with the demands of workers in various industries — jute, cotton textile, steel, engineering, road transport, port and docks, colliery workers, women workers in industry, plantation workers, railways and others. It passed a resolution against automation and supported the demands of the State and Central Government employees.

In its resolutions on Kerala and West Bengal, the Conference condemned the repressive measures launched by the treacherous mini-front Ministry in Kerala; and the widespread repression and encouragement to goonda attacks against the democratic forces under President's rule. It exposed the treacherous role of the revisionists who in collaboration with the Bangla Congress and Forward Bloc disrupted the United Front in West Bengal to kowtow to the Congress; it condemned their role in Kerala and their open alliance with both wings of the Congress. It demanded immediate midterm elections to get a verdict of the people and put an end to the regime of repression.

Votaries of 'Unity'

Having done everything to bury a united organization, the Rightists now come forward as advocates of unity and shed crocodile tears for it. By unity they mean acceptance of their leadership of arbitrary functioning, betrayal in the daily struggle and disruption of the democratic struggle.

Naturally, this is nothing but prostitution of the word 'unity'. The Communists, Marxist-Leninists, fight to build and defend unity in the class struggle, unity to defend the daily interests of the workers against the capitalists. They demand unity to fight the capitalist-landlord Government in alliance with the democratic forces, a united struggle which leads to rising Socialist consciousness of the workers. For Marxist-Leninists unity cannot mean just acceptance of the leadership of the reformist or revisionist leadership. They are prepared to work in every organization with following when the minimum conditions exist for propagating and working for class unity.

The trade union is an organ of class struggle and not of class collaboration. And those who prattle about unity only to keep their class-collaborationist hold are plain disruptors. They may bureaucratically cling to the old organization but when they make it impossible to carry on the class struggle through it, they only disrupt it. This is what the Rightists have done.

We did our best to protect class unity and had to separate when it became plain that remaining in one organization meant helping the revisionists to disrupt the struggle of the working class.

Historic Decision — Why?

Why should the decision of the Conference to found a new organization be considered a historic decision? For Marxist-Leninists the trade union movement is the cradle of the revolutionary movement of the working class, the training school for Socialist consciousness, for equipping the working class with the consciousness of its struggle for political power. Our Party, in distinction from the revisionists and other parties, follows the Leninist teaching that the hegemony of the working class is absolutely essential in the Socialist as well as the democratic revolution. The influences affecting the trade union movement, the elementary struggle of the working class, plays a vital role in determining its capacity to discharge its revolutionary responsibilities.

A working class whose trade union movement is dominated by reformists and revisionists, a working class whose trade union movement cannot break through the shackles of economism and parliamentarism and identifying itself with the revolutionary movement, cannot discharge its tasks and can neither emancipate itself nor the toilers. A trade union movement which under the influence of the reformists and revisionists is indifferent to the growth of American domination over our economy, or the agrarian revolution and the struggle of the peasantry cannot be an instrument of educating the working class in its revolutionary responsibilities.

That is why every development in the trade union movement, every step forward in releasing the movement from the reactionary grip of the reformists and revisionists has an important revolutionary meaning for the immediate democratic struggle, for the final Socialist revolution. The release of nearly a million organized workers from the grip of the AITUC leadership, the opening that

is cleared for their initiative, will acquire great importance in the revolutionary struggle if this initial success is properly consolidated.

Lenin attached great importance to the struggle against reformist trade union leaders in the fight for capture of political power. Writing about the advanced countries and the stranglehold of reformists over the unions, Lenin said: "This struggle must be waged ruthlessly and it must be unfailingly be brought—as we brought it—to a point when all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism, are completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions. Political power cannot be captured (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until the struggle has reached a *certain* stage." (*Collected Works*, Volume 31, p. 52) This is enough to show that without growingly eliminating the influence of reformists over the trade union movement, the revolutionary initiative of the working class cannot be released. The fight is necessary not only to defend the daily interests but much more so, for preparing for the struggle for capture of political power to end the rule of the capitalist class.

The Background

In the first place, the crisis and the struggle engendered by it were narrowing the capacity of the reformist and revisionist leaders to sabotage strikes and struggles and pin the workers' faith in official machinery. Though forced by the pace of the working class to support strikes, the reformists and revisionists often got exposed by their half-hearted approach, by their failure to contribute to organization of the struggle and their passivity. That is why whenever struggles have broken out, and where our influence was strong the reformists lost heavily among the workers. The cry raised by the reformists and revisionists in West Bengal, including the SSP and SUC that our Party was disrupting their unions was really the acknowledgement of an objective fact, that large masses of workers were deserting the reformists to join the class unions.

But the cause of the split lays deep in the political situation also.

The post-election years have been eventful. The United Fronts in West Bengal and Kerala, the attempts to forge similar democratic united front elsewhere, resulted in bringing together the organized working class following democratic opposition parties together in a common front against the Congress. This unleashed new enthusiasm and advanced the consciousness of the working class and its striking capacity. The big defeat of the Congress in mid-term elections in West Bengal when a big united front was formed; its failure to get a majority in the others States—all this radicalized the situation and further strengthened the resolve of the working class for a common front. The achievements of the Kerala and West Bengal Ministries, headed by us, the mighty strikes that won victories strengthened the democratic forces and cemented the alliance of the workers with them.

Thus the power of the working class and the democratic forces was increasing and it was encouraging the people and working class in other States.

It was precisely in this period that the ruling party, confronted by the rising mass discontent and actions, split into two, undermining the capacity of the bourgeois-landlord classes to act unitedly. One section wanted to attack the movement frontally by allying with the other reactionary forces; the other wanted to bolster bourgeois-landlord rule by presenting a democratic image to the masses, by making concessions to certain sections and simultaneously create illusions in the working class and basic masses to disrupt the united front of the democratic forces and isolate our Party.

The situation really offered a great opportunity to the working class to forge ahead to weaken the hold of the Congress to expose and combat the machinations of the Syndicate and strengthen the democratic forces. Our Party helped by its allies tried to achieve precisely this.

Revisionists' Role

But here all the class collaborationist groups in the trade union and the United Front betrayed the people. Their line of parliamentary path, of avoiding genuine struggles, now made all of them take a hostile stand against our Party and seek covert or overt alliance with the Indira Congress. It is no accident that in Kerala both the Indira wing and the Syndicate support the Achutha Menon Ministry of the revisionists. It is no accident that the revisionists in Kerala support Congress candidates to defeat us. It is further no accident that backed by the capitalist-landlord interests represented by the Indira Congress and the Syndicate, the Achutha Menon Ministry is launching the severest repression against the workers and the people.

The same process is seen in West Bengal. The revisionists have caused the collapse of the United Front and invited President's rule and are directly demanding open repression against us, the workers in trade unions led by us. They are supported by the other reformist groups who all want the police to run amok among the workers under the pretext of suppressing violence alleged to be organized by us.

The utter unscrupulousness of the revisionists was seen when they not only opposed the historic March 17 strike against President's rule but organized violence against the workers and are today acting as the stooges of the capitalists to involve as many workers as possible in criminal cases.

The line of the revisionists and the reformists under the stress of the crisis and mass struggle has turned a full circle. In the beginning they tried to exploit the class discontent against the Congress rule by uttering radical phrases and posing as anti-Congress fighters and getting themselves in the Ministries to pursue the parliamentary path. But when the masses began to go ahead they turned round, revealed their class collaborationist character and joined hands with the Congress to disrupt the common democratic and trade union front.

The revisionists have been set on this course for a long

time. Their one aim has been to isolate us, disrupt the front and be of service to the Congress.

This was the line that they wanted to impose on the AITUC. The leadership had made statements on behalf of the AITUC supporting this line. They supported the Achutha Menon Ministry, giving a clean bill to it when it was repressing the people. They attacked the West Bengal Ministry, and its Bill to grant trade union recognition by ballot.

To pursue this policy it was necessary that they retained bureaucratic control over the organization and carry on their betrayal in the name of the AITUC. That is why they turned down every proposal for democratic functioning.

The split has come on the crest of rising wave of strike struggles which have educated large section about the real nature of the Dange leadership; it has come in the wake of the political treachery of this group whose effects are directly experienced and felt by lakhs of workers in Kerala and West Bengal. It is born out of the class developments that are taking place in India.

Tasks Ahead

The foundation of the new organization devoted to the fight for unity based on class struggle is no doubt a historic step in the context of the present political and economic situation.

The task of uniting the workers in the daily battles demands that all major political, ideological and organizational weaknesses of the trade union movement should be eliminated. The struggle for uniting the working class must meet the practical and ideological challenge from both sides—the Right reformist danger and the Left adventurist danger. The former is the main danger against which the large mass of workers has started revolting. The latter is an insipient danger and is emerging as a counterpart of reformist practices and outlook. It tries to replace the united class resistance of the workers by impatient individualist actions of a few in the name of militancy. It recognises no union discipline,

makes organized functioning impossible and in certain cases acts as the provocative agency of the employers.

In the coming months when the working class will be under constant offensive, this common action has to be organized and the masses following the reformist and revisionist leaders have to be drawn together. They belong to the INTUC, AITUC and other central organizations and unions. In the course of this struggle the vast mass of the unorganized, uncommitted in each factory, have to be won over for active action.

The enormousness of this task, with reformists and revisionists actively opposing, can be easily imagined. But today, there is a great urge among the masses to unite in common resistance and all those who go against it will be thrown out by them.

Widest Workers' Participation

That is why the struggle has to be conducted with the full participation of the widest sections. Our constituent unions and leaders must make the factory and the factory committees the base of this struggle involving in it the uncommitted mass, that mass which does not attend even factory gate meetings. Factory committees and action committees and strike committees elected by the mass of workers—these must be forged as the instruments to build common resistance against employers' attacks. Here any kind of sectarianism, satisfaction with the participation of only the active cadres of the union will do great harm and cause even a split. The leading cadres of the union must lead the battle but must ensure the widest participation in it.

This cannot be achieved unless our unions combat the atrocious type of trade union organization that has grown up in recent years—a type which suits the sabotaging politics and methods of the revisionists. A few bureaucrats manage the affairs of the unions; workers are hardly consulted in taking decisions; meetings of the organs of unions are hardly held and agreements with managements are not put for sanction

before the workers. This makes the mass inert, unable to resist treachery; it does not rouse its confidence in the organization and paralyses both its consciousness and its initiative.

Conscious class struggle must be waged against such an organization. Our unions must combat this unionism and replace it by democratic functioning, fully restoring the initiative of the rank and file and making it the lever of the organization. Protecting minority opinion, giving it adequate opportunities to express itself, the union must embody the decisive and democratic unity of the class wedded to class struggle.

In the reformist unions where we are functioning we must follow the same path of democratic functioning and try to win over the majority for unity. We have not given a call to start new unions everywhere; in unions with substantial following we wish to work and win over the majority.

Battle for Winning Over

A battle for the patient winning over of the workers under the reformist influence must be carried on, a battle in which the reformist and revisionist practices will be concretely exposed. This may begin on local or factory issues or on general issues. The resistance of the revisionist leaders to action has to be overcome through pressure from below. In this struggle direct appeals to leadership of reformist unions or their central organizations have also to be made.

As essential part of this struggle is a growing fight against the reformist illusions created in relation to the conciliation machinery, labour courts, arbitration, conferences and other paraphernalia created by the Government. The revisionists have replaced class action by reliance on this legal machinery and have developed a *modus operandi* of class collaboration. This has to be concretely exposed and the mass of workers should be made to realize that their only sanction is mass strength and the unity of the organization. Only the strength in the class struggle will yield results.

This however should not be accompanied by negative

boycotting. The legal machinery, the conferences, all these may have to be utilised to make the workers understand their real role. Moreover, presentation of cases, participation in conferences should not lead to an illusion that these are substitutes for mass action. They can be effectively used for educating the workers if this main link is understood.

Ensure Class Solidarity

One of the atrocious developments of the recent period is a lack of feeling of solidarity and action among workers of different States. This is the product of reformist ideology. Thanks to this, communal and linguistic fanatics are attacking working class unity, organizing riots in which hundreds of workers are killed with the trade unions looking on helplessly. This helplessness before this attack arises because the reformists and revisionists have often soiled their hands by compromising with the reactionary forces. Our unions must put up a fight against this and strain every nerve to ensure class solidarity. West Bengal and Kerala have already shown the way.

Fighting these daily battles, stretching our hands to all workers irrespective of their organizational and political affiliations, our unions must make a determined effort to breakthrough the present practice of economism by the majority of the trade unions. They must combat the spread of parliamentary illusions, of anti-Communism, anti-internationalism and uphold mass struggle to liquidate the bourgeois-landlord rule.

Ally with Democratic Movement

The trade union movement in our country will not be successfully able to defend the interests of the workers unless it gives up the old legacy and takes conscious part in the democratic revolutionary movement against the present regime, unless it shows growing initiative in this direction. What chance have the workers to defend their wage, employment and standard of living with the vast mass of poor

peasants and agricultural workers denied land and exploited by the landlords? What chance has the working class to liquidate the bourgeoisie-landlord rule if it is unable to forge a powerful worker and peasant alliance? What chance has the working class to defend itself if the trade unions do not take the fight against the growing American domination and educate the workers to fight it? What chance has the working class to advance its interests if the democratic forces are crushed one by one, if they are disrupted and the power of reactionary forces increases?

Trade unions practising class collaboration do not raise these vital issues. But without these being part of the consciousness of the ordinary workers, neither the trade union movement nor the democratic movement can go ahead.

Can the trade unions remain indifferent to the disruption of the United Fronts in West Bengal and Kerala—a disruption which is bringing in its wake the worst kind of repression? It must be their privilege and duty to work for a united front of democratic forces to defeat the present regime.

The trade unions must act as the cradle of Socialist consciousness. The workers steeled in this fiery struggle, must growingly emerge as fighters for Socialism, as fighters for the revolutionary liquidation of the present order, for a State of the working class, for the solidarity of the international working class and supporters of the mighty Socialist Camp. This can be achieved only if the trade unions link themselves with the democratic struggles and play their due role in them.

The fight against reformism and revisionism will be idle talk unless the old heritage is rejected and the trade unions embark upon discharging their responsibilities to the workers and the democratic movement.

Jyoti Basu Indicts President's Rule in West Bengal*

**Letter dated June 2, 1970 sent
to the Governor of West Bengal**

Following is the summary of a letter written by Comrade Jyoti Basu to the Governor of West Bengal on June 2, 1970. Copies of the letter have been forwarded to the President, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister:

1. I am writing this letter in pursuance of my discussions with you on May 21, 1970 regarding certain actions in the sphere of administration of a disquieting nature taken by the Government of West Bengal, after the imposition of President's rule.

2. In this respect, the most improper action so far has been the transfer of certain officers, the most important among them being Sri S. B. Ray, IAS, Sri S. M. Murshed, IAS, Sri A. Sen, IAS, Sri S.K. Singh, IPS and Sri T. Dutta, IAS. Even Sri A Sinha, who held an insignificant post of Private Secretary to me, has incurred the wrath of your petty advisers. A post was found for him in Calcutta but now he is being sent out to a district as a penal measure. Had all these transfers been made in the normal course nothing could have been said about them. That they were not so, will be evident from the fact that with the exception of Sri S. B. Ray, all the officers were in their posts for a short period and their transfer was not due in the normal course. As regards Sri Singh, I have seen certain Press reports which say that the IGP is of the opinion that his work as SP, 24-Parganas, left nothing to be desired. Sri Singh had been appointed as SP, 24-Parganas,

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with the knowledge of the IGP. If all this is true, why was Sri Singh transferred? The circumstances attending the transfers are distressing and they clearly reveal a sinister purpose which bodes ill for the administration of the State and the people.

3. First, a tendentious statement was made in Parliament by Sri V. C. Shukla, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, to the effect that politically committed officers of the State Government, as he put it, would be weeded out. This is boundless hypocrisy coming as it does from a Minister of the Congress Government which has attempted to use the administration for the last 22 years in the interests of the Congress party, vested sections of the society and against the people.

4. Secondly, immediately after this statement was made, virulent campaigns were conducted against the officers in the Press. Many false and malicious allegations were made against them. I know these allegations were false because they pertained to matters which I and my colleagues of the erstwhile U.F. Cabinet had dealt with and I know the truth of those matters. The Government did not contradict these allegations although they knew they were false.

5. Thirdly, after the officers had been subjected to a campaign of vilification in the Press, and after an unsavoury impression had been created about them, Sri L. P. Singh visited Calcutta. This visit was followed by the announcement that Sri S. B. Ray, Sri S. M. Murshed and Sri A. Sen will be transferred. Sri S. K. Singh had of course been transferred earlier. The reasons why these abnormal transfers were to be made were not announced. The officers were not told what were the allegations against them and they were not given an opportunity to defend themselves. It is quite clear that one of the prime reasons behind these transfers is the attempt to denigrate and attack the Ministries held by the representatives of the CPI(M). This despicable method is taken recourse to because the Central Government and other reactionaries are unable to wreak vengeance on the Ministers

who enjoy the support of the vast masses of the people. In our time, when we transferred certain officers for administrative reasons and even when there were grave suspicions about some of them being able to carry out U.F. Government's policies, we did not act in a spirit of revenge. During 20 years of Congress rule, many officers, especially police officers, took unjust action against the people and opponents of the Congress by fabricating false evidence and submitting false reports and letting loose unheard of repression against the democratic movements with a view to securing the favour of the Congress party. They made a farce of the little democratic rights we have by tapping our telephones, opening our letters and constantly spying on us. Yet, the number of officers who were transferred when we acquired the reins of Government in 1967 was kept by us to the absolute minimum.

What, however, is more important is that the transfers were effected quietly and they were not preceded by public campaign of hate. We were not unnecessarily vindictive. Our contention has been that the main responsibility for anti-people policies lies with the Congress Government and its Ministers though the bureaucracy also must share the responsibility. We have been aware, however, that with limited powers, no fundamental change in the bureaucracy could be brought about by the State Government, however much desirable it be. Hence mere humiliation of officers would have led to no solution.

We only desired that all officers should implement the the best of their ability the policies of the U.F. Government. I do not deny that if there are specific charges against officers action should be taken, but mere witch-hunting is no solution. We did not touch Sri M. M. Basu, ICS, or campaign against him despite our suspicion that he was acting against the U.F. Government in 1967. Similarly, despite the report regarding the issue of bus permits against Sri S. M. Bhattacharjee, IAS, who was Transport Commissioner in 1967 and who acted under the orders of the Congress Ministers, we did not go out of our way to campaign against him.

6. Finally in finding new posts for the officers we took into consideration their personal problems and difficulties and found them suitable posts. We did not try to banish officers to far-off places and outside the State unnecessarily and in a spirit of revenge. Such considerations do not appear to have been present in your mind or the men in authority who advised you.

7. You will thus see from what I have said above that your action has been in sharp contrast to ours. In your action, there has been vindictiveness and a spirit of persecution. If you think that any particular action that the officers took was incorrect or improper, they should be informed about their acts of omission and commission. But where they have acted on the orders of the Ministers, you should join issue with them. I shall illustrate this with one example. As a matter of policy, we had decided that all criminal cases which were instituted by the police against persons who had participated in what we regarded to be democratic movements should be withdrawn. The power to pass final orders in individual cases was entrusted to me by the Cabinet. Therefore if any case was withdrawn that was because I wanted it to be withdrawn in accordance with the policy adopted by the U.F. and the officers who issued orders for the withdrawal of the case was in no way responsible for the decision taken by me in that regard.

8. Similarly, if we prevented the administration and police from taking action against democratic movements or acting in the interests of the vested sections of the society, the officers could not be held responsible. If on the policy of land, labour, education, etc., the Ministers wanted a new line to be pursued in the interests of the people how could the officers refuse to carry out our instructions? If, however, some officers are to be taken to task for their actions, they must know their guilt.

9. Your action under the direction of the Central Congress Government seems to lay down the norm that civil officers in West Bengal must not co-operate with anti-Congress

progressive Governments but carry on subversive activities. Your action will lead to demoralizing the entire administration and instigating officers to act against the people and particularly the CPI(M) if they wish to be looked upon with favour by the Central Congress Government.

10. In order to place the matter in its correct perspectives, I would like to emphasize clearly at this juncture that my endeavour so far has not been to question the right of Government to transfer an officer from one post to another in the public interest. What I am protesting against is not the transfer of certain officers as such. I am protesting against the manner in which the officers have been transferred for this is open to the greatest suspicion.

11. You have sought to demonstrate to the officer cadre in general by your action that if they faithfully serve the Government irrespective of its political complexion, a bitter fate awaits them, but if they serve a Government of a particular political affiliation they will be certified as good, loyal and efficient. To be more explicit, you have in unmistakable terms told the officers that they dare not serve particularly Ministers belonging to the CPI(M) and that they should now show their bona fides by punishing members and supporters of our Party. This is a pernicious principle. The conclusion that follows from this principle is that officers who now enjoy your confidence are committed to the Congress party which now virtually rules West Bengal under the cloak of President's proclamation.

12. You have conveyed to the public the false impression that integrity of administration has been restored by the transfer of certain officers. I have explained at length the wrong you have done in making these transfers. But are you really interested in maintaining the integrity of the administration? I have great doubts regarding this. I shall cite some examples.

13. The Vigilance Commission conducted some enquiries against Sri R. Banerjee, IAS Commissioner, Presidency Division. If you read the report of the Vigilance Commission,

you will find out the charges of depravity and corruption against Sri Banerjee. The Vigilance Commission wanted to conduct an open enquiry against Sri Banerjee. I asked them to do so. They wanted him to be transferred from his present post and sent outside Calcutta. I agreed to this also, but my attempt to transfer him was frustrated by the Chief Minister and his advisers. Strange things occur. In fact, I was compelled to write to the Vigilance Commission about this matter. A smoke-screen was created and Sri Banerjee remains where he is.

14. I shall now cite the case of Sri Dhar, IP. We ordered an enquiry into the circumstances leading to the attack on the Assembly House on July 31, last by a section of West Bengal policemen. The report of the enquiry showed that Sri Dhar deliberately evaded his responsibility, shirked his duty and was generally found to be incompetent and cowardly. We wanted to transfer him from the charge of the Presidency Range. In this also, I was frustrated by the Chief Minister because he did not agree with me upon the choice of a successor.

15. I shall cite the case of the Controller of the Sugar Industry. His appointment was motivated by dishonest considerations and the procedure adopted in making it was extraordinary and highly suspicious. I would request you to examine this case from the very beginning. If you have any concern for the integrity of the administration, you should not hesitate to take appropriate action in this particular case.

16. I have sent you letters protesting against the atrocious behaviour of a certain police officer in beating up Sri Debu Dutta, MLA of our Party in Burdwan, and against some police officers in Burdwan in humiliating our MLAs, Sri Benoy Konar and Sri Gokulananda Roy and taking them in hand-cuffs to the Court as desired by some Congress goondas. But I wonder what you have done about all these. When I discussed this particular case with you, I placed before you facts to show that their arrest was unwarranted and unjustified. You along with the officers who were present

during the discussions, had no alternative but to agree with this but so far nothing has been done to right the wrong or punish the officers concerned. May be, you are thinking of promoting them as they are serving the Congress party well. It is also strange that our MLAs have not been offered higher classification in jail, although you once told me that you accorded the highest respect to MLAs, MPs and other elected representatives of the people.

17. Before I conclude there is one more matter that I should mention. Your Government has started large-scale oppression against workers and kisans and even Government employees who are being indiscriminately arrested without any cause or justification, and many of them mercilessly beaten up in police custody. Of course, our Party members, followers and sympathizers are special objects of attack. The Police and particularly the CRP have been let loose against the people. Let me tell you that these unwarranted and limitless measures of repression will not serve any good purpose. You shall achieve nothing and in the end, we shall prevail.

Harkishan Singh Surjeet Indicts Punjab Government for Anti-People Policies*

**Letter dated June 21, 1970
sent to Punjab Chief Minister**

The CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Harkishan Singh Surjeet in a letter to Punjab Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal on June 21, 1970, has indicted the Badal Government for its anti-people policies and demanded an immediate end to these policies. The CPI(M), the letter says, will mobilise the entire democratic forces in the State to fight against these policies and defeat them.

The letter reads:

A few days ago when I came back from Calcutta, I heard innumerable stories of police repression on the people as well as of the efforts of your Government to uproot the tenants, and auction evacuee and wastelands instead of distributing them to the tiller of land and the land-hungry. I had read while in Calcutta your statement also defending this policy.

Immediately after you had assumed office I demanded that you order a judicial enquiry into the murders of political workers at the hands of the police perpetrated under Gurnam Singh's regime. You promised to do it but months have passed and you have ignored this, of course, under the advice of police officials and your Home Ministry officials.

Is it a small thing to arrest a political worker, take him away, shoot him and make it out as an encounter? If today it is the workers of our Party or the Right C.P., tomorrow anybody can be arrested and become a victim of this course.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, June 28, 1970.

If you allow the police to take the law into its own hands, it will run riot and you will not be able to control the law and order situation. Our Party will not tolerate this policy and will mobilise public opinion against it.

Then comes the question of proper supply of irrigation water. There is no doubt that irrigation is a very important element in agricultural production and everywhere there is a demand for its expansion. Our Party has always said that there is illegal utilisation of water. Hundreds of cusecs of water is being swallowed by many dubious means such as through pressure on officials, in the name of gardens, etc. The Irrigation Ministry got some cases investigated and issued orders for the cancellation of such water supply which is illegal. It made an effort to regularise the present water supply to the benefit of lower sections of the peasantry. But when you assumed office, you took a major policy decision to cancel the orders of the Irrigation Ministry, just to defend the interests of the landlords. This no doubt has created doubts that your Ministry is going to pursue pro-landlord policies as you are yourself a big landlord.

Then comes the question of distributing land to the agricultural workers and poor peasants. The Akali Dal was committed to the policy of land distribution. In fact Sant Fateh Singh had taken a vow to spend his days for the uplift of harijans and the other downtrodden.

The United Front Ministry of 1967 had taken a firm stand in changing the Congress policy of land auctions under which certain favourites of the Ministers and officials were grabbing land. A cursory review of land policy under the Congress regime will prove how much land has been grabbed by officials and Congress leaders. The U.F. Ministry discarded this policy and decided upon land distribution. But amazingly your Government again decided to revive the Congress policy of auctions which is aimed to deprive the tiller and other landless harijans of their lands. This policy of yours is being resisted by the people. For this tenants and other political workers are being put behind bars.

Not content with this, your police has recently resorted to unprecedented repression. In the night of June 15-16, a big police force was sent to the Bet area of Jullundur, Ferozepore and Ludhiana with a view to terrorising the people. They searched houses, insulted women, resorted to indiscriminate beatings of tenants and what not. Innumerable people were arrested, taken to police stations and made victims of repression. This has created great panic in the whole area and anger against your Government.

Not content with this also, your police has started involving members and sympathisers of our Party in murder cases in the name of fighting the Naxalite menace. S. Mahenga Singh, a most respected personality of Bengal, has been arrested and sent to jail. His only crime is that he continuously raised his voice against injustice and police repression. Perhaps your Government under the instructions of the Central Home Ministry has decided to create a scare of perpetual menace. You are well aware that there is no menace in Punjab. But your administration and police want to use it against our Party, which continues to champion the cause of the downtrodden and is a consistent fighter for democracy. Even the employees of various departments are being dubbed as pro-Naxalites in order to disrupt their unions. Officials have started using this weapon as a handy one.

All this has shown that your Government has decided to continue the anti-people policies of your predecessor with added emphasis. This not only will further isolate your Government from the people but will intensify the crisis in the Akali Party itself. As far as our Party is concerned, it took birth in its fight against oppression and repression. It is wedded to the cause of the downtrodden and is arrayed against the bourgeois-landlord combine and their class rule. It has no fear of repression because its cause is just. It got steeled in repression. Moreover, no movement could be suppressed with repression. The Congress which tried this weapon for many years had to face a crisis itself and has lost its monopoly of power.

Therefore, I would ask you to reconsider your policies and demand that:-

1. Immediate judicial enquiry be instituted into the murders of political workers, and punish the responsible officers;
2. Stop auction of land immediately and distribute all waste and evacuee land to the agricultural workers and tenants;
3. Illegal supply of canal water be stopped; and
4. An end be put to the policy of repression.

Our Party will mobilise all the democratic forces in the State to fight against this policy of your Government.

I would like to discuss this question with you at the earliest opportunity. Inform me about the time and place.

I am releasing this letter to the Press because the issues involved are agitating the people very much and I want to make the stand of our Party clear on that.

Right Communists Incite Communalism in Kerala: Attacks on Political Opponents Continue*

Every day the Press is reporting clashes in the Cannanore district of Kerala. The latest report is that the Government has clamped prohibitory orders under Section 144 over the whole district.

For the entire situation in Cannanore district, the mini-Front-Kerala-Congress Government has to bear the whole responsibility. During the campaign for the by-election in the Madai-constituency in the district and particularly after the victory of the CPI(M)-led United Front's candidate there, the Muslim League leaders have unleashed a veritable reign of terror there against political opponents, specially supporters of the CPI(M).

The police have been rendered completely inactive by the Muslim League Home Minister and people living in those areas where the League has some strength are living in constant fear for their lives.

What is worse, top leaders of the Right Communist Party including its present State Secretary M. N. Govindan Nair have been issuing statements along with Muslim League leaders calculated to incite communal passions.

Comrade A. K. Gopalan visited Mattul, the area worst affected by the League terror and has addressed a letter to Chief Minister Achutha Menon on what he saw and heard, stating how serious the situation there was and proposing urgent measures for restoring normalcy. Last week,

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, July 5, 1970.

People's Democracy had printed a report of a visit to the area by United Front M.P.s and MLAs.

Comrade Gopalan's letter to the Chief Minister reads :

This is to bring to your notice the horrible happenings in Mattul and its neighbourhood, incidents organised with utter callousness by power-drunk Muslim Leagues against non-Leagues immediately after the Madai by-election result was announced. Not that I pen this letter with any hope that you will take proper action—my earlier experience whenever I brought to your notice any atrocity perpetrated by police and landlords and their goondas against the working people has been to the contrary. I am compelled to write again as you happen to be the head of a Government claiming to do justice to the people of the State.

Shocking Atrocities

What has happened and is happening in Mattul and its neighbouring areas will shock anyone who has the interest of the people at heart. The situation is such that non-Leaguers in Mattul live the life of the living dead in an atmosphere of terror and goonda atrocities perpetrated by Leaguers. While those who are left in Mattul count their days of existence, are denied job facilities and live in acute starvation, those non-Leaguers who have fled from the island to save their lives are forced to live the life of wandering refugees, receiving no comfort or solace but only threats and intimidation from those in power.

I myself have made a visit to these areas, heard the pathetic tales of the non-Leaguers remaining there and seen ghastly sights. Huts and houses are burnt, looted and ransacked: cash crops and furniture destroyed or looted, workers prevented from doing their jobs, fisherfolk prevented from engaging in fishing, students and teachers prevented from attending schools, all victims being non-Leaguers.

In all, over a hundred and forty families have been driven away from Mattul island, many are missing their families live in constant fear of their lives, prevented from stirring

out to do their normal household chores or jobs to earn their living. Over a hundred families who have licences for fishing are prevented from it, these poor fishermen are asked by Leaguers to give them 25 rupees per net for carrying on fishing. Their fishing nets are either looted or burnt. Over a hundred workers including 43 beedi workers are prevented from going to Cannanore town, denying their right to work. All this is being done under your Government which boasts of doing justice to the workers.

A Few of Their Crimes

I am enclosing for your information a memorandum submitted to the District Collector by United Front leaders, M.P.s and MLAs on the deplorable fate of the people of Mattul. This lists at least 28 crimes committed by the League goondas, but in no case was any action taken against the guilty by your police. Your police dare not do so. When nine constables dared to take action against a few of the League goondas, they were immediately suspended. Such is the justice meted out by your Government to your own men who dare to take action against criminals.

As you may not find time to go through the entire memorandum, I am highlighting a few crimes listed there.

1) About 140 families are living the life of refugees elsewhere after being hunted out of Mattul by armed Leaguers.

2) On May 24, Sukumaran's house was burnt. He was driven away from the island, his family of seven children and his wife are starving in a neighbouring house, the children and the wife thirsting for news of the bread-winner. Sukumaran's four fishing nets and other household articles have been stolen. His son's books, over Rs. 100 worth, were burnt.

3) Padmadas, the teacher son of K. A. Karthiyani, is missing from Mattul South, since May 24. Their house was attacked, their bathroom roof stoned and smashed. Their family is everyday being threatened by League goondas.

4) On May 21 Mattookkaran Koran was beaten severely by a gang of over 100 League goondas. Koran is now in

hospital. Both his son and brother are being prevented from stirring out. His son was not allowed to attend school for three days.

5) Kallan Anthony, when threatened by League goondas, escaped from Mattul to save his life. His brother Francis was also threatened. He complains that Leaguers have threatened to kill him.

6) Kelan's household articles worth Rs. 100 were destroyed. He himself faces a threat to his life. P. V. Narayanan's house was attacked. His furniture was stolen. His well was filled with debris. His brother, Balan, who was the Syndicate Congress candidate's agent was beaten. Cash crops of Kunhiparambil Koran were destroyed and furniture stolen. Similar was the fate of toddy-tapper Chonan Onakkaran, Payyanavalappil Kunhambu, Gopinathan and others.

7) Many families have left Mattul. Koolathaparambil Kunhambu and his family is one such. In some cases the bread-winners are forced out of the island by League goondas, leaving the family behind and they are not allowed to take any job. Such inhuman treatment was meted out by Leaguers against many among whom are the families of Sathyapalan, Gopinathan, Damodaran and Athickal Onackal.

I have only highlighted a few of the 28 crimes. But in all cases, despite complaints from the victims, no case, no action was taken against the guilty though names of the criminals were given. The League gangsters are allowed to go scot-free despite their crimes against the people.

What is worse is the fact that non-Leaguers are denied their right to work. Over a hundred fishing families live in starvation. Their fishing nets have been destroyed by League goondas. And they are prevented from fishing, even though they have obtained necessary licences for carrying on fishing.

Teachers and Students Assaulted

Teachers and students are also victims of League goonda atrocities. To cite a single instance, 20 teachers were assaulted near Pazhayangadi by Leaguers. Assaulting teachers

and students during their struggle was a common feature in Malappuram district. While on the one side the Government machinery was misused to favour communal goondaism and terrorise political opponents, wherever the police dared to take action against Leaguers by accident, action was taken against the concerned officials. I have already cited the fate of nine constables who were suspended for taking action against a few League goondas. Let me cite one more. In Kannapuram when a police party was searching every jeep for Marxist leaders, of course under the direction of the Muslim League Home Minister, a jeep carrying Leaguers armed to the teeth, was also searched — the police thinking that it belonged to the Marxists. The concerned Dy. SP was immediately transferred. Is this how justice is to be meted out to officials who follow the Government's instructions?

Before concluding, let me point out the lurking danger in these incidents. Atrocities against non-Muslim Leaguers by Muslim Leaguers may develop into anti-Muslim sentiments. The Jana Sangh and all anti-Muslim organizations and individuals are already in the field. They are trying to exploit the situation.

To cite one instance. In Ettikkulam, on May 10, Leaguers attacked a non-Muslim which had its echo elsewhere on the 11th when in Kunhimangalam non-Muslims attacked Muslims. It was by our Party's effective intervention that it did not develop into a communal holocaust. When the Government machinery and your Government refused to put out the communal fires, we averted a catastrophe by mobilizing the secular forces against the communal elements and put an end to the communal conspiracy by mutual discussions.

Right C.P. Incites Communal Passions

But, unfortunately, your own party man, M.N. Govindan Nair, played the game of communal reactionary fanatics when he along with Bafakki Thangal issued a statement to spread the canard that a mosque was burnt near Kannapuram, thus adding fuel to the communal tension in the area. The entire statement

was baseless, as nobody had burnt any mosque. I myself have visited the spot and found it intact. Ten Muslims in the area have issued a statement repudiating the canard of Govindan Nair and company.

But the harm done by such statements can easily be assessed. Instead of playing a healthy secular role, your own party men by spreading such canards are only helping to increase and not ease the communal tension.

The question is whether you would initiate any steps to put an end to the League terrorism in Mattul and its neighbourhood, to restore the peaceful atmosphere in the area, give confidence to all people irrespective of political affiliations, to live without fear of their lives, to enable all workers to enjoy their right to work and rehabilitate those who were hunted out of Mattul island and whether you would take action against the League goondas who have committed innumerable crimes against the people. If you dare not, you and your Govt. will go down in the history of Kerala as a group, which by their blind hatred for the CPI(M) attempted to foster and develop communalism to deny people their right to work, which deliberately used force and the administrative machinery to terrorise political opponents.

If you have any claim to be secular, and desire to restore peace in Mattul immediately,

- 1) Give police protection to the fisherfolk so as to enable them to restart fishing;

- 2) Grant fishing licences to those who have been engaged in fishing for the last several years, but who are denied such licences on the orders of Muslim League Minister Naha.

- 3) Give monetary relief for purchasing fishing nets to those whose nets have been burnt or looted.

- 4) Rehabilitate those who were driven away from the island by League goondas. Restore peaceful atmosphere for rehabilitation by (a) punishing criminals responsible for such atrocities and thereby preventing such actions in the future and by (b) employing enough police personnel for giving necessary protection to those rehabilitated.

Women—Special Target of Police Attacks Under President's Rule in West Bengal*

Bangla Congress leader and former Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherjee went on a demonstrative fast not so long ago to protest against the "barbarous atrocities" committed by people belonging to the CPI(M) in the cities and villages of West Bengal. A woman from Kalna came in tears to Curzon Park and narrated to the Bangla Congress leader how CPI(M) men had forcibly cut her hair and insulted her. From all over West Bengal one or another 'insulted woman' came to relate her story to Ajoy Mukherjee. The Press lapped it all up. Ajoy Mukherjee tried to console these women. He said in public meetings that women could not move out in the streets at night!

But today, when really barbarous atrocities are being committed on women under President's rule, there is no word of condemnation from Ajoy Mukherjee. He and the leaders of various parties including the Right C.P. have yet to open their mouths against these atrocities. When nothing was happening they concocted stories about insults to women to malign the CPI(M). When atrocities are taking place they keep mum. So much for their concern for Bengal's womanhood.

President's rule was imposed on the State on March 19 and the CRP and the West Bengal police have since then been on the rampage attacking men and women with a ferocity surpassing the days of British rule.

Plenty are the reports from the various districts of West

*Report published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, July 5, 1970.

Bengal of the police, anti-social elements including those belonging to the Congress and jotdars unleashing a reign of terror. Their target is mainly the poor agricultural labour and peasant women who stood firmly with the U.F. Government and the CPI(M) all during this period. At the West Bengal Mahila Samiti Executive meeting recently, members from all the districts narrated incident after incident of such attacks.

These reports showed the general pattern of the CRP entering houses at dead of night, breaking open doors, frightening the womenfolk, using abusive and obscene language against young girls, arresting them, looting whatever they can lay their hands on. In a few cases, raping was also reported and enquiries are going on into these cases on the basis of doctors' certificates. The attempt is to demoralise the fighting women, terrorise them to submission and smash the movement in the districts.

In Hooghly district, where the kisan movement is very strong, such atrocities have been committed on a large scale.

At Kalachhara, under Haripal thana, the CRP entered the house of every agricultural worker, beat their inmates with rifle-butts, kicked them with boots, arrested all the men they could find and looted whatever property they could. Even children were not spared the beatings.

At Bahirkhand village, the wives of Purna Tudu and Robi Tudu were beaten mercilessly.

At Narayanpur village every house was forcibly entered into, the inmates were threatened and asked about the whereabouts of their men.

"The repression in the villages under the Polba thana is beyond any words", said the representatives from Hooghly district. After beating the women, the police began using obscene language and insulting them. The village Mediya was specially chosen for this sort of behaviour in the presence of young girls.

At Kansaripur, under Dhaniakhali thana, the jotdars with the help of goondas and the police, made the lives of women

unbearable. At Shikhat, under Dadpur thana, some Congressmen got the police to arrest agricultural workers and then they began their attack on the women. A woman who was dragged by her hair and then beaten by the police narrated the story.

In the Dhaniakhali thana area, a Santhal woman, Kami Mandi, was raped and beaten by police. A case has been registered on the basis of doctor's certificate.

In *Burdwan district* the CRP and West Bengal police with the help of goondas and the Congress Chhatra Parishad are daily harassing political workers, especially Comrade Archana, Secretary of Bengal Mahila Samiti. Constant threats are being held out to others to terrorise them.

In Mirer village, under Mangalkot thana, a batch of CRP and West Bengal policemen led by an officer, entered 87 agricultural workers' houses and mercilessly beat their inmates. No woman, no girl was spared. The beating was so severe that when Comrade Jyoti Chakrabarti, President of Bengal Mahila Samiti, with other representatives later visited the houses, they could see the victims with their hands, backs and faces still swollen and hear their harrowing tales.

A pregnant woman was beaten with lathis while she was standing near a water tap. A child standing near her got frightened and cried out and the child was picked up and thrown on the ground. Another child of four years was snatched from its mother and thrown into the nearby well. If the workers present at that time did not rush to its rescue, the child would have lost its life. All through the police was misbehaving with the women.

In *Malda district* the police entered houses in the absence of the men and committed atrocities.

At Sujapur-Mandaigram under Kaliachak thana, on May 3, goondas with the help of the police and jotdars entered houses and committed atrocities on women which are beyond description.

At Nandashikh, under Kharba thana, on April 22 at dead of night, they entered the house of an old Muslim woman

and beat her mercilessly. It is reported that a young girl of 13-14 years was raped here. A certificate has been given by the doctor and a case registered.

Debrani, Kamala Khatoon, Kadam Khatoon and so many others at Sujapur village were brutally manhandled by the police.

At Kaliachak, in Ho Chi Minh Nagar, the police entered two houses and inflicted injuries on two women.

In *Cooch-Behar district*, in Baluarhat village (Anchal), the police beat Devi Pandit with lathis and she fell down. A gold chain was stolen from Devnath Singh, one of the villagers.

At Shibpur, the police entered every house and beat women. They went at night with torches and went to the beds, under plea, of making searches. They used extremely filthy language.

On May 14, the police came to arrest the Secretary of Kisan Samiti and broke open the door of the house. Not finding anything illegal there, some policemen took a watch and went away.

At Tufangunj Balrampur, Kanchanbala Adhikari in a statement she issued on May 15, gave facts of police attacks, including the names of the women on whom the atrocities were committed. She said, "On May 15, the police entered my house at 3-30 at night. I told them that my husband was not at home. They then tried to arrest me. My old mother protested and did not allow it, then they started searching the whole house. Many valuables were stolen"

In *24-Parganas district* the stronghold of the CPI(M), the CRP and police with help of goondas are running riot and creating terror among the basti women and agricultural labour women. Women can no longer move on the streets in some places. Reports have been made to the higher authorities but the police refuse to go to the help of the women. It is a well-known fact that immediately after the U.F. Government assumed office a warrant had been issued against a notorious goonda of the Dhapa area. He escaped arrest, reportedly with the connivance of the police. After the imposition of

President's rule, the same goonda has returned to the area in a police van. He went and broke the Amiya Chakrabarti Shahid Bedi. With the help of police, he entered houses in Dhapa Basti and got many people arrested, then threatened the women and girls. It is reported that a girl was raped at that time.

Against all this, the women came out in a demonstration. But the police has refused to take any action and the situation remains the same.

On June 1, the CRP opened fire at Mathpukur Choumatha, and killed Mayarani Santra (40) and wounded a small girl named Chayarani. Two other women were also wounded and taken to hospital in a serious condition. The CRP camp here located in the house of a notorious goonda.

From Habra, in 24 Parganas district, a memorandum signed by Amiya Basu, Deu Bale Mandal, Kiran Das and 20 other women was sent to the D.M. giving full detail about the misdeeds of the police. They said in the memorandum that the police entered houses at night and used obscene language against our girls . . .”

At Habra composite Home No. 1 and 2 at the Anathashram, the police entered the Ashram without the permission of the Superintendent, and approached the girls who were sleeping in their rooms on the pretext of making a search. Small boys were arrested. The appeal to release them on bail in view of the coming examinations was rejected. While making the search, they were using obscene language all the time.

In *Nadia district*, at Humaniapota village, the police opened fire and killed a pregnant woman.

In *Jalpaiguri district*, in Dhupguri, the police killed a woman worker, Mangaleswari Roy, during a lathi-charge and firing.

In *Calcutta* on May 2 at the Shradhananda Park, when CPI(M) meeting was being held a Mahila Samiti worker, Uma Adhya, was injured by bomb and her leg had to be amputated.

In North and South Belegkata, throwing of soda-water bottles, bombs, and other missiles has become a daily oc-

currence. Any time the police and goondas come, enter the houses and women are their first victims. Mia Bagan in North Beleghata is the special venue of such atrocities.

All these incidents have occurred during President's rule, in the last three months. Wherever strong resistance is put up by the people, the police were forced to retreat. Every district has seen women's demonstrations, deputations to D.M.s, gheraos of thanas against the inactivity of police. Agricultural women in Hooghly and Burdwan have resisted goonda attacks with lathis, bamboos and brooms.

In Dhapa, in 24-Parganas, 200 women sat on the street, refusing to move unless the police promised to check the goondas.

In Canning thana, a procession of agricultural labour women went with children and gheraoed the thana. The police got ready to open fire on the mass of women. The women were very angry and were demanding that the authorities check the police and goondas. Because of the foresight of the leadership of the Mahila Samiti, no untoward incident could take place and the women compelled the authorities to listen to their deputation.

In Hooghly and Burdwan districts, women have faced the police with courage and resisted the goonda attacks and the police. They have taken out big demonstrations, raising slogans, sent deputations to the D.M. and restored confidence among the people.

In North and South Beleghata, women have come out in demonstrations, and gave memoranda to the authorities.

In Malda district a mass deputation of 300 women went and met the D.M.

Big processions of women, 700 and 800 strong, came out in Burdwan district where Comrade Binay Konar, MLA, and others are still kept in the lock-up.

Two big mass deputations of women in Calcutta and of the West Bengal Mahila Samiti with about 2,000 women were taken to the Governor's House to see the Governor. Even after the grievous injury suffered by Uma Adhya, the

Governor did not meet the deputationists. Money is pouring into the Samiti office towards the fund being raised for her.

Women know very well that the CRP and the West Bengal police will not stop their repression, unless they themselves put a stop to it. And, next month, along with these attacks already going on, the attacks of the jotdars will begin. All the women's conferences are giving the call to resist the attacks of the CRP and police, demanding their withdrawal and declaring the determination to protect the gains won under the U.F. Government.

A public meeting to protest the heinous crimes being perpetrated by the CRP and goondas on women, especially in the rural areas on June 28, organized by the Mahila Samiti in the ABTA Hall in Calcutta, heard the stories of the repression from some of the victims. Agricultural worker women, victims of the police brutalities, told the women present about the horrors they are undergoing. Among them were Savitri Dey from Sultanpur who had been tortured and raped, Satyabala Dasi, Parul Choudhuri, Seeta, Kalidasi Das, Shibani and others.

Manjusri Gupta presided over the meeting and among the Mahila Samiti leaders who addressed the meeting were Kanak Mukherjee, Madhuri Das Gupta, Pankaj Acharya and Pushpa Ghosh.

Uma Adhya, the young woman on whom a bomb was thrown at the time of the CPI(M) meeting in Shradhananda Park on May 2, 1970, and one of whose legs had to be amputated as a result, was present and addressed the meeting.

Before the meeting, agricultural worker women came in a procession to the ABTA Hall from Dhapa.

Right C.P. –Indira Congress Conspiracy in Kerala*

A gang of political crooks with shameless constitutional chicanery has engineered a coup d'etat against the people of Kerala to somehow hang on to office to which they never had any right. The Right Communist–Indira Congress conspirators have dissolved the Assembly but the minority Achutha Menon Government remains in office.

Achutha Menon claims he had a majority in the dissolved Assembly and as such he has every right both to advise the Governor to dissolve the Assembly and to continue in office. This is sheer humbug.

False Claim of Majority

The parties constituting the coalition never had a majority, from the first day of its existence it was clear that it could stay on in office only with the support of both wings of the Congress. Votings in the Assembly, again and again, demonstrated this. And the last session of the Assembly was adjourned abruptly despite the legislative programme pending before it because the coalition was facing a crisis from which even Indira Congress-Syndicate Congress support could no longer save it.

Ever since the ISP split, with three MLAs of that party joining the PSP, it was clear that the Government's fate was sealed. Every effort, some of them so degenerate that any group which calls itself a political party would

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, July 5, 1970.

be ashamed even to think about them, was made to cajole and keep together the tottering coalition. But nothing could save it. The PSP's demand that it should find a place in the Co-ordination Committee of the ruling parties to which all the ruling parties except the ISP agreed and the ISP's threat that its eight MLAs would walk out of the ruling front if the PSP was admitted created a situation where only the reactionary coup was the way out for the Right Communists, Muslim League, the Kerala Congress and their Indira Congress backers.

Chief Caretaker Achutha Menon did not consult any of the other parties of the coalition or his Cabinet before he advised the Governor to dissolve the Assembly. The ISP leaders and even the Muslim League Home Minister C.H. Mohammad Koya who has justified the decision have gone on record about this fact.

Achutha Menon did not consult the other parties or his Cabinet because any such consultation would have been the signal for the ISP to formally withdraw support to the Government reducing Achutha Menon's claim of majority to what it actually is—a sheer bluff.

Conspiracy with the Centre

Even though none of the other ruling parties or the Cabinet was consulted, the Right Communists were in touch with their masters in Delhi regarding their decision.

The Statesman of June 29 reported: "Incidentally the CPI made up its mind on the dissolution of the Legislature four days ago—soon after its State Council meeting. Also the Union Home Ministry was aware of Mr. Menon's decision well before Trivandrum was surprised."

The Governor's action on Achutha Menon's advice confirms this conspiracy between the Right Communists and the Indira Congress Centre.

It was at 2 p.m. on June 25 that Achutha Menon went to the Governor and tendered his advice and twenty minutes later, at 2-20 p.m., the Governor issued the proclamation

dissolving the Assembly. The Press has reported that in these twenty minutes the Governor did not consult the Centre.

No Governor of any Indian State today would have dared to take such a decision without instructions from the Centre. Enough instances have been there in the last three years when we saw how the Governors acted in State after State on instructions from the Centre. Obviously the Right Communist leaders had discussed the whole strategy with the Indira Congress leaders and the Governor already had instructions as to what to do when Achutha Menon went to him with his advice.

The Governor knew the Kerala situation. He knew that the ISP had decided to withdraw from the coalition. He knew that Achutha Menon's claim of majority had no substance. Yet, instead of asking Achutha Menon to tender his Government's resignation and then calling other parties who would have been prepared to form a Government and face the Assembly, Governor Viswanathan lost no time in acting according to Achutha Menon's advice and dissolving the Assembly.

In what contrast this is to West Bengal. It is clear that no stable Ministry can be formed in West Bengal and the only thing that has to be done in that State is to dissolve the Assembly and hold fresh elections. But in West Bengal, the Assembly is kept suspended to enable the Indira Congress leaders, the Ajoy Mukherjees and the Right Communists to knock together an unholy mini-front and form an anti-people Government.

If in West Bengal the attempt is to instal in office an Indira-Congress-backed Mini-Front Government, in Kerala the unscrupulous method of dissolving the Assembly had to be resorted to keep the Indira-Congress-backed Mini-Front Government in office. The Congress leaders have again demonstrated that Constitutional provisions are as flexible as their conscience and Governor's powers are there to be misused in the partisan interests of the Congress and its allies.

Government of Treachery and Betrayal

The Achutha Menon Government that was born out of betrayal, that kept itself in office with lies and slanders, that had only suppression of the people as its policy for the 218 days it was in office continues to cling to office with more betrayals and the treachery, to carry on its anti-people policies and use office to try to influence the elections that are to be held.

The Right Communists know that they will be wiped out by the people of the State. They have been brave in attacking the people all these days because the police were in their front and at their back to protect them from the wrath of the people. The cowards that they are, they know what will happen to them the moment this police protection goes. For them the continuation of the Ministry is an absolute must.

But the people of Kerala do not want this Ministry to exist for another moment.

The Right Communists had been reduced to almost nothing in the political life of Kerala when in the 1965 elections the people massively rejected them, reducing their strength in the Assembly to just three and they created a record in losing security deposits.

To stage a come-back, these hypocrites joined the United Front and fought the 1967 elections as a constituent of the U.F. and became a partner in the U.F. Government that was formed.

But betrayal of united fronts and treachery to the people are in their blood. They conspired with the Kerala Congress and the Congress and succeeded in overthrowing the U.F. Government.

Anti-People Policies

The traitor Government that was formed afterwards could carry on only with the support of the two wings of the Congress, despite all Achutha Menon's initial brave declarations that he would resign the moment he found that his

Government could not manage without Congress support. The RSP which declared that it would have nothing to do with any Congress-backed Government had to swallow its words to share the loaves and fishes without actually joining the Government.

The Kerala Congress, the party of the reactionary landlords of Central Travancore, got the opportunity as a ruling party to unleash the most violent attacks on agricultural workers. The Right Communists, rejected by the agricultural workers and seeking vengeance on them, joined hands with the murderous landlords and the police was ordered to give all protection to them. Agricultural workers were murdered in cold blood, many were beaten and maimed for life. Thousands were arrested and illegally kept in lock-ups and tortured — lock-ups again began to echo with the screams of innocent workers. This Government set up a new record in lathi-charges and police firings. The parties of the ruling front let loose their goondas to liquidate their political opponents specially the supporters of the CPI(M). The Muslim League goondaism in Madai is only the latest instalment of this criminal campaign. Agricultural workers had to be killed, people tortured and political opponents exterminated because this Government led by the Right Communists was pledged to use every moment in office to serve the employers and landlords and all the reactionary vested interests in the State.

Such a Government of betrayal and treachery could not last and it has not lasted. All the constitutional chicanery, all their perfidy, will not enable them to cling on to office. The people of Kerala do not want their care-taking and are determined to kick them out. Sans tears, sans honour, Achutha Menon and his gang will have to go. Nothing can save them from the wrath of the people—not even the Indira Congress Centre.

The Anti-Communist Strategy of Ruling Congress Party*

M. Basavapunnaiah

The ruling Congress headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi, which had unfurled the flag of revolt against the Syndicate and the political line and alliances it had projected just a year ago, is revealing its true class colours with astonishing speed. It is emerging nakedly as an essentially anti-democratic and anti-Communist force, notwithstanding its differences with the Syndicate regarding the manner, methods and forms of struggle in pursuing the anti-democratic and anti-Communist crusade.

The entire monopolist controlled Press and its paid pen-pushers who initially poured contempt and ridicule on the leadership of Indira Gandhi for her anti-Syndicate stances and measures such as the nationalisation of banks and the splitting of the Congress in opposition to the leaders of the Syndicate, are, now, busy extolling to the skies Indira Gandhi and her strategy of building an anti-CPI(M) alliance and her "achievements" as in Kerala and West Bengal. They are eulogising it more or less as a master strategy to beat down the Syndicate alliance on the one hand and the united fronts headed by the CPI(M) on the other and are projecting the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government as the saviour of the country from the present "troubles and turmoil".

Anti-Communist Front

Some political parties and groups which betrayed and deserted the anti-Congress united fronts and jumped on the

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bandwagon of the ruling Congress party are complimenting themselves on their treacherous role, and are extremely jubilant at what they are supposed to have achieved, namely, the 'isolation' of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The Right Communist Party which has been playing the role of cat's paw of the reactionary ruling classes, is proudly parading itself as the ideological leader of this anti-CPI(M) alliance.

The leaders of the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government, emboldened by the initial victories scored against the Syndicate rivals and encouraged by the pyrrhic successes in blowing up the U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, are now embarking on forging an open and full-fledged anti-Communist front, chiefly directed against the CPI(M) and the democratic unity forged around it. The crafty moves and shabby manoeuvres by the ruling Congress in Kerala and West Bengal provide complete confirmation of this.

The question that arises is, what fate awaits this simultaneous two-front battle, one against the Syndicate alliance and another against the united democratic movement headed by the CPI(M), what objective basis exists for its success or otherwise and with what pernicious political results?

A brief analysis and assessment of the political developments during the last three years since the Fourth General Elections, and in particular the events of the last one year, provides the answer to this question, if only one is objective and realistic in his analysis and judgment.

Not Easily Possible

In the first place, it has been irrefutably recorded by history that the Congress party which could unite behind it the overwhelming majority of the bourgeois-landlord classes and hold its monopoly sway over the State and Government in India for the last twenty three years, has lost that unifying capacity and monopoly hold. This was amply demonstrated by the results of the Fourth General Elections—reflecting the widespread mass discontent due to the anti-people policies

of the Congress of building capitalism in alliance with landlordism and collaboration with foreign monopoly capital, and the consequent economic crisis that has afflicted the country.

Secondly, it was this economic crisis and loss of the Congress party's hold on as many as eight States of the Indian Union, besides a drastic reduction of its majority in the Lok Sabha, that led to the aggravation of the inner-party crisis and split in the Congress party, followed by the political somersaults of several democratic anti-Congress parties who, deserting the anti-Congress united fronts, have chosen to get on one or the other bandwagons of the Syndicate and Indira Gandhi Congress alliances.

Thirdly, the basic causes behind these political developments being what they are, namely, the developing economic crisis, the intensification of the class contradictions and struggles, and the growing discontent with the Congress among the people which was crystallising in powerful anti-Congress united movements and fronts of parties, it is not easily possible for either the Congress party or its two wings to unite the bourgeois-landlord classes and to rally behind them the majority of the masses, as could be done before 1967. When there are powerful economic-political factors behind all these divisions and splits in the ruling classes and their political parties, leading to the projection of two bourgeois political lines and formation of two rival alliances against the revolutionary working class and the democratic movement, no schemes of "grand alliances" and "mini-fronts", have any chance of being durable. Every such effort and its seeming success, in turn are bound to encounter newer divisions and disintegration of the exploiting classes, in face of the growing mass radicalisation and increasing assertion of working class leadership over the democratic, revolutionary movement of the people.

In this connection, it may be relevant to remind our readers of what the C.C. of the CPI(M), commenting on the slogan of National Coalition Government put forward by sections of the Congress, Swatantra and Jana Sangh leaders

immediately following the 1967 General Elections, had observed:

“There is a whole historical process how parties such as Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the like-minded had to be formed and developed. The bulk of these parties at one time or the other were in the Congress fold, and they deserted the Congress. The objective and subjective conditions that led to this process have not disappeared, all of a sudden. The same are coming up against this nice and neat plan of the bourgeois ideologies, at every stage, and are making the task not as easy as some ‘wise men’ among these parties imagine.”

The C.C. statement added, “if the Swatantra and Jana Sangh parties in their craze for sharing power with the Congress and in their anxiety to save the rule of the bourgeois-landlord Congress succeed in realizing the slogan of National Coalition with the Congress party, and if the Congress leadership falls for it, that, surely, is not going to save the bourgeois-landlord classes from their disunity and disintegration. It, in its turn, will give birth to still more differences and disunity among these classes, and probably, on a much higher political plane than at present.” (*New Situation and Party's Tasks*, pp 77-78)

Events Confirm CPI(M) Analysis

Events during the last three years, in the last one year in particular, completely confirm this assessment. The high-sounding slogan of National Coalition Government, the tall talk of “grand alliance”, all the conspiracies against the anti-Congress U.F. Governments the shameless toppling operations of these Governments etc., instead of achieving the reactionary unity and united front of the ruling classes and their proteges, have only further intensified and deepened the division among them.

The very mooted question of these alliances had on the one hand resulted in the split of the Congress party and on the other, created deep differences and divisions among all

other political parties which are being lured into the two opposing bourgeois alliances led by the two wings of the split Congress.

The Syndicate Congress and its proposed alliance is not only considerably discredited politically among the people, but the parties of the Syndicate alliance are themselves becoming shy of openly and aggressively championing their slogan of alliance, as was done a year ago. The Syndicate alliance is placed in such a ridiculous position in States like Kerala and West Bengal that it has to tamely line up behind the Indira Gandhi Congress and its mini-front allies, losing its independent identity with nothing but a nuisance value. Defeats and loss of deposits in several by-elections by the Syndicate and its allies during the last six months or so have shattered its morale considerably. Besides, there is the terrible embarrassment it is caught in because of the outbreak of anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat, Bihar and Maharashtra and the role played by the Jana Sangh and its accomplices in these riots. The Syndicate's rabid anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism which goes to the point of applauding U.S. aggression in Cambodia and its support to the U.S. war against the Vietnamese and Laotian peoples are causing resentment even among certain bourgeois circles which consider it beneficial to play on the U.S. Soviet rivalries instead of placing themselves at the exclusive mercy of the U.S. imperialists.

Such, in short, is the Syndicate's political line and its projected alliance, which has not been able to make much headway so far. But the dangerous character of its political line and the potential counter-revolutionary menace of its projected alliance with the Swatantra and Jana Sangh cannot be under-estimated by the revolutionary working class and democratic movement of our country.

Ruling Congress Performance

Coming to the balance-sheet of the performance of the Indira Gandhi Congress, its Government at the Centre and in several other States, it is a fact that it had scored some initial victories against the Syndicate and its political line,

by concentrating its main fire on the pro-communal aspect of the Syndicate alliance, besides capitalising on the bank nationalisation step and indulging in general demagoguery of democracy and Socialism.

It has also succeeded in rallying behind its anti-Marxist mini-front strategy certain political parties such as the Bangla Congress, Right Communist Party, Kerala Muslim League, ISP, SUC, and RSP, and to engineer the toppling of CPI(M) based U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, United Fronts and U.F. Governments with whose solid support alone Indira Gandhi's wing of the Congress could defeat the Syndicate, Presidential candidate and secure the initial, firm foot-hold to fight its rival Congress wing.

Further, utilising the levers of power at the Centre, the ruling Congress party stalled the attempt of the Syndicate allies to capture the State Governments of U.P. and Bihar, and has succeeded in installing the BKD-Congress coalition Government in U.P. and the Congress-led coalition in Bihar. These victories have gone to the head of its leaders, emboldening them to unleash a police-goonda terror regime in Kerala and to impose a Governor's rule of repression and suppression on the people of West Bengal.

The ready acceptance of the advice of the mini-front Chief Minister of Kerala to dissolve the Kerala Assembly, the obstinate rejection of the demand for dissolution of the defunct West Bengal Assembly and holding of fresh elections, the hectic attempts to forge a Congress-led front in Kerala and the formation of a Congress-supported mini-front Government in West Bengal, etc., highlight some of the pronounced reactionary features of the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government and it has pushed the struggle against the anti-Congress democratic forces headed by the CPI(M) and its class allies to the forefront, taking its victory over the Syndicate for granted.

The glib talk of Indira Gandhi about the fight against monopolists, for land reforms, Socialistic measures, etc., stands exposed, the activities of the Central Government

and several State Governments led by her wing during the last one year, having amply demonstrated how the basic policies of the Indira Gandhi Government are in no way different from the anti-people policies pursued by the Congress Government over all its twenty-three years' rule.

If these anti-people policies and the bankrupt path of capitalist development in alliance with feudal and semi-feudal landlordism and collaboration with foreign monopoly capital had led to the present economic crisis and consequent split in the Indian ruling classes into two political alliances, one led by the Syndicate Congress and the other by the Indira Gandhi Congress, how can these two alliances, basically pursuing the same bankrupt anti-people policies, hope of either uniting all the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes or rallying the different political parties behind them!

Enough indications are there that Indira Gandhi's mini-front strategy, are wrong, awaits the same fate as the Syndicate's strategy of so-called grand alliance. The corrosive conflicts and contradictions among the opportunist allies of the anti-Marxist mini-front and its Government in Kerala has already led to the scuttling of the Government, and the stage is set for a dog fight among the mini-front partners and their Congress patrons regarding the distribution of seats and deciding the exact share of power that each constituent of the anti-Marxist gang up should have in the event of a victory of the Congress led front in the ensuing elections.

In West Bengal, the anti-Marxist eight party front has so far neither dared to form a mini-front Government with Congress co-operation as in Kerala, nor can it resist the demand raised by the CPI(M) and its allies for the dissolution of the Assembly and the holding of a fresh poll. The Bangla Congress ally of the eight party combine has its face turned towards the ruling Congress party. But some other constituents like the Forward Bloc and SUC, have been proclaiming that

they cannot have any truck with either of the Congress wings, directly or indirectly. These parties, despite their anti-Marxist stand, realise that the masses in West Bengal will severely punish those parties that gang up with the ruling Congress.

Allies Are Arch Reactionaries

This is not all. The ruling Congress and its Government led by Indira Gandhi, notwithstanding its anti-Syndicate fight and public postures of democracy and Socialism, is a party and Government around which several arch-reactionary forces have rallied. From the BKD headed by the notorious politician Charan Singh to the Master Tara Singh Akali faction, every opportunist group is being purchased by the Congress, through the distribution and promise of patronage from the Centre. Its unprincipled and politically immoral tactics have gone so far as to straightaway recruit hundreds of Shiva Sena activists into the Congress party in Bombay. It does not hesitate to hob-nob with the Swatantra Party in Gujarat or with the separatist leaders of the so-called Telangana Samiti. Its top leaders, who find no other way in Kerala and West Bengal except joining hands with the Kerala Muslim League and the ramshackle Right Communist Party, are extremely worried about whether this lining up would not adversely affect their fortunes in the rest of the States and the entire country,

Thus, the nice and neat plans of a two-front war, one against the Syndicate alliance and the other against the Marxist-led democratic forces, with a double-faced policy and unprincipled alliances, are coming up against the class realities at every step.

One fact is evident, and that is the ruling classes have been forced to realise that the days of one-party Congress monopoly rule has ended never to return, and bourgeois-landlord rule can be perpetuated only by forging either a so-called Syndicate alliance or Indira Gandhi Congress alliance, neither of which, of course, can be easily formed nor can they provide a way out of the all-sided and ever-deepening economic-political crisis enveloping the country.

Such in brief is the essence of the two bourgeois lines of the Syndicate and Indira Gandhi Congress.

Revisionists Will be Disproved Again

The crucial question before the workers, peasants and other democratic classes and political parties that represent them is whether, bamboozled by the barrage of bourgeois propaganda and blinded by anti-Communist prejudices, they will toe one or the other Congress-led political lines and alliances they have projected or take a forthright stand against both, nailing them down as essentially the old bankrupt line of building capitalism in alliance with landlords and collaboration with foreign monopoly capital.

The CPI(M) together with its close allies, is determine to pursue an independent class line, the line of uncompromising opposition to both the Congress-led lines and alliances and advocate a popular democratic revolutionary line.

From the experience of the struggle between the two political lines during the last one year, the Dangeites, true to their class collaborationist politics, draw one lesson, while the CPI(M) draws exactly the opposite lesson.

The Dangeite party, in the happy company of some bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties under the hegemony of Indira Gandhi's Congress and Government, thinks that it is forging the great and grand National Democratic Front of its dreams, successfully isolating the CPI(M).

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) holds the view that the Right Communist Party has successfully liquidated everything of its Communism except its sign-board, and the CPI(M) has been left in 'isolation' to carry the banner of revolutionary opposition which it would proudly carry, no matter what ordeals await it.

The coming days and months will further clarify the issues, once again disproving the Dangeites' thesis that we are isolated, just as they were disproved in 1962 and 1965 on the same score.

Marxist-Leninist Teachings on the Judiciary and Law*

B.T. Ranadive

The Supreme Court Judges delivering their judgment in the EMS Case have opined that considering judges and the judiciary to be part of the class apparatus of the State is no part of the teachings of Marx-Engels-Lenin. Since this is not a question of the interpretation of the Indian laws under the Constitution, one is entitled to tell the Judges that they lack even elementary knowledge of Marxism.

Everyone in the least familiar with the Marxist theory—Historical Materialism—knows that Marx includes all legal institutions including the institution of courts in the superstructure of society and considers them as reflecting the class conditions and class interests; he regards the law and courts as instruments of class justice or class domination no less than the police or the army.

Marx's main contribution in this respect was to show that the ideological products of society—its philosophical, religious, ethical, legal and political ideas—were the results of changing class relations, new conditions of social production and that the ruling ideas were the ideas of the ruling class. He described the "independence" of the judges in bourgeois society as sham independence and also explained under what circumstances the concept arose and how it was all along a concept to protect the rising bourgeois rule. If on every occasion, Marx-Engels-Lenin did not refer specifically to courts and judges it was because they directly attacked

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the legal system and principles which the judges were to faithfully implement and interpret. The very fact that the judges are not at liberty to coin their own law, that they are bound by the class law enshrined in the system or the Constitution, makes them just a class agency.

Marx On Power Of Courts

How the Supreme Court Judges themselves are bound down by the limitations of the Indian law is seen from their judgment on the Nationalization of Banking Ordinance. They upheld the "right to property" enshrined in the Constitution, sanctioned sufficient compensation. Their verdict disappointed progressive opinion in the country who saw no reason why so much compensation should be given to the bankers and to the shareholders. But according to the Court, they had to follow strictly the provisions of the Constitution regarding the right to property.

The judgement in the EMS case says, "In no writing, which we have seen or which has been brought to our notice, Marx or Engels has said what the appellant quotes as saying. It will be noticed that in all these writings there is not that mention of judges which the appellant has made." Marx and Engels knew, the judgement observed, that the administration of justice must change with law and change in society. There was no needs to castigate the judges as such, beyond saying that "the judicial system is a prop of the State."

It is true that Marx, Engels and Lenin generally confined themselves to laying bare the role of the judicial system and judiciary under the class rule of the bourgeoisie. But it is not correct to state that they never attacked judges or courts specifically. When occasion demanded they openly charged the judges with open partisanship and a cringing attitude. Writing about a murder trial in which the police were involved and the light sentences passed on the accused, Lenin wrote, "In a word, the court did all it could to let the culprits off as lightly as possible." "But we cannot refrain from

noticing a tendency characteristic of the court of crown judges and representatives of the estates; when they try a police official they are ready to display the greatest clemency; but when they sit in judgement over an act committed against the police, as is well known, they display inexcusable severity." "With a police sergeant before it how could the court refuse him clemency." "From the ordinary human point of view, the sentences Panov drew was a mockery of justice. It reveals a cringing, servile spirit, an attempt to throw the whole blame upon the minor police officers and to shield their immediate chief with whose knowledge, approval and participation this brutal crime was committed. From the juridical point of view, the sentence is an example of the casuistry resorted to by bureaucratic judges who are themselves not far removed from police sergeants. Speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts, say the diplomats. Our jurists may say that law is given to distort the concepts of guilt and responsibility. Indeed, what refined judicial art is required to be able to reduce complicity in torture to simple insulting behaviour." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 389,390, 391)

Here is what Marx says about the power of the courts. "With the development of civil society, hence with the development of private interests into class interests, relations of right changed and acquired civilized expression: They were no longer regarded as individual, but as universal. At the same time, division of labour placed the protection of the conflicting interest of separate individuals into the hands of a few persons, whereby the barbaric enforcement of the right also disappeared. (Our emphasis) ... How closely juridical relations are linked with the development of these material forces arising from the division of labour is already clear from the historical development of juridical authority and the complaints of the feudal lords about the development of right... It was just in the epoch between the rule of the aristocracy and the rule of the bourgeoisie, when the interests of the two classes came into conflict, when trade

between the European nations began to be important, and hence international relations themselves assumed a bourgeois character, it was just at that time that the power of the courts began to be important, and under the rule of the bourgeoisie, when this broadly developed division of labour becomes absolutely essential, the power of the courts reaches its highest point. What the servants of the divisions of labour, the judges and still more the *professores juris* imagined in this connection is a matter of the greatest indifference." (Marx & Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 82.)

In short, the power of the courts arose as an instrument of bourgeois class struggle against feudal rule. It started as the instrument of bourgeois rule.

What the Paris Commune Did

Karl Marx in his description of the bourgeois State in France as an engine of repression of the working class mentions the judiciary specifically. He also again stressed the development of the modern State with the growth of the capitalist class. "The centralised State power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy and *judicature* (emphasis ours)—organs wrought after the plan of a systematic and hierarchic division of labour—originates from the day of absolute monarchy, serving nascent middle class society as a mighty weapon in its struggle against feudalism... During the subsequent regimes the Government, placed under parliamentary control—that is, under the direct control of the propertied classes became not only a hotbed of huge national debts... the State power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a public force organized for social enslavement of an engine for class despotism." (Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France", *Selected Works*, Moscow, Vol. I., pp. 516-7)

Marx's opinion about the independence of the judiciary was trenchantly expressed when the Paris Commune decided to have elected judges: "The judicial functionaries were to

be divested of that sham independence which had served to mask their abject subserviency to all succeeding Governments to which, in turn, they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of the public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable." (Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France", *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 520)

Lenin, in his "Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky", exposes the hypocrisy of "equality before law" in bourgeois society, and denounces judges, leaving no doubt about their role. "Take the fundamental laws of modern States, take their administration, take freedom of assembly, freedom of the Press, or 'equality of all citizens before the law', and you will see at every turn evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every class conscious worker is familiar... We are governed (and our State is 'knocked into shape') by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of Parliament, by *bourgeois judges* (emphasis ours)—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth which tens and hundreds of millions of people belonging to the oppressed classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their own experience..." (Lenin *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 248)

Lenin, in his "Draft programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)" wrote : "On the road to Communism through the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party, rejecting democratic slogans, completely abolishes also such *organs of bourgeois rule as the old courts* (emphasis added) and replaces them by the class courts of the workers and peasants. " (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p.131)

Again, in his "Theses and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and Dictatorship of the Proletariat" to the First Congress of the Communist International, Lenin writes: "The significance of the Commune, furthermore, lies in the fact that it endeavoured to crush, to smash to its very foundations, the bourgeois state apparatus, the bureaucratic, *judicial*, (emphasis added) military and police machine and to replace it by a

self-governing, mass workers' organization in which there was no division between legislative and executive power." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 459.)

Class Law Is Administered

The basic point that Marx and Engels repeatedly made was that the law which the judges administer is a class law ; that it is the law of the dominating exploiting class which the judges are forced to administer. The class society is held together by this law which expressed the existing relations of exploitation and no judge dares violate it. The judges must act as the instrument of administering the class law and justice must express itself as the implementation and fulfilment of that class law.

Here there is no question of the honesty, good intentions of a judge. Even the most well intentioned persons when they become judges, may not be aware that they are administering a class law. What they are taught in schools and colleges is the ideology, concepts of rights, etc., of the ruling class. These are proclaimed as eternal truths. The subjective motives of judges therefore should not be brought in this discussion.

Having shown that the State is the organ of one class to rule over another, Marx and Engels, write : "Since the State is the form in which the individuals of a ruling class assert their common interests and in which the whole civil society of an epoch is epitomised, it follows that the State mediates in the formation of all common institutions, and that the institutions receive a political form. Hence the illusion that law is based on the will, and indeed on the will, divorced from its real basis, free will. Similarly, justice in its turn is reduced to actual laws." (K. Marx, *German Ideology*, p. 80.) Law is class law and justice is implementation of this law, done according to this law.

In his preface to the Critique of Political Economy, Marx said, "The sum total of these relations of production, constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which

risers a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general."

Nailing down the class character of bourgeois law, in the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels said, "But don't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, *law* etc. (emphasis ours). Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of the existence of your class." It is the law of the exploiters that the judges are called upon to administer; justice is implementation of this law and that is why Marx and Engels declared the independence of the judges to be a sham independence.

The judges could be just only if the law was just; the judges could rise above class interests only if the law arose above class interests; the judges could be impartial only if the law was impartial as between classes. The equality before law which they have to administer is reduced in practice to equality among members of the ruling classes. This is so where class issues are involved. This should not be confused with the private suits among individuals. This is the gist of Marxist teachings. Once again, it has nothing to do with the motives of each judge. It has something to do with the entire system.

Expressing the same idea in a general form, Marx and Engels say, "The individuals who rule in these conditions, besides having to constitute their power in the form of the state, have to give their will, which is determined by these definite conditions, a universal expression as the will of the State, as law, an expression whose content is always determined by the relations of this class, as the civil and criminal law demonstrates in the clearest possible manner."

No Independent History

They sketch the development of civil law and show how it is directly influenced by the class needs of a changing society and that law like religion has no independent history apart from the developing social relations.

“Civil law develops simultaneously with private property out of the disintegration of the natural community. With the Romans the development of private property and civil law had no further industrial and commercial consequence, because their whole mode of production did not alter. With modern peoples, where the feudal community was disintegrated by industry and trade, there began with the rise of private property and civil law a new phase which was capable of further development. The very first town which carried on an extensive maritime trade in the Middle Ages, Amalfi, also developed maritime law. As soon as industry and trade developed private property further, first in Italy and later in other countries, the highly developed Roman civil law was immediately adopted again and raised to authority. When later the bourgeoisie had acquired so much power, that the princes took up its interests in order to overthrow the feudal nobility by means of the bourgeoisie, there began in all countries—in France in the sixteenth century—the real development of law, which in all countries except England proceeded on the basis of the Roman Codex. In England, too, Roman legal principles had to be introduced to further the development of civil law, (especially in the case of movable property). (It must not be forgotten that law has just as little an independent history as religion.)” (Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 80.)

The development of law at each stage expresses the needs of the class situation, that is what Marx and Engels taught. And that determines the role of the judiciary.

The celebrated principle of separation of powers— what have Marx and Engels to say about it? “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the

same time its ruling intellectual force. For instance, in an age and in a country, when royal power, aristocracy and bourgeoisie are contending for mastery and where, therefore, mastery is shared, the doctrine of the separation of powers proves to be dominant idea and is expressed as an 'eternal law.' (*The German Ideology*, p. 81.)

Engels in his "Ludwig Feurbach and the End of the Classical German Philosophy", again stressed that not only the state and public law were determined by economic relations, but also private law. He also showed how the class content of law changes with new conditions while it may continue to have the old form. The change in the content of law in this case does not appear to jurists as due to new class conditions but due to juridical decisions, on expansion of the concept of law and justice. "If the State and public law are determined by economic relations, so, too, of course is private law, which indeed in essence only sanctions the existing economic relations between individuals, which are normal in the given circumstances. The form in which this happens, can, however, vary considerably. It is possible, as happened in England, in harmony with the whole national development, to retain in the main the forms of the old feudal laws while giving them a bourgeois content; in fact directly recording a bourgeois meaning into the feudal name. But also, as happened in Western Continental Europe, Roman Law, the first world law of a commodity producing society, with its unsurpassably fine elaboration of all the legal relations of simple commodity owners (of buyers and sellers, debtors and creditors, contracts, obligations, etc.) can be taken as the foundation. In which case, for the benefit of a still petty-bourgeois and semi-feudal society, it can either be reduced to the level of such a society simply through juridical practice (common law) or, with the help of allegedly enlightened moralising jurists, it can be worked into a special code of law to correspond with such social level—a code which in these circumstances will be a bad one also from the legal standpoint, (for instance, Prussian Landrecht). In which case,

however, after a great bourgeois revolution, it is also possible for such a class law code of bourgeois society, as the French Code Civil, to be worked out on the basis of this same Roman law. If, therefore, bourgeois legal rules merely express the economic life conditions of society, in legal form, then they can do so well or ill according to circumstances."

What about the independence of the judiciary from the executive? No doubt, written Constitutions of some bourgeois States as well as historical traditions provide for independence of the judiciary. Even then this independence is often formal. The judges are appointed by the executive, often the appointment is frankly a question of political patronage. The fact that sometimes legislation is struck down, executive actions are declared *ultra vires* by the courts, does show certain freedom of the courts vis-a-vis the executive. But all this is within the framework of the existing Constitution, existing law which is a class law. The point which Marx makes is that in the final analysis the judges are not independent of the class rule, they are functionaries of the class rule, the most liberal and well-meaning judges cannot go beyond that class law which oppresses the exploited. Once again, the question of the motive of this or that judge does not arise.

The development in England where the feudal form of law was retained to push in bourgeois control which led to the illusion about the self-expanding character of law, was however not fortuitous. It was the direct result of the balance of class forces obtaining in England at the time. In *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, Engels writes: "The Great French Revolution was the third uprising of the bourgeoisie, but the first that had entirely cast off the religious cloak, and was fought out on undisguised political lines; it was the first, too, that was really fought out up to the destruction of one of the combatants, the aristocracy, and complete triumph of the other, the bourgeoisie. In England, the continuity of pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary institutions and *the compromise between landlords and capitalists* (emphasis ours) found its expression in the continuity of juridical precedents

and in the religious preservation of the feudal forms of the law. In France, the Revolution constituted a complete breach with the traditions of the past; it cleared out the very last vestiges of feudalism and created in the Code Civil a masterly adaptation of the old Roman Law—the almost perfect expression of the juridical relations corresponding to the economic stage called by Marx the production of commodities—to modern capitalist conditions...” (Marx-Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 107)

No Mechanical Understanding

The question of the class character of law and justice under bourgeois rule should not be understood mechanically. It does not mean that in every individual case before a court the verdict must go against the worker or downtrodden. It does not mean that a judge has no latitude, no liberty in interpreting the law and that dissimilar verdicts may not be had from different judges on the basis of identical circumstances.

The bourgeois society has to be run so that production continues unintermittently and capitalists continue to earn profits. For this purpose, even the members of the ruling class are expected to observe certain norms, absence of which will bring the society into danger. The capitalists are not allowed to maintain their private armies or shoot down striking workmen at their sweet will. That privilege is reserved for the State which acts on behalf of the capitalists. Individual members who violate this or any other law and thereby prejudice the common good of the exploiters may be punished. The workers may gain some small concessions under the law from the courts. But in any major battle for the defence of working class interests, against exploitation, when class is pitted against class, the verdict goes against the workers. The right to work is never upheld but the right to earn profits is freely admitted. The law and order, its execution is upheld by the judiciary and this law and order is only used in the interest of the exploiting class.

Such are the class realities behind the development of law, realities to which bourgeois jurists and judges are blind.

The difficulty of the bourgeois judges and lawyers in understanding that justice and law are determined by class relationship was seen by the founders of Communism. In his letter to Schmidt, dated October 27, 1908, Engels said "The reflections of economic relations as legal principles is necessarily also a topsy-turvy one; it goes on without the person who is acting being conscious of it ; the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* propositions, whereas they are really only economic reflexes; so everything is upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this inversion, which, so long as it remains, forms what we call ideological conception, reacts in its turn on the economic basis..." Again, "It is indeed among professional politicians, theorists of public law and jurists of private law that the connection with economic facts gets lost for fair. Since in each particular case, the economic facts must assume the form of juristic motives, in order to receive legal sanction; and since in so doing, consideration has to be given to the whole legal system already in operation, the juristic form is, in consequence, made everything and the economic content nothing. Public law and private law are treated as independent spheres, each having its own historical development, each being capable of and needing a systematic presentation by the consistent elimination of all inner contradictions." (Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", *Selected Works*, Vol II. p. 397)

Engels correctly points out that the law does not bluntly reflect economic realities or class relations.

Especially modern bourgeois law must in appearance present itself as a law based on equality. The class relationship must be legally expressed as based on equality of citizens. There should be no inner contradictions in this legal system which might expose its class character or render it ineffective to defend the class aims. Besides, the law has to be trimmed from time to time, according to circumstances, especially according to the needs of the ruling classes, or

according to pressure exercised by the oppressed classes to whom concessions have often to be made. Engels also pointed out the differences in laws in different countries. For instance, the law of inheritance cannot be explained by economic relations. Past history and other factors are often responsible for them. Nevertheless, the main determining element is the class relationship. And since it is not crudely expressed, it has to be expressed in terms of equal rights for all and changes have to be made, the illusion is created that the sources of change are the bourgeois judges or lawyers. This of course, satisfies the vanity of the judges and lawyers alike, and creates an illusion of progress and independence. "In a modern State, law must not only correspond to the general economic conditions and be its expression which does not, owing to inner contradictions, reduce itself to nought. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class — this in itself would offend the conception of right' ... Thus to a great extent the course of the 'development of right' only consists first, in the attempt to do away with contradictions arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in the system by the influence and pressure of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions. I am speaking only of civil law for the moment." (Letter to Schmidt, Marx- Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 493.4)

Part of The State Apparatus

According to Marx and Engels, the judiciary is a part of the State apparatus — that engine of class repression. This can be seen from what they have written about courts.

Apart from this Marx and Engels have shown that the entire legal system, its principles, the men who dispense justice under it, only serve the interests of class domination.

The independence of the judiciary is not always true even in relation to the executive. It is never true in relation to the class which dominates society, which rules society. The men of the judiciary are trained in bourgeois law, they are bourgeois jurists and when they are called upon to administer the law, they give exact weight and fulfil the real class implication of the law—this is what Marx has taught.

The Judges of the Supreme Court have no doubt the right to reject Marxism. In fact, they would not have been any where near their high office had they been suspected of accepting a Marxian outlook. But their interpretation of Marx only reveals their deep ignorance. Marxism-Leninism is the world outlook of the international working class. It is the science of Socialist revolution. Parties adhering to Marxism-Leninism have liberated one-third of the world. The Governments of one-third of the world are led by these parties. Generalisations regarding it require deep study and a capacity to adopt the proletarian outlook.

Marxism-Leninism teaches that law, judiciary, are all part of the State apparatus to dominate the exploited class ; that legal relations express class relations; that the concept of law changes to the needs of the ruling class and judges are only appointed to interpret the law, apply it to concrete case in the interest of the ruling classes. The notion that law has an independent history apart from class relations, that it is the jurists or judges who evolve legal principles from the void by sheer power of intellect, is a figment of imagination.

Attacking the idealistic nonsensical conception in connection with another problem, Marx and Engels wrote: "This 'cranium' system is as old as the Egyptian pyramids, with which it has many similarities, and as new as the Prussian monarchy, in the capital of which has recently been resurrected, as young as ever. The idealistic Dalai Lamas have this much in common with their real counterpart : they would like to persuade themselves that the world from which they derive their subsistence could not continue without their holy excrement," (*The German Ideology*, p. 601)

New Forms of Resistance in Rural West Bengal*

The peasants in West Bengal have been able to defend their gains against the offensive of the jotdars and the police launched after the fall of the U.F. Government in March last. They, on the whole, not only kept and ploughed the *khas* and *benami* lands which were occupied during the U.F. regime, but also resisted evictions, won rises in wages and occupied some more lands. The peasants forged widespread unity amongst all sections of the rural poor and worked out new forms of struggle against the class enemies. The Executive Council of the West Bengal Kisan Sabha came to this conclusion at its meeting on July 29 on the basis of reports of the movement over the last few months from all the districts.

The jotdars went into the offensive to wrest back lands as soon as the U.F. Government fell, and the police waited in the wings to beat and arrest peasants in the name of law and order whenever jotdars and their men were able to provoke incidents. The peasants, however, did not flinch at all. They resisted attacks of jotdars' toughs and, where necessary, faced police lathis and arrests. In a negligible number of cases where the odds were overwhelmingly against them the lands were wrested from them, but, on the whole, the lakhs of bighas of lands which were occupied last year were held.

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Broad-Based Unity, New Forms of Struggle

Beating back this reactionary offensive was possible because of the broad-based unity which was built among the peasants under the leadership of the Kisan Sabha, and because of the consequent isolation of the jotdars. The poor peasants, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers were drawn together in the movement and they marched shoulder to shoulder.

Strengthened with this unity, the rural poor found new forms of movement to meet the offensive of jotdars and police. The jotdars who reconciled themselves to the taking away of *benami* lands were left in peace. But those who wanted to grab the land again had to be tackled. When negotiations failed, mass demonstrations in front of jotdars' houses, gheraos, and boycotts proved effective.

The jotdars have guns and hired men with various weapons. But more often, they realized that using these would be suicidal against massive gatherings.

Boycotts meant complete stoppage of work in fields as well as in houses by the hired poor. Reports from different districts showed that in boycotts lands remained unworked, cattle remained unattended and family members of the jotdars were compelled to do the chores, and various odd jobs in and around the house were not done because even the maid-servants would not come to work. The impact was so overpowering that many jotdars were worn out. They conceded the demands.

Starting court cases on false or flimsy charges with the help of the police has been a common method of jotdars to harass peasants. Many such cases which had been filed have not been withdrawn. In a village in Burdwan district, the court did not permit the withdrawal of a case nor was bail given to the accused, but the jotdar who earlier filed the case had to concede the demand that all expenses for defending the case and also the maintenance expenses of the families of the accused peasants would be borne by him. In another

instance in Murshidabad district, the jotdar agreed to bear expenses of an appeal case now pending with a higher court.

Such organized mass pressures compelled jotdars to settle disputes on land, stop eviction of crop-sharers and to restore or raise wage-rates of agricultural workers. The police could not intervene.

Some jotdars who invited the police to set up camps in the compounds of their houses, had to agree to rescind their requests to the police. They agreed to give loans at reasonable rates of interest. There were even some cases where they agreed to give paddy loans to the poor for maintenance during the lean months free of interest.

Bitter Struggles and Deaths

It was not, however, smooth sailing everywhere. Bitter struggles started. There were casualties in skirmishes and even a few deaths occurred.

For instance, in the district of 24-Parganas, centering over an island in the Piyali river, four skirmishes broke out in a stretch of only ten days and now the lands are with the peasants. In the same district, in Bhangar and other areas, lethal weapons including firearms were used in fightings. In Sandeshkhali in the same district, the peasants had to be on continuous alert and had to march in repeated processions to stall isolated terroristic attacks on peasants or to get the release of arrested cadres.

Many peasants and Kisan Sabha workers were injured in these attacks by jotdars and their goondas. Between July 1 and 21 in three weeks alone, five Kisan Sabha workers were murdered. Comrade Sudhangsu Datta, who was President of the Haroa Kisan Sabha in 24-Parganas district was murdered. In Barasat sub-division of the same district, Comrade Aulad Hussain was waylaid and killed at night. In Burdwan district, an agricultural labourer, Comrade Gobinda Let, was murdered in Rayan village. And Comrades Kanua Burman and Bijal Deshi were murdered in West Dinajpur district.

for long even with beatings and firings by the CRP. The jotdars will have to come to terms with the peasants as many have already done. And the movement is spreading and new bases are being built. The present naked repression by the CRP and the police will actually hasten the process.

That the political consciousness of the peasant masses is increasing very rapidly was apparent from the way in which they participated in the general strike of July 14. In every district, where there was any semblance of a peasant movement, the poor cultivators and agricultural labourers ceased work. Ploughs did not move on the fields that day. In fact, the literal translation of the Bengali slogan that was raised was, "Plough-Strike". The strike was a stupendous success and the organizers of the Kisan Sabha said that they had never seen such a thing. The peasants did not stay at home either. Processions were organized and these went round the villages with red flags and popularized the demands for which the general strike was called.

The Kisan Sabha State Council noted with satisfaction that the repression let loose under President's rule had not demoralized the peasants at all. On the contrary, they are becoming steeled in this ordeal. The Council is confident that despite the new offensive of the Congress Government to restore the privileges of the rural vested interests, the peasants will hold to their own. The march of the peasants cannot be barred by lathis and rifles.

Communiqué of Meeting

A Press statement on the meeting of the Executive Council of the Sabha reads:

An extended meeting of the Executive Council of the West Bengal Kisan Sabha was held on July 29, Comrade Harekrishna Konar presiding. The Council heard reports from all districts about the heroic struggles of peasants and agricultural labourers to defend their gains against combined jotdar-police attacks. It noted that brutal repression had been let loose on peasants in every district. Jotdars are helped in

every way; many peasants have been murdered, hundreds have been wounded and more than 6,000 arrested. It was also noted that brutal attacks were perpetrated by the CRP.

The Council was glad to note that in spite of such attacks, the peasants were able to successfully defend their gains. The attempts of jotdars and police to evict peasants to dispossess them of the surplus or *benami* lands (3½ to four lakh acres) that they occupied during the U.F. period have totally failed. On the other hand, more than 3,500 acres of *benami* lands have been newly occupied during this period. Millions of peasants and agricultural labourers have shown exemplary courage and spirit of resistance. Police wanted to arrest many thousands, but failed to arrest the majority. Peasants responded actively to the strike call of July 14 by stopping ploughing.

The Council noted that the Central Government, instead of bowing down to the people, have become more desperate and have intensified police attacks. Jadavpur and Bijur (Burdwan) are dangerous symptoms. This new situation demands that the peasants strengthen and intensify the resistance movement. Lands and crops will have to be defended at all costs; anti-hoarding struggles will have to be intensified. The existence of this reactionary Government that depends on police terror, is a serious danger to the people and to democracy. It must not be allowed to have its way and early election will have to be forced on it. The Council fully supported the programme of movement from August last week as announced by the Six-Party Committee. A resolution was passed accordingly.

The Council noted that the land-grab movement of the Right communists had been practically a flop and was nothing but a political stunt. Under the cover of the land-grab slogan, they, in some cases, tried to help particular jotdars as in Basirhat, Sonarpur, etc., in some cases, they tried to evict bargadars or poor peasants who occupied the lands last year and gave the lands to others; in some cases they tried to grab lands of small peasants and falsely accused CPI(M)

leaders who had nothing to do with the lands. In some other cases, they came into conflict with Bangla Congress jotdars and tried to beat a retreat. Real land occupation was negligible. The Council appealed to peasants following the Right Communists to see the real face of this game and promised full support in real anti-jotdar struggles.

The Council in a separate resolution paid homage to the martyrs killed by the police and jotdars. it condemned CRP brutalities in Jadavpur and Bijur (Burdwan) and demanded immediate withdrawal of the CRP.

It greeted Madame Binh who was halting at Calcutta on July 30.

On the problem of new refugees it demanded adequate relief and measures for rehabilitation and warned both the refugees and local people to be on guard against communal forces. It expressed anxiety at the paucity of relief measures in drought-hit Purulia and Bankura and demanded adequate relief.

After the Council meeting was over, the Governor on July 30 has announced the dissolution of the Assembly. The Kisan Sabha feels that it is the first round victory of the people. But the people will have to continue the struggle so long as early election date is not declared and CRP atrocities are not stopped.

Congress Government's Terror Tactics : What They Portend For the Future*

M. Basavapunnaiah

The ruling Congress party and its Central Government, repeatedly defeated and frustrated in all their opportunist, political manoeuvres and dirty conspiracies to isolate the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and beat down the democratic revolutionary movement in West Bengal during the last five months of President's rule, have embarked upon a perilous path, the path of naked use of State violence to crush the surging tide of people's movements.

Since the imposition of Presidents' rule, the police repression was mainly concentrated on the peasantry and in the rural districts of West Bengal.

A new phase of intensified armed police repression on the working class had been initiated at Durgapur in the first week of August 1970, and is being relentlessly pursued since then. The threats hurled against the State Government employees' strike, the strike-breaking tactics employed against the West Bengal secondary teachers' week-long protest cease-work, the imposition of Section 144 throughout the State and the virtual banning of the celebration of Martyrs' Day on August 31, the arrogant display of armed might through truckloads of police and army parading on the streets of Calcutta, the curfews imposed on several district towns, the resorting to repeated shootings and lathi-charges to intimidate and terrorise the people, and the arrests of hundreds of trade union and kisan leaders and activists of the Communist Party

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of India (Marxist), are what people are witnessing in the month of August, particularly in the latter half of it.

The State of West Bengal is thus made to look like a besieged and occupied territory where lawless law of the gun and the lathi rules the roost—all under the hypocritical cry of restoring the so-called law and order, the order of unbridled exploitation of the landlords and the monopolists and the law that legalizes and sanctifies this class plunder and loot of the common people.

The Bogey of Law and Order

If at all there exists the problem of law and order in West Bengal, it is primarily the making of bourgeois-landlord Congress misrule over decades, which woefully failed to solve any single social problem, and created mass misery, poverty and unemployment. It is the Congress party and its Central Government that are responsible for further aggravating it by its deliberate refusal to accept the democratic verdict of the people and its incitement of the vested interests for revolt against the non-Congress U.F. Government, by its foul toppling operations, and by its undemocratic rejection of the popular demand for a mid-term poll. Similarly, a part of the so-called law and order problem is also due to deliberate engineering of it by the Central Government and by its agency of Governor's regime in order to use it as a plea to perpetuate President's rule in the State.

Who does not know that there are several Congress ruled States where law and order is no better and far worse than in West Bengal, but such alarming cries are not raised by the Congress leaders? Or, who does not know that this bogey of law and order is always raised whenever an anti-Congress State Government led by Communists come into existence, such as the 1957-59 Kerala Government, and Kerala and West Bengal U.F. Governments since 1967? It is strange and ridiculous for the Congress leaders and their apologists to shamelessly argue that law and order is unsafe under a democratically elected and duly constituted Government, and

that it will be safe in the custody of hardened ICS and IAS bureaucrats under President's rule!

The spokesmen of the Government, the monopolist-controlled Press and the political parties like the Right Communists who have opted for the role of political pimps of the ruling Congress party and Government, are shamelessly hilarious of this police terror rule. They do not conceal their glee since all this repression is principally directed against the CPI(M), and the powerful democratic movement that it is proudly heading in the State. All these hostile political forces in their frenzied and purblind anti-Communism—its specific and concrete form in our country assuming at present hatred against the CPI(M), declaring it as their principal political enemy—are totally oblivious of the historical truth that aggressive anti-Communist attacks are only a prelude to an attack on democracy all along the line, paving the perilous road to fascist dictatorial regime. They also ignore the fact that it was precisely such anti-people policies and repressive methods in the past that had brought the ruling Congress party into the present sad plight among the people of West Bengal. They blissfully forget the past experience that the seeming victories for the policy of police repression proved illusory and deceptive and failed to stem the tide of steadily surging popular struggle against the oppressive bourgeois-landlord regime.

Truth Behind Durgapur Attack

The Government and its Right Communist strike-breakers were mischievously propagating the lie that the steel workers' strike of Durgapur was politically motivated to subserve the partisan interests of the CPI(M), and no issue of trade union movement and workers' interests was involved in the strike. This lie was intended to shield the Government's attack on the Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union of Durgapur, by arresting its leaders on cooked up charges, the attack planned to disrupt and destroy this advanced post of the steel workers' movement in the country which is acting as the militant vanguard in the public sector undertakings, and forms a powerful branch of the T.U. movement in West Bengal. The

indisputable truth is it was the Government and its Right Communist agents that hatched the political conspiracy to launch their foul attack on Durgapur workers and their union, as a prelude to the attack on the entire militant trade union movement of West Bengal. It is a politically motivated attack with the deliberate aim of weakening and undermining the powerful democratic movement and the CPI(M) which is not only valiantly fighting for the day-to-day demands of the workers, peasants and other oppressed employees but also boldly leading the struggle to end President's rule and to hold democratic elections in the State. Like thief calling thief, these conspirators slander that the strike is politically motivated for serving the partisan interests of the CPI(M), while in truth it is the class politics of perpetuating President's rule and denying of the demand for elections that were behind this fiendish attack on Durgapur.

They shamelessly gloat over the violent suppression of Durgapur workers' strike and its withdrawal after eleven days of dogged resistance; they console themselves by issuing blatantly false statements that the three days' successful strike of the State Government employees was a total failure; and they express their sorrow and disappointment that the CPI(M) and its allies refused to walk into the Government's trap by frontal defiance of the ban orders on the Martyrs' Day and go in for a head on clash with the police and the army. They go on issuing provocative statements that the "bluff of the CPI(M) was called", that the CPI(M)'s programme for the Martyrs' Day "was an unmitigated flop", that "the CPI(M) euphoria is deflated", that "strike at Durgapur has failed", that the whole month of August was a month of reversals, retreats and ignoble defeats for the CPI(M) and the workers' and peasants' democratic movement it was leading, and that "the CPI(M) is thoroughly isolated", etc.

Why They Fear Holding The Election

If all this is true and not fabricated falsehood, intended only for the morale-boosting propaganda for the consumption of

the following of the ruling class parties and their henchmen, why don't they dare to take this "golden opportunity" to hold the mid-term poll and "call the bluff" of the CPI(M) completely and get an electoral verdict in their favour? They don't venture to do so because they are mortally afraid of getting another round of severe drubbing at the hands of the fighting people of West Bengal, a drubbing which might upset the fortunes of the ruling Congress party in the ensuing general elections of 1972, thus setting a pattern for the entire country, more devastating than it had witnessed in 1967.

They also realize that the ballot-paper democracy with which the Indian ruling classes have been till now confidently toying can no longer be toyed with such ease, since the working class and other toiling millions have learnt the use of the ballot paper to further their class interests and class politics. The bourgeois-landlord politicians and their ideologues, so far, were proclaiming their venomous hostility to the Communists on the plea that the latter stand for revolution and do not hesitate to take to arms in defence of the revolution, while they themselves are 'saints', wedded to peaceful parliamentary methods and democratic Socialism!

But, paradoxically enough, the bourgeoisie has now come to dread even the ballot paper since the common people are in no mood to obediently put it in the boxes allotted to the bourgeois-landlord parties. Thus, the deepening economic-political crisis, in its turn, has introduced serious elements of crisis in the realm of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, about which the Indian ruling classes had been boasting, that it is the largest democracy in the world. Is it any wonder that the anti-people policies pursued by the Congress rulers, over nearly a quarter of a century, which have brought about the economic-political crisis, also has engendered crisis for their bourgeois parliamentary system?

In reality the Government of Indira Gandhi, faced with such a crisis, has chosen to reject the democratic demand of fresh mid-term poll in West Bengal. Instead, her government has opted for the path of using naked State violence to

suppress democratic opposition and to perpetuate the discredited President's rule. The excuse trotted out that there does not exist a congenial law and order situation to hold democratic elections in the State does not deceive the people of West Bengal. They know pretty well that what is really not congenial for holding the poll is not the law and order situation, as the Central Government leaders and its apologists say, but it is the political climate that is uncongenial for the ruling Congress and its satellite parties, who hitched themselves to the band-wagon of the Congress Government.

It is the loss of political confidence in the electorate of West Bengal that is at the bottom of rejecting the democratic demand for a mid-term poll and to the resorting to the path of extreme provocation and armed suppression of the opposition.

Who is Isolated

The prattle about the so-called isolation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is not new, our class enemies and the paid men in the service of the bourgeoisie have been repeating this canard since the time of the Bangla Congress betrayal of the U.F. Government some six months ago. If the CPI(M) is 'isolated', certainly that isolation is from the parties and groups that chose to betray the anti-Congress united fronts and U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, and are opportunistically lining up behind one or the other bourgeois-landlord camps, led by either the so-called New Congress or the Organizational Congress, but not from the common people, who have been fighting against the Congress Government.

Even our avowed enemies know, though they dare not admit it openly, that the two successful Statewide protest general strikes and hartals, on March 17 and July 14 the hundreds of mass rallies where millions of people participated and protested against the imposition of President's rule, and a series of class and mass struggles, for partial demands that were organized since March 1970, — and all these in the

teeth of opposition by the Congress and its eight-party allies — were a clear demonstration of the ever increasing popular support to the CPI(M), and its programme. In fact, it was this growing popular support to the CPI(M) and its allies that frustrated the fructification of a mini-front Government in the State, that ultimately forced the unwilling hands of the Central Government to dissolve the defunct Assembly, and that compelled most of the parties of the eight-party combine to mouth all the major demands and slogans, such as the end of President's rule, holding of elections and withdrawal of the CRP etc., that were being raised from the beginning only by the CPI(M).

Panic at Their Own Isolation

It is precisely the panic caused by the rising tempo of the democratic movement and increasing mass mobilization behind the programme of the CPI(M) and its allies that was at the root of the political despair of the Congress Government and its yes men, prompting them to embark on the path of naked violence and police terror. It is the increasing isolation of the Congress Government and its President's rule that prompted them to unashamedly reject the legitimate democratic demand for mid-term poll and to resort to the use of force to beat down the surging mass movement and to crush the Communist Party of India (Marxist) that is proudly heading it. And yet, ridiculously enough, the Government, the monopolist Press and the parties that fell for the treacherous alliance with the Congress continue to harp on the lie that CPI(M) is isolated from the popular masses! Of course, lying has become a perfected art and a weapon in the armoury of the decadent bourgeois-landlord classes which are desperately defending the exploiting order, an order that is decaying and rotting alive. The capitalist class does not hesitate to commit any abominable crime in its last-ditch battle. The mere mention of the fact that several of the anti-Communist politicians continuously throw out, covertly and overtly, the diabolical hints that nothing short of "an Indonesian remedy" would

solve the problem of Communist challenge in West Bengal and Kerala, demonstrate the depths of degeneration and degradation they are sunk in, and the savage fascist methods they approvingly applaud.

Who Is Afraid

The path of police-goonda armed terror, that was initiated at Durgapur, is being jubilantly acclaimed by the reactionary classes and their hangers-on as a political line that has scored wonderful victories for the Congress Government while inflicting defeat for the democratic forces of West Bengal and the CPI(M), which is playing the vanguard role in fighting against the Congress Government and its reactionary, anti-people rule. The arrest of Durgapur workers' leaders on cooked-up charges, the hurling of armed police battalions to violently suppress their protest strike and convert the Steel Town of Durgapur into an armed military camp is being hailed as a victory! The eleven-day-long protest strike of the workers, the heroic resistance they offered, and the unity and solidarity displayed by them, in the face of the brutal police terror, is being deridingly tom-tommed as a defeat for Durgapur workers, because they had to withdraw the strike after eleven days of dogged resistance when the entire township was occupied by the armed police battalions. To none except the politically mad and suffering from hallucinations would it appear that the Durgapur workers were organizing a sort of Dien Bien Phu battle—only they can go into the type of ecstasy over the so-called victory of police repression at Durgapur.

Drunk with the pyrrhic victory at Durgapur, the Congress Government and its bureaucratic presidential regime was going about issuing open threats of violent suppression of the strike struggles of the State Government employees, secondary teachers, and different other sections of the workers and middle-class employees, deploying all over the State armed battalions of the CRP, displaying the truckloads of military and imposing Section 144 and a ban order the Martyrs' Day celebration rally on August 31. What was the upshot of all this?

The three-day State Government employees' strike, the week long all-Bengal secondary teachers' cease-work, the students' protest strike and the latest engineering workers protest strike—every one of these strike struggles had been fought out successfully, and the people were not cowed by either threats of violent repression or by victory parades over Durgapur workers. The totally false and Government-inspired propaganda that all these struggles were a flop could neither throw dust in the eyes of the people of West Bengal nor cover up the ignoble political defeat of the Governor's bureaucrats. The fiendish manner in which the Martyrs' Day rally was prevented, and the repression, shootings, lathicharges and arrests with which the Government sought to sabotage it, did in fact create more devastating political effect on the discredited Governor's regime than the proposed massive rally that sent shivers down the spine of the Government. In fact, the high-handed manner in which the Government sought to prevent the demonstration before the State Government's Secretariat ended up in a virtual general strike and hartal for the day. The canard that the Martyrs' Day was a flop and the CPI(M)'s 'bluff' was called, etc., does reflect only the wailings of the authorities that unarmed people could not be successfully provoked into frontal clashes thus affording an opportunity for the blood-thirsty bureaucrats and their armed battalions to let loose terror on the unprepared and undefending masses.

Who but the politically naive fail to understand the mischievous meaning of these taunts and the devilish intentions behind them? If it is the contention of our class enemy that our Party and the democratic movement under its leadership should accept the battle on the terms of the class enemy, his chosen moment, and the forms of struggle selected by him, then he is sadly mistaken.

Character of The Battle

Be it known to the Congress Government and its anti-Communist appendages that the democratic revolutionary movement, and the CPI(M) that is called upon to assume the

major responsibility to lead it would neither permit the Congress rulers to deny democratic elections to the people of the State, and escape scot-free, nor be provoked into actions that play into their hands. They are politically aware that the bankrupt ruling classes, losing the battle in the field of democracy, democratic rights, and liberties of the people, are conspiring to transform the struggle into a sort of show down struggle between Communists and anti-Communists. The immediate political issue involved here is neither the confrontation between the forces poised for and against People's Democratic Revolution nor between Communists and anti Communists. It is a much broader and pressing issue of the day: whether to fight and defend the democratic rights of the people to elect their representative government or to accept the rule of the Congress party, direct or indirect, that has lost the confidence of the electorate of West Bengal and dares not face the democratic elections, and hence is bent upon perpetuating President's rule with the aid of police-military bayonets and bullets.

Also closely linked with it is the issue whether to permit the Congress party and its agents to disrupt and destroy the class and mass organizations of the people, or to doggedly defend the hard-won gains of the people and beat back the offensive on them. The CPI(M) is quite conscious and confident that it is not alone in this battle, and it has powerful potential mass allies for it, which certainly do join this battle in defence of democracy. The Marxist-Leninist critique of bourgeois democracy, bourgeois democratic rights and liberties, that they are severely curtailed, maimed and made formal because of the bourgeois possession of money and political power, does in no way mean that these rights are not cherished and defended by them when sought to be nullified by the bourgeoisie. Their struggle in defence of democratic rights and liberties under a bourgeois rule is inextricably linked with their struggle for People's Democracy and Socialism. The latter struggle cannot be carried on effectively and successfully if they were to abandon the struggle for the former,

succumbing before the dictatorial and violent onslaughts of the bourgeoisie. The present phase of the battle that is on in West Bengal between the bourgeois-landlord Government at the Centre and the democratic forces headed by the CPI(M), has this character.

Clash with People's Movements

The democratic rights and liberties that the people of our country have come to acquire, whatever their bourgeois limitations, are neither secured by the grace of the bourgeois-landlord classes nor they can be allowed to be mutilated, annulled, and trampled underfoot at the sweet will of the Congress rulers. These rights and liberties are the outcome of people's glorious struggles and sacrifices. Any political party and Government that conspires to snatch them away cannot escape the wrath of the people, and the due punishment at their hands. It appears that the ruling Congress party and the Government headed by Indira Gandhi, which in their present predicament and plight have taken to the path of violence and dictatorial methods flatly rejecting the democratic demand of holding elections in West Bengal, are heading to court such a punishment before long. In this process of denying democratic elections to West Bengal, the Government of Indira Gandhi is not merely coming into head-on political clash with the CPI(M), but above all is colliding with the democratic movements, struggles and organizations of the workers, peasants, middle class employees, students and other progressive sections of the people, thus treading a path of suppression of class and mass movements of the people, and paving the way for fascist and dictatorial regimes, if not check-mated and defeated in time.

The democratic revolutionary movement and the CPI(M) would pledge to do everything in their power to halt and reverse this perilous path of the Congress Government. If the Congress Government and its class allies arrogantly think that by their new strategy and tactics of police and military terror they

have posed the alternatives before the democratic revolutionary movement of West Bengal—namely, either to surrender before the show of police-military brute force or get crushed in the unequal battle with the well-organized forces of State violence—they would be erring grievously. The people of West Bengal would never surrender before such threats of the bankrupt ruling classes, they are determined to resist and defeat the police and military threats and attacks on the democratic movement, and are quite confident of the victory in their just, legitimate and democratic struggle to end the autocratic President's rule and to win a representative Government for the State through a democratic mid-term poll.

People Will Take The Right Road

They put the counter alternative before the Congress rulers whether they concede the just and democratic demand of the people for an immediate mid-term poll or deny it by the use of police-military force only to get completely isolated and thoroughly rejected by the people. Regarding the appropriate form of struggle to be chosen by the people from time to time for defeating the foul conspiracies and violent attacks of the Congress Government to crush the democratic movement, history demonstrates that people always prove more creative than their oppressors, and there is no reason for our power-drunk Government to think that the fighting people of West Bengal and their brethren in the rest of the country would be an exception to it, as not to be able to devise means and methods of resisting the Government's fiendish attacks. Several such threats and attacks of the Congress Government were resisted and defended by the people of West Bengal, and the present attack awaits no other fate.

While stating our views on the issue, we are fully aware that a far wider political mobilization, far more efficient organization and a determined and militant resistance is necessary to defeat the dictatorial ways of the Congress and

its despotic methods of repression. Equally are we aware that the bougeois-landlord rule of the Congress, after nearly a quarter century of unbroken domination, is on the decline, caught in a deepening economic-political crisis, and it is waging a fast-losing battle for its perpetuation. It miserably failed in arresting its decline and disintegration since 1967, despite its despicable toppling operations of State Governments and other opportunist conspiracies, and in the days and months ahead it is awaiting still more serious debacles, if it does not radically mend its perilous path of violence against the people.

Comrade Jiban Maity Succumbed to Naxalite's Attack*

Obituary in "People's Democracy", September 13, 1970

Comrade Jiban Maity breathed his last on the morning of September 5. It may be recalled that he was attacked by an armed gang of Naxalites on August 21. He was 70 at the time of his death.

As soon as the news of his death was heard, workers, students, youths, middle class employees flocked in their hundreds to have a last look at their dear leader. A half-a-mile long funeral procession headed by the State and District leaders of the Party saw him last before he was cremated.

Comrade Maity's political life began with the Bengal terrorists in 1920-21 and he was one of the leading functionaries of the Hindusthan Socialist Republican Army, founded by Bhagat Singh. Detained under the notorious Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1930, he came into contact with the members of the Communist Consolidation while in the Deoli Detention Camp, and decided to follow the path blazed by the Red Flag. He was taken into the Party shortly after his release in 1937 and till the end of his days he tirelessly served the working people as a wholtimeer of the party. He was a member of the Secretariat of the Howrah District Committee of the Party. In the late twenties, Comrade Maity was one of the closest young friends of the great novelist,

*Comrade Jiban Maity was a member of the Secretariat of the Howrah District Committee of CPI(M) at the time of his death.

Jiban Maity Succumbed to Naxalite's Attack 723

Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, who used to live in Baje-Shibpur area of the Howrah town and was the President of the Howrah District Congress committee.

We dip the Red Flag in honour of our departed comrade and send our heartfelt sympathies to his bereaved family, friends and comrades.

Sardesai Enlightens “Foreign Readers” with Half-Truths and Untruths*

M. Basavapunnaiah

In the Communist magazine, *Peace, Freedom and Socialism*, in its July 1970 issue, is published an essay on “Political Struggle in India” by S. G. Sardesai, a leading member of the Right Communist Party of India. From the statement of Sardesai that, “it will be difficult to foreign readers... to realize the profound implications of these developments for our country and its politics”, it becomes evident that the author has set himself to the task of enlightening his “foreign readers” about the current political developments in India, with his ‘profound’ mastery of the subject. The essay in question by the author would have neither interested nor induced us to comment, but for the simple reason that it contains a string of half-truths and untruths and that a journal of repute and political status like *Peace, Freedom and Socialism* has thought it fit to disseminate this balderdash for its readers all over the world.

The author who, disgustingly enough, wears the badge of an Indian Communist leader and parades as a “creative Marxist”, in his opening paras starts with his Red Salutes to the Indian National Congress, the principal political party of the Indian bourgeois-landlord classes which is having its monopoly rule of ruthless exploitation and oppression in the country during nearly the last quarter of a century. He writes with a gusto that, “Indian National Congress, founded in

*Published in “People’s Democracy”, Calcutta, September 20, 1970.
S. G. Sardesai was a leader of the Right Communist Party.

1885, nourished by heroism and sacrifices of literally millions of Indians, and moulded by leaders of international stature such as Tilak, Gandhi and Nehru, led our country to freedom". Apart from the cringing uncritical, and absolutely non-class glorification of the role of the bourgeois-landlord Congress party and its leaders—absolutely unbecoming of any Communist—he further brazenly rejects and repudiates the entire analysis and assessment made regarding the Congress Party, its class character and role in the freedom struggle, etc., by the Communist International and the Indian Communist movement so far. He is not ashamed of completely omitting the proud role played by the young and growing working class of India and its Communist movement in the freedom struggle, and its impact in vitally influencing and moulding the policies of the Congress from time to time.

It is all the more shocking that such panegyrics are sung to the Congress party and its *exclusive* role in securing national freedom at a time, when this party, after full twentythree years of unbroken monopoly rule in the country, has landed the country in a veritable mess of deepening political crisis, while immensely strengthening the hold of reactionary forces of big monopolists, landlords and their foreign collaborators, and thus enhancing the threat of neo-colonialist domination over the country.

This clownish eulogy of the Congress party and its leaders by the author is not as innocent as it might appear at first sight to many a foreign reader. It is purposefully done to facilitate the sale of the author's and his party's Right-opportunist thesis of Congress-Communist collaboration, in order to achieve the so-called National Democratic Revolution and Socialism.

Political Contortions

The author who takes upon himself the task of enlightening his readers on a series of vital political issues connected with India, like that of the class character of the Congress party and Government, the class character of the two split

wings of the Congress party and in particular the character of ruling Indira Gandhi Congress, and the underlying cause and reasons for the crisis and Congress split, etc. , has led himself into performing all sorts of political contortions, only to make the confusion of his reader worst confounded.

He tells us in all seriousness that the Congress party since the year 1947 has developed "as the main political party of the Indian bourgeoisie", that the Congress Government was pursuing "capitalist policies", that due to its pursuing of capitalist policies there was "the growing mass misery and discontent", and consequently, "it steadily lost its influence", that, after the split, "the Indira Gandhi Congress is still a national bourgeois or kulak", and that "the social composition of its leadership from top to the district level is either bourgeois or kulak", and "there is no question of forging a united front with Indira Congress or government in the present position".

So the foreign readers are enlightened by our able "Marxist" analyst that the Congress party was a capitalist organization following capitalist policies, with only the slight difference that its leadership "is either bourgeois or kulak", from top to bottom, and that "the Indira Gandhi Congress is by no means Left, and, of course, not Socialist by any standard of measurement!" Thus he dispels at one stroke all ignorance about the Indira Gandhi Congress and government, which are mistaken by his foreign readers of *Peace, Freedom and Socialism* for a proletarian or semi-proletarian party, pursuing Socialist or semi-Socialist policies !

Such highly interesting and extremely amusing stuff certainly require some detailed examination, and we shall attempt at it in the following paragraphs.

Let us first take Sardesai's assessment of the class character and composition of the Congress party and Government, and what according to him, led the country into the economic-political crisis and the consequent loss of political influence of the Congress party among the masses. His first profound observation is that the Congress party, since independence,

has developed "*as the main political party of the Indian bourgeoisie*." Does this statement of the writer aim at clarifying the concrete class character and composition of the Congress party to his foreign readers or deliberately intend to obscure the absolutely necessary clarity over the issue?

If the author's purpose is not the latter, he would never leave it at this extremely elastic and delightfully vague phrase of "Indian bourgeoisie" to define the class character of the Congress party and Government. Every student of politics acquainted with the ABC of Marxism-Leninism knows that the bourgeoisie' covers big bourgeoisie, the non-big bourgeoisie and even landlords, that the objective class interests and role of these three different strata in the present stage of the Indian Revolution are different, and that the big bourgeoisie and landlord classes are reactionary while the non-big bourgeoisie, by and large, is objectively interested in the completion of the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and democratic tasks of the revolution.

Motivated Subterfuge

A studied silence on these issues and evading it with the phrase "Indian bourgeoisie" is mischievously conceived and politically motivated in order to shield the real and concrete class character and composition of the Congress party. To tell his "foreign readers" that the Congress is the main political party of the Indian bourgeoisie is nothing short of inflicting insult on the intelligence of his readers as though they have been under the absurd illusion that the Congress party is a party of either petty-bourgeoisie or the proletariat, and our profound "Marxist" is called upon to their assistance to tell them that it is a party of the Indian bourgeoisie.

This political subterfuge of the author and his party stands in bold relief when they violently dispute and refute the concrete class characterization of the Congress party and Government by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) — that it is a bourgeois-landlord party, led by the big bourgeoisie which is collaborating with foreign finance capital and allying with feudal and semi-feudal landlordism.

They not only furiously contest and reject the above class definition of the Congress party but also deliberately dodge to answer the crucial-question as to which class or stratum is the leading force in the Congress party and Government, and flatly deny the sharing of political power by landlords in the State and Government run by the Congress party. They indulge in this sort of petty-fogging and political chicanery not because they do not know and realize after twentythree years of experience of the rule of Congress Government that the landlord class and its political representatives are firmly entrenched in the Congress party and Government at various levels, and the representatives of the big capital hold the leading position in the State.

Right - Opportunist Thesis

It is their Right-opportunist thesis of unity and collaboration with the Congress that makes them shy of accepting the facts of big bourgeois-landlord dominance in the Congress Government. As an alibi for it, they use the phrase "Indian bourgeoisie" to serve as a fig-loaf, to palm it off as democratic, progressive and national bourgeoisie, thus justifying unity and united front with it. The truth of this statemnt of ours gets further confirmed when we examine Sardesai's misleading analysis and assessment of the Congress split.

He poses the question as to why this "main political party of the Indian bourgeoisie, steadily lost its influence," resulting in the political crisis and consequent split in the Congress party. He nonchalantly answers it away that it is due to "the growing mass misery and discontent resulting from the *capitalist policies* pursued by the congress Government."

Here once again, the writer resorts to the same political tomfoolery that it is the "capitalist policies" that resulted in the crisis and growing mass misery and discontent. If one were to raise the pertinent question to our friend, "Well, gentleman! there are capitalists and capitalists, and also capitalist policies and capitalist policies, but whether it is big capitalist policies

such as alliance and defence of feudal and semi-feudal landlordism in the country and the loot of the people in collaboration with foreign finance capital that are responsible for creating crisis and mass misery or several other policies such as development of certain heavy industries in the public sector, the construction of some big river-valley projects and the like, which also, strictly speaking, come under the term 'capitalist policies', since they are carried by the capitalist Government to develop capitalism in industry and agriculture", the writer has no answer except to draw blank.

Big Capital's Policy Engendered Crisis

The economic-political crisis that has gripped the country and the consequent Congress split are not the results of the so-called "independent capitalist path of development", about which Sardesai and his party were jumping and dancing in the past, nor the "capitalist policies" in general. But it is because of the specific path of capitalist development, namely, the building of capitalism in alliance with feudal and semi-feudal landlordism and in collaboration with foreign finance capital. It is the policy of big capitalists that is at the root of the crisis and the Congress split. To hide this ugly truth and try to tell the "foreign readers" that some general capitalist policies have resulted in all this is not intended to enlighten them but contrived to mislead them.

The most nauseous and extremely repulsive political acrobatics of Sardesai are to be witnessed when he presents his party's class assessment of the Congress split, and the class character of the two split wings of the Congress party. In the course of long and rigmarole review of these two split wings and their respective National Conventions at Ahmedabad and Bombay, he sums up his farcical findings thus :

One : "The Syndicate and its Congress have thus clearly cast themselves in the role of the doyen of the reactionary parties."

Two : "The Indira Gandhi Congress session at Bombay was comparatively a much more complicated affair. The total

upshot of the session clearly corroborated our party's earlier evaluation of the Indira Congress"... "The Indira Gandhi Congress is by no means Left, and, of course, not socialist by any standard,"... "the new Congress is still national bourgeois organization." Though many radical elements are attracted to it, "it does not alter the character of its leadership or its social composition". "The social composition of its leadership from the top to the district level is either *bourgeois* or *kulak*". "The leadership (of the Indira Gandhi Congress — M.B.), thus while adopting certain progressive measures, will undoubtedly vacillate and makes a *number of compromises with big business, the landlords, the bureaucracy and foreign monopoly capital.*" "*There are many healthy elements in her camp* (Indira Gandhi's camp not party. — M.B.) though it has to be borne in mind that *a number of reactionaries, opportunists and anti-Communists* have also got on to her bandwagon." The wonderful Indira Gandhi Congress comprises many healthy elements' and also a number of reactionaries, opportunists and anti-Communists." The only element Sardesai has forgotten to add is the element of pseudo-Communist !

It will be interesting to find out if any of the foreign readers could make head or tail out of Sardesai's labour and if they are any wiser now about the class character of the Indira Gandhi Congress and her Government.

Evidences Galore

The author of the article, after having adduced every ingenious argument in support of his party's political line of class collaboration and alliance with the ruling Congress party and Government, makes a totally false statement saying : "There is no question of forging a united front with the Indira Gandhi Congress of Government in the present situation,' and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) "never attempts to adduce the slightest evidence for this allegation" of Congress-Right Communist alliance.

Such unity and understanding between Indira Gandhi Congress and his party is forged in Bihar, and with the latter's

support alone the State Government in Bihar has come into existence and is running at present.

Such unity and understanding between the two was long ago arrived at in Kerala, on which the Right Communist-led mini-front survived its short span of nine month's life. Today an open electoral front between the two, principally directed against the Communist Party of India (Marxist), is forged and functioning in full force. There are a number of spheres including strike breaking activities carried on unitedly by the Right Communist Party and the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government.

The open announcement by a prominent Right Communist leader, reported in every Indian newspaper, on August 31 and September 1, 1970, completely corroborates our statement. To quote : "The Communist Party of India and the Congress (N) will have an alliance at all-India level to fight the next general elections, the former Kerala Chief Minister, Mr. C. Achutha Menon, said yesterday."

"Addressing a public meeting at Pudukadu in Kodakara constituency where he is a candidate, he said the CPI considered the Congress (N) as a progressive party ... etc." (*Hindusthan Times*, September 1, 1970).

S.A. Dange, the Chairman of the Right Communist Party, did come out not very long ago with the theoretical-ideological defence of the Indira Congress-Right Communist alliance, and the following would go to prove it : "We do not agree with the Marxists' path. We are advancing in the direction of the State of National Democratic Revolution. In this, there will be the working class, poor peasantry, middle classes, a section of the national bourgeoisie *and also some monopolists*." (From the speech of S. A. Dange, delivered at Guntur at his party workers' meeting and reported in the political weekly of their Andhra State Committee, *Visalandhra*, February 26, 1970).

This shameless thesis of S. A. Dange for joining "some monopolists" is intended to buttress the political line of unity and united front with Indira Gandhi Congress

Government, even though the monopolist representatives dominate it.

In the face of these facts Sardesai has the temerity to assert, that that the CPI (M) "never attempts to adduce the slightest evidence for this allegation". Is it not a blatant lie to state as Sardesai states in his article that "there is no question of forging united front with Indira Gandhi Congress or Government"?

Utter Falsehood

Mr. Sardesai, in his unseemly anxiety to defend his party's indefensible political line of collaboration and alliance with the ruling Congress party and Government, has mounted up a foul and filthy attack on the Communist Party of India (Marxist), by presenting to his "foreign readers" utter falsehood regarding its political stand. He writes : "At the same time, our party does not treat the crisis and split in the National Congress, *as a family affair between two groups of equally reactionary bourgeois-landlord leaders, motivated, purely by considerations of factional power politics.* This is the analysis of the conflict being made by the CPI (M) and the two other main left parties in India and the Samyukta Socialist Party." Further he adds, the CPI (M)'s "traditional and obdurate refusal to recognize *the political significance of the contradictions* within the bourgeois camp has led them to make all sorts of *obscurantist* formulations which equate the Indira Gandhi and Syndicate camp and yet attempt to make *spurious* distinction between the two." (Emphasis added).

And to top all these palpable lies, he fabricates the biggest lie that the CPI(M) is allying with the Syndicate Congress, and that its leaders like Comrades Sundarayya and Namboodiripad have "publicly declared that they will co-operate with Syndicate Congress in Kerala to pull down Achutha Menon Ministry" and the like.

There is no other effective way to refuting these wild allegations and pin them down as deliberate lies of Sardesai,

wilfully fabricated and catered for the consumption of his "foreign readers", than to quote the relevant passage from the Political Report of the C.C. of the CPI(M), February 2, 1970 and published as an open pamphlet.

CPI(M) Stand

"The economic and political crisis has been more aggravated than what is was at the time of the April 1967 resolution or even the time of our Eighth party Congress. The class and social contradictions have been far more intensified and the class struggle has sharpened. The political crisis, which we described in April 1967 as in its initial stage, has reached another phase, symbolizing the split in the ruling Congress party and also the ruling classes into two broad divisions. One wing, which is called the Syndicate, and its allies are pursuing a pronouncedly reactionary political line. This is the line of uniting all the reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces with a view to launching a frontal attack on the lives and liberties of the people, *a line of shifting the internal and external policies of the Government further to the right, and imposing a nakedly dictatorial rule over the country.* The rival wing, led by Indira Gandhi, though pursuing the basic path of building capitalism, in alliance with landlords and in collaboration with imperialist monopolists, is opposed to the political line of the Syndicate. *It upholds Nehru's "middle path" with some modifications here and there, under the facade of democracy, secularism and Socialism.* Neither of these line offers a solution to the developing economic-political crisis. Both the wings are busy mobilizing the political forces behind their respective lines. While the Syndicate wing is working up an anti-Communist frenzy and demands banning of the CPI(M), the other wing is assiduously working to isolate the CPI(M) from its allies in the U.F.s and encourages the formation of mini-front Government excluding the CPI (M) and subservient to the Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress." (pp.22-23, *Present Political Situation*, Report of the C.C. emphasis added).

"It is precisely in this stage of the political crisis, when the

working class and the revolutionary movement it is heading are still not powerful enough to aim at the immediate overthrow of the big bourgeois-landlord rule, and the premier bourgeois-landlord ruling party is split into two over the dispute on policies to overcome the economic-political crisis, that the CPI (M) is called upon to work out its tactical slogans. *The choice before it is neither to be indifferent to this split, on the ground that there is nothing fundamentally different between the two political lines, nor rally behind the wing led by Indira Gandhi under the illusion that it represents the non-big bourgeoisie and thus is progressive.* Our line should be such that while it sharply and continuously attacks and exposes the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh combine and all its machinations, *frustrating its attempt to take over the Central Government*, it at the same time, strengthens the position of the working class and the democratic movement as against the entire bourgeois-landlord rule led by the big bourgeoisie, no matter whether it is led by the Indira Gandhi wing or the Syndicate wing.” (p. 26 *ibid*, emphasis added).

These passages are sufficiently self-explanatory and they need no further elaboration.

Can one in his senses who is capable of reading the above cited passages from the Political Report of the C.C., CPI(M), summon courage to disseminate such utter falsehood among the international readers of *Peace, Freedom and Socialism* — that the CPI (M) treats the Congress split as “a family quarrel between the two group of equally reactionary bourgeois-landlord leaders,” considers it as an affair “motivated purely by consideration of factional power politics” and “makes a spurious distinction between the two”, etc. ? And yet such is the black lie that Sardesai and his party fabricate, and a Communist monthly *Peace, Freedom and Socialism* chooses to give world-wide publicity by lending its columns !

Strange And Monstrous

Is it not really strange and monstrous for Sardesai and his party to brag that “the total upshot of Bombay Session clearly

corroborated our Party's earlier evaluation of the character of the Indira Congress"? Is there anything that can really be called class evaluation of the Congress party and Government by the author and his party, before or after the split, except the comical political acrobatics as extensively cited by us in the foregoing paragraphs ?

Is it not ridiculous to state that the united Congress was "the main political party of the Indian national bourgeoisie", and the split Congress under Indira Gandhi's leadership "is still a national bourgeois organization," and call this gibberish a class analysis, assessment and evaluation ? Is it not sheer political bankruptcy to reiterate that the united Congress and Government was carrying out "capitalist policies" and the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government would carry out the same "capitalist policies"? If so, is not the Syndicate Congress too the political party of the Indian bourgeoisie, striving to pursue the "capitalist policies"? If pursuing capitalist path of development and practising capitalist policies are common to both the Syndicate Congress and Indira Congress, why does Sardesai tear his hair and scurrilously quarrel with the CPI(M) when it states that there is no *basic and fundamental* class difference between the two wings of the Congress? By what Marxist Leninist yardstick have Sardesai and his party judged the statement, that the two political lines of the two split wings of the Congress do not *basically and fundamentally* differ in class terms, implies or conveys the meaning that the two do not differ on policies and tactics, that both are equally reactionary, and there is nothing to discriminate between the two ?

If Sardesai's faculty of reading and understanding of our resolutions are defective, the practice of the CPI(M) during the last one year of the Congress crisis and split must have enabled him to dispel his misgivings provided honesty and objectivity are still there with him. Can he point out a single occasion or over a single democratic issue, during the last one year of the Congress crisis, when the CPI (M) has not decisively thrown its weight against the Syndicate and its

allies ? If it is "a spurious distinction" as the author slanderously alleges, can he explain as to why and how the MPs of the CPI(M) were lending their critical support to the Indira Gandhi Government, despite the fact that this Government has declared their unconcealed hostility and war against the CPI(M), and is doing everything to suppress it by police-goonda terror in Kerala and West Bengal ?

Surely, the CPI(M) does not draw such fictitious, false and deceptive distinction that the Syndicate Congress represents big bourgeois-landlord reaction and the Indira Gandhi Congress essentially represents the non-big democratic and progressive bourgeoisie, since it is not interested in reducing itself to an appendage of the Indira Congress Government in the manner our friend and his party are doing, and yet repeat the lie that they are not for a united front with Indira Gandhi Congress and Government.

The dirty propaganda that the CPI(M) was allying with the Syndicate Congress, that it is isolated amongst the people in Kerala, and that it is getting isolated in West Bengal, that his party is building a so called Left and Democratic Unity, etc., don't deserve any serious reply. Everybody in India knows that what the Right Communists are building is no other front than an open and unconcealed anti-Communist united front together with anybody and everybody including the ruling Congress Government which is principally directed against the CPI(M) and the democratic revolutionary movement of workers and peasants headed by it. The coming few weeks and months would show what the truth is. The workers and toiling millions of India would not tolerate the attacks of the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government and their Right Communist stooges on the hard-won gains of the anti-Congress democratic forces and against the CPI(M) that is spearheading the anti-Congress democratic struggle of the popular masses in the country. Neither Sardesai and his party nor his patron of the *Peace, Freedom and Socialism* who lend their services for this malicious international propaganda against the CPI(M) can hide the truth any longer.

Such is the clownish class analysis of the Indira Gandhi Congress and its Government, and the bogus assessment of the Congress split presented by Sardesai, to his "foreign readers" of *Peace, Freedom and Socialism*. What appears more shocking to us is that such bizarre political stuff on Indian political developments secures place for world-wide publicity through a Communist journal, of *Peace, Freedom and Socialism's* stature and repute.

P. Ramamurti on the Privy Purse Bill*

**Speech Delivered in the Lok Sabha on
September 2, 1970.**

Speaking in the Lok Sabha on the debate on the Constitution 24th Amendment Bill — the “Privy Purse” Bill — on September 2, 1970, Comrade P. Ramamurti, Leader of the CPI(M) Group in Parliament, charged the ruling Congress party with utilizing the threat of abolition of privy purses for its narrow party ends.

He said:

I am glad that I get the opportunity to speak after Sri Chavan. Sri Chavan has said that the agreements that they entered into with the princes were political agreements. I agree with that. But why did they enter into those political agreements? That is the real question.

Somebody here said that if those agreements had not been entered into, the integration of our country would not have taken place.

Sri Morarji Desai said that. Remember what happened in the year 1945 at the end of the Second World War. The whole country was a boiling cauldron. The army was in revolt. It was precisely during that period—it was admitted even by a person like the ex-Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Attlee, that the British rulers saw the writing on the wall and entered into a compromise with the Congress Government here for the transfer of political power. Just like that the princely order would have been thrown into the dustbin of history in the years of 1946 and 1947. With the revolts that

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were taking place in State after State, the princes would have gone the way the other despots had gone.

Bourgeois-Feudal Alliance

But then came Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Why did he enter into those agreements? Those agreements were entered into precisely because he wanted to save them from the doom that was theirs. That is the reality of the situation. For example, we know what happened when the gentleman by the name Sri C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer wanted to declare Travancore to be an independent country. And we know what happened. Sri C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer had to flee the State before the wrath and onslaught of the people. Therefore, all this talk that this was a very wonderful act, that the agreement that had been entered into was an act of diplomacy and that, but for that, the integration of the country would not have taken place is nothing but bunkum. It was a political agreement, a political alliance with the princes in order to rule the country for a long time. It was an alliance between the bourgeois and the feudal elements. That is the reality of the situation. They see the writing on the wall. The princes also saw the writing on the wall. That is why the princes at that time entered into an agreement. We also know that. Therefore, there is no question today of correctness or incorrectness of that wonderful act.

Today you are bringing this amendment to the Constitution. You know that the people of this country do not want this thing [princely privileges] to continue. Are you serious about it? If you were serious about it, no amendment to the Constitution was necessary. You are now seeking to delete clause 22 of article 366. What does it say? It says:

"Ruler" in relation to an Indian State means the Prince, Chief or other person by whom any such covenant or agreement as is referred to in clause (1) of article 291 was entered into and who for the time being . . .

Merely by entering into an agreement, he does not become a Ruler; another consideration has to be satisfied and that is:

... and who for the time being is recognized by the President as the Ruler of the State, and includes any person who for the time being is recognized by the President as the successor of such Ruler;

It was open to you to utilise the power vested in this. There was no need to come to Parliament. By an executive order, the President could have said, "I do not recognize such and such person as the Ruler of the State." No question of privileges arises; no question of privy purse arises. The question could have been decided in no time whatsoever.

Now, today, when these people, the Congress party, come forward and say that they are progressive and they want to abolish the whole thing, I question the integrity and the sincerity of that statement. There is a purpose behind this. What is that purpose? After all, the Prime Minister when she spoke yesterday indicated that they want to give them some solatium which will be terms of a smaller multiple in the case of bigger people and a bigger multiple in the case of smaller people. You have had negotiations with them for the last two years. Sri Chavan just now said that those things had proved useless. This question has been there for the last two years. Why is it that you could not find time, all these two years, to make up your mind and say that this is the solatium, this is the multiple, you are giving to them?

Winning Princes' Support For Ruling Congress

I say, it is a political game. And what is the political game? After passing this Bill, the political game is to negotiate with the princes. Sri Chavan himself has admitted that. You want to negotiate with them. For what purpose? Again, for a political purpose. At that time, in 1947-49, it was a political agreement entered into in order to get their support. That is why so many princes joined the Congress party after 1947. Today also, there is a political purpose and the political purpose is to win their support for the ruling party.

Why did not you utilize article 366(22) directly and abolish the whole thing? There is a political purpose. Apart from

that political purpose, there may be also a monetary purpose. There is also a monetary purpose. After all, when Sri V.P. Menon negotiated the agreements with the princes, negotiations were entered into with each prince. There was no principle for the payment of the privy purse. Privy purse was not determined on the basis of any principle whatsoever and the rumour is that the more money that one gentleman got, the more amount of the privy purse given to that Ruler. Today also the quantum of the compensation or solatium or whatever it is, is going to be determined not only on the basis of the political support but, also on the quantum of the amount that the ruling Congress party's coffers would get from them. I have openly told the Prime Minister, "You will be open to this charge unless you bring both the Bills together." And yet you did not do it and you cannot escape that charge. Any amount of denial by the Prime Minister on the floor of this House will not get credence in the country because people today do not trust you.

Therefore, this is the political purpose. I do not know who is the law adviser who had advised them with regard to this. Why this article 366(22) be deleted at all? What is the harm in continuing that article 366(22)? What harm does it do? You can later on utilize it. The very fact that you are abolishing it means that you do want to have a political settlement with them in mutually advantageous terms. This is the real thing.

What About Supreme Court Supervening?

The last question I would like to pose here is this. We know the Supreme Court. Sri Chavan has talked about article 363. He has read the whole article. Therefore, I do not want to read that. Are you sure that with the ideological background of the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court judges as we know from the Golaknath case and the bank nationalization case that the Supreme Court will not hold that these agreements are in the nature of a property? That they are just like stocks, preferential stocks of a company and you are entitled to get

so much money every year? When you hold a preferential stock in a company, 5 per cent return you are entitled to whether the company makes profit or not. Are you sure that the Supreme Court will not hold that this is in the nature of property and, therefore, any attack on this will be subject to the law that they have laid down in the bank nationalisation case? Therefore, I want to question the very way in which this whole thing has been done. You will be open to this charge.

Despite all these things there is one good thing about this. What is that? The privileges are abolished. We certainly would support this Bill on this ground knowing full well the machinations of the Congress party, knowing full well that they are going to utilize it for political bargaining, and knowing full well that they are going to have intrigues and horse-trading. Why? Because, in the ultimate analysis we depend upon the power of the people in this country and with that, before which nothing can stand, we are going to fight.

Constitution Should Go — Lock, Stock & Barrel

Therefore, the question is today you are going to abolish the privy purses and privileges and if the Supreme Court holds it to be in the nature of a property and strikes it down, then the people will know what this Constitution is. Despite what my friend, Sri Dange, has said, the eulogies he paid to the Constitution, under this Constitution nothing progressive can be made in this country and this Constitution will have to go lock, stock and barrel. Without that this country cannot make any progress. Therefore, let people understand it by their own experience and in order that the people can understand it by their own experience, we certainly are going to support this and we believe in the ultimate analysis it is the people who are the sovereign of this country. Who are the people who are sovereign of the States? Not the princes. It is the people of the States who are sovereign. Did you enter into agreement with the sovereign people of the States? No. It is

only with some rulers that you entered into agreements. Therefore, there is nothing sacrosanct about it.

Finally, despite the fact that I am absolutely certain that the passing of this Bill is going to be utilized for political horse-trading—in spite of that—I say, we are going to rally the people and we are certain, even as we have broken your machinations in Kerala, despite all your attempts, we will succeed and it is only the people of this country who will succeed.

Massive Calcutta Rally's Ringing Challenge : Hold Poll Now in West Bengal*

And once more the Brigade Parade Ground, Calcutta, was a human sea on September 27, 1970 teeming with men and women, hundreds of thousands of them.

It must be noted that the background to this CPI(M) Rally is very meaningfully different from that of the ones held in the past. With the Presidential regime alias Indira Congress rule clamped on West Bengal, Central Reserve Police and other such hordes of Indira Gandhi seeking to turn the State into an occupied territory, a police terror raj thrust on the life, livelihood and liberties of the people, Right Communists and agents of their ilk desperately disrupting the democratic struggles and goondas of all hues murdering CPI(M) leaders and workers, with the agonies of the people in the recent natural calamities in West Bengal, it is profoundly significant that at such a time people from far and near, particularly from the villages, mustered strong at the Brigade Parade Ground Rally in their thousands. Jute, textile, and engineering workers and Government and mercantile employees who have been bravely fighting to defend their gains earned during the last U.F. Government against the invidious inroads by the prevailing police raj, joined the rally in large numbers. In their midst could also be found some steeled faces representing the heroes of the working people of Durgapur.

Present at the rally were the thousands and thousands of

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peasants who have been steeled in their battles of defending the two million bighas of land they recovered from the landlords during the two U.F. Government's rule. Notwithstanding the very inclement weather, countless processions, large and small, marched towards the Brigade Parade Ground. To the Brigade Maidan confluence came in small tens of hundreds of groups, peasant men and women, from Nandankote in Burdwan, Labhpur in Birbhum, Bethuadahari in Nadia, Singur in Hooghly, Bhangar in 24-Paraganas and so on. People came to hear their leaders explain the current political situation and their tasks braving in quick turns the scorching sun and then the heavy downpour drenching them to the skin.

And to disturb and dislocate the programme of the rally, the police of the Advisorial junta, the Congress-Right Communist goondas, Naxalite marauders did not remain idle. News came from many points that the police and railway officers were harassing the incoming people on all pleas even after production of the tickets. Information came from Bansberia in Hooghly that the Naxalites were plotting to attack the commuters from Nabadwip. At some spots processions were assailed upon by anti-socials employed by some politicking bosses. On the VIP Road near Beliaghata a procession was attacked by the goondas of the Congress, Right Communists and Forward Bloc. In the face of all such assaults, the volunteer forces beat the assailants back and ensured safety for the processionists.

Comrade Jyoti Basu, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) presided over the meeting. Seated on the dais was Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad, one of the founders of the Communist Party, whose presence when announced, was greeted with shouts of 'Lal Salam' that rent the skies.

Comrade A. K. Gopalan

First to address the rally was Comrade A. K. Gopalan, member of the Polit Bureau and leader of the Kerala people. Referring to the last elections in Kerala, Comrade Gopalan

said: "The anti-Communist Press and political leaders are today vociferous that the CPI(M) and its democratic allies have been routed and buried consequent on the results of Kerala polls.

Further they are shouting that in West Bengal also the revolutionary forces would meet the same fate. The one and single aim of this propaganda is to divide and frustrate the fighting people everywhere, in Bengal in particular. Note needs be taken of the essential aspect of the Kerala election — class consciousness of the people has increased profoundly. Although the CPI(M) and its allies have got less number of seats, votes have increased quite appreciably in comparison to the 1967 elections. With the initial bugle-blowing over, the big bourgeoisie are also pondering over it seriously. However, the truth that emerges from the 1970 election, and that none can shut out is that the CPI(M) is not only as large a force as before but today it is the biggest force among the people. Their percentage of votes, by far larger than that of Congress votes, clearly establishes this position.

In 1967, there was a comprehensive anti-Congress United Front of the Left and other parties, but in 1970, this anti-Congress direction veered to an anti-CPI(M) position. And in this anti-Marxist alliance were ganged up the Congress, Muslim League, revisionists, the RSP, the Catholic Church, the big landlords and the Nair Service Society. The Right Communist Party, RSP etc., by their betrayal eventuated a division among the democratic forces. Their great patron Indira Gandhi speaks of an anti-Syndicate front but in Kerala, they formed only an anti-CPI(M) alliance. Some parties have been entrapped in the hoax of Indira Gandhi. People are confused for the time being. The set-back for the democratic movement is only a temporary one. One must not forget that the CPI(M) has polled nearly one million votes more than the Congress.

The Right Communists have not only joined hands with the Congress but what is more, they have accepted Congress programme. Their Ministry would be directed from outside

by the Congress party. Right C.P. bosses have solemnly declared that they would honestly implement the programme held in common by them and Congress party. And what is the Congress programme? The people of Bengal particularly know the Congress programme of terror, police and CRP brutalities and of loot and murder. Indira Gandhi's programme in West Bengal means this horror regime of CRP suppression. Her labour and industrial policy is intimately understood by the people, especially after the Durgapur experiences. Her land policy is known by the Bengal peasantry to consist in police help to jotdars in attacking the poor and landless tillers. And precisely these programmes and policies the Right Communists are solemnly pledged to translate into action in Kerala!

The Right Communists believe in the progressivism of Indira Gandhi and her regime and hence all anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly and anti-feudal fights, against all reactionary forces whose interests her Government safeguards must be stopped. This is the basis of the understanding between the Congress and Right Communists. And in this shady affair, the Right C.P. has been able to mislead a section of democratic masses. On that count, to speak as they do of the isolation of the CPI(M) is sheer goose tale. Voting figures speak volumes to establish this. In course of the nine months of office of Achutha Menon's mini-front, the CPI(M) has rallied the common masses in powerful movements and in the process mass and class consciousness has been crystallized.

Mention must be made of the heroic struggles of the hutment dwellers and of the bestial torture by the mini-front regime on them. 40 fighters fell dead, countless were injured and tortured in lock-up. 70,000 cases were launched against the poor. In the teeth of all these, more than 100,000 huts were raised. Before and after the polls. Indira Gandhi's CRP constitute the brunt of the attack on the people of Kerala. And after all these attacks of theirs, reaction in Kerala spread the canard that if the CPI(M) comes to office, the small

proprietors would be liquidated. In this malicious propaganda, they were obliged by Naxalite misdeeds which with ease were pinned on the CPI(M). But the traitors and their masters can win one election, they cannot win all the coming battles.”

Challenging Indira Gandhi and her agents to hold elections in West Bengal and to see what becomes of them, Comrade Gopalan concluded that in the impending battles the people of Kerala, must of necessity, would unswervingly stand by the fighting people of West Bengal.

Comrade Promod Dasguta

Comrade Promod Dasgupta, member, Polit Bureau and Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, greeted the people who had rallied in great numbers at the first Brigade Parade Ground rally after Presidential rule was imposed on West Bengal braving all the inclemencies of the weather. In his speech, Comrade Dasgupta said, traitors to the people cannot be known in a short time. The one great advance that the Kerala election battle has marked is that the band of traitors has been exposed. Kerala results must not make us give way to despondency. In terms of votes and mass support, the CPI(M) has emerged for the first time as the biggest force in Kerala, superior to the Congress.

The real yardstick for progress of the revolutionary movement consists in the extent of the unity of the democratic masses forged and in their rallying together for democratic battles. We must apply the same to Kerala as well as to West Bengal. *Kalantar*, the revisionist mouth-piece, trots out that “Kerala’s path is the path for Bengal also.” The path they have shown in Kerala is the path of treachery to the people. Not only there. Beginning with the March 17 hartal and general strike, through the dissolution of the Assembly on July 29, down to the current battles against repression and for the restoration of a democratic government, the people of Bengal have successfully foiled the mini-front conspiracy. All these struggles were opposed by the Eight-Party

Combination and the Bangla Congress as well. The CPI(M) was the first to voice the demand of CRP withdrawal. This political demand has immense significance. Withdrawal of the CRP and restoration of democracy are essential to the survival of the people, their life and liberties.

The eight parties fell in line publicly with this demand. But their hypocrisies are abundantly borne out by their blatant opposition to demands for the withdrawal of the CISF and CRP from Durgapur and release of trade union leaders there. The hypocrites opposed tooth and nail the struggles of the Government employees, secondary and primary teachers since in all these struggles the demands for CRP withdrawal and restoration of an elected democratic government were unequivocally raised. Identical is the stand of the traitors in all struggles today.

Sharply uncovering the collaboration of the Right Communists and the sycophancy of some so-called Left parties, Comrade Dasgupta said, the Right Communist Party promises that in Bengal they will have no alliance with the Congress. And the sycophants in the SUC and Forward Bloc are consoled. But these gullible leaders forget that ideologically and in political action today the revisionists are committed to the Congress. Despite the revisionists' braggadocio, that there is not a whit of discrepancy between their programme and Congress's is plain to everybody today.

As for the RSP, this party said they will not join or stand by any Government based on direct or indirect Congress support. That is its holy pronouncement. And in naked action, it is in the same crowd of the Congress-oriented traitors in Kerala. As concerns the Right Communists again, the Bangla Congress wants more CRP and armed forces for West Bengal, and while the revisionists crave for its friendship, SUC, Forward Bloc, et al obligingly ditto.

He said, in Bengal today, struggles are going on all fronts. Along with Government and mercantile employees, jute, textile, engineering, steel and other workers are struggling hard. The peasantry has not only successfully been defending the

two million bighas of land recovered during two U.F. regimes, but has also occupied 12 thousand bighas of benami and surplus land, during the gubernatorial regime. No amount of repression by the CRP and other armed might can stop these movements in which many already have fallen martyrs.

Despondency must not overcome us. There are ebbs and tides in the revolutionary movement. We must move actively and valiantly go ahead in forging unity through the struggles, of the workers, peasants and the toiling middle classes. The traitors will not be able to come out every time with flying colours. Like P. C. Ghosh, they would be thrown into the dustbin of history. People in Bengal today understand from their living experience that to end the present terror raj, there must be democratic election and Government.

Admonishing the reaction. Comrade Dasgupta concluded, "If Indira Gandhi and her associates go on suppressing these popular demands, the people cannot wait patiently for all time and they would be forced to go the other way."

Speaking in Hindi, Comrade Krishnapada Ghosh, member of the Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee, reminded the audience of the battles looming large on the horizons of West Bengal during the coming harvest season.

Comrade Jyoti Basu

In his speech, Comrade Jyoti Basu, first of all analysed the class character of the ruling Congress party. "It still represents the bourgeois-landlord classes led by the big bourgeoisie collaborating with imperialism. Isolated from the people because of the regime of exploitation and repression that it carried on for more than two decades, the Congress is split into two today. This is a golden opportunity for the democratic forces to fight and crush this enemy of the people. But just at this moment some parties led by the Right Communists are saying that the ruling Congress is progressive. This has eventuated disruption in the democratic forces. The Kerala election is an indication of that heinous division. By their

nefarious activities the Right Communists are resurrecting the Congress party from its doom."

Pointing to the hollowness of the tall talk of progressive measures by the Indira Congress a la bank nationalization, Comrade Basu explained, "These so-called progressive steps have meant nothing for the common people. Considering these as progressive, the Right Communists have drawn conclusions about the Indira Congress diametrically opposite to ours and rallied behind her as loyal agents. Some so-called Left parties are tailing behind the Right C.P. They, at best, can be called agents of agents ! These traitors have forgotten all the sacrifices of the people. In the economic struggles this betrayal is well known, but in the political arena it is a new development. But the mighty united Congress could not last, how can a divided Congress stand to its ground even with the help of these agents ?"

In West Bengal, a terror regime is continuing, a regime that has been seated in power by the revisionists. Indira Gandhi's hordes of occupation are let loose on the people like wild animals. This anti-people regime is doing nothing except bragging even after the recent floods. But its police Commissioner has asked the people not to collect relief donations without permission from them!

The occupationist CRP are aiming and killing at random, CPI(M) workers being their special target. Even goondas and Naxalites are employed by the police, Right Communists and their friends to murder CPI(M) workers and leaders. CPI(M) followers are being subjected to inhuman torture in thana lock-up and outside and, at times, shot in custody. This murder of detainees in police custody that is being resorted to in case of some Naxalites is repugnant to all forms of justice. Anti-social creatures spray bombs and other attacks on the people. If rarely one goonda is apprehended even for murder, he is bailed out by police very indulgently, as in Jorabagan, Calcutta. But trade union leaders are kept in jails on false charge and without trial and allowed no bail, as in Durgapur. This is the law of the day.

Continuing his speech, Comrade Basu declared: "The people have the inalienable right to self-defence. And for self-defence they must prepare everything to stave off goonda and police attacks. To crush the democratic movement, police are engaging even wagon breakers, who give a share of the booty to the former. Some police officers are in league with Naxalites who are inspired to attack the CPI(M) workers.

But the people are fighting back all attacks heroically. People vividly remember that during the tenure of the U.F. Government, the police were contained and never allowed to attack popular struggles to subserve the interests of capitalists and jotdars. But during President's rule with Smt. Indira Gandhi reigning as the Home Minister, her police are walking rough-shod over the life and rights of the people of West Bengal.

But the day of reckoning is not far off. Patiently by winning over the masses still following the traitor parties and by building up revolutionary organization on all fronts, we must forge ahead. Let the oppressors shiver for the day when change of things will come. Police officers and other oppressors who are piloting this torture programme must one day be publicly whipped. Patiently but surely that day is awaited by the millions. The people have no reason to give way to despondency. We are sustained by our faith in the ultimate triumph of the people."

The meeting ended with the singing of *L'Internationale*.

West Bengal: Right Communists Preparing Ground to Walk Into Congress Parlour*

At the end of her election tour of Kerala last month Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said that the "Kerala pattern" of alliances would be followed in other States. Right C.P. leader Achutha Menon, too asserted that the Kerala alliance would be extended to the national level for the general election in 1972.

Although ruling Congress President Jagajivan Ram promptly ruled out this possibility and the move of the so-called Young Turks for an open alliance with the right C.P. did not find favour at the Patna session of the AICC, in his Presidential speech Sri Ram himself said that local adjustments with like-minded parties would be made at the appropriate moment.

The door of the Indira Gandhi Congress has thus been kept open for adjustments with any party which is prepared to jump on its bandwagon. But no fuss is being made over it lest the diehards of the party take it amiss and are weaned away by its rival—the Syndicate Congress. This tactical line of Indira Congress has been adopted also with the ostensible object of pressurizing the Right C.P. into further submission to it.

The urge of the Indira Congress to follow the Kerala pattern is nowhere as strong as in West Bengal where the CPI(M) is a very formidable force. To meet the challenge from the CPI(M) and its allies in this State, the Indira Congress is using the Right C.P. and the Bangla Congress to decoy the various constituents of the Eight-Party Combination, the

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Progressive Muslim League and other minor parties. Until some such arrangement favourable to it is made and there is a chance of defeating the CPI(M) led Front, the Congress-dominated Centre is in no hurry to order a fresh poll in West Bengal. However, as the time for the next General election is drawing nearer and the Congress and its allies are becoming more and more isolated from the people because of the deepening economic crisis and reign of terror, let loose in the State under President's rule, a sense of urgency is growing in the Indira Congress, Right C.P. and Bangla Congress to come closer together and entice as many other parties as possible to confront the CPI(M)-led Front.

Right C.P.'s Move

It is in this background that the resolution of the Right C.P. adopted at its National Council meeting held in Delhi in the first week of this month, has to be studied. The resolution calls for inclusion of the Bangla Congress in the Eight-Party Combination led by it and close co-operation and understanding between this combination and the "progressive sections" of the Indira Congress. Talk of "progressive sections" etc., is just humbug, the plan is to ally with the entire Congress and rally behind Indira Gandhi's leadership.

The second part of this resolution had produced sharp reactions among most constituents of the Eight-Party Combination. While the EPC has been trying unsuccessfully to draw in the Bangla Congress, the right C.P.'s attempt at bringing about close co-operation and understanding between the EPC and the Indira Congress has been resented by parties like, the Forward Bloc, SUC, SSP and PSP (dissident).

The reaction of the Forward Bloc Secretariat was that the Eight-Party Combination was formed to fight both wings of the Congress, which represented the vested interests, and also the "Left sectarian extremism" of the CPI(M) and that if the Right Communists now held a different view, it could not be accepted by the Forward Bloc.

The SUC leaders, Sri Subodh Banerjee and Nihar Mukherji,

said that they could not accept the view that the ruling Congress has assumed a progressive character simply because it had broken away from the other wing of the Congress. According to the SUC, Indira Gandhi continued to represent the "monopoly bourgeoisie and feudalism".

The PSP (dissident) and SSP have also not taken kindly to the Right C.P.'s proposal for alliance with the Indira Congress.

At a meeting of the Eight-Party Combination, the top leaders of the Right C.P., including Sri Bhupesh Gupta and Sri Bhowani Sen, tried in vain to persuade their partners to agree to the proposed alliance with the Indira Congress. Most of these EPC constituents plainly told the Right Communists that they considered the Congress the main enemy and, therefore, there was no question of their having any track with it. They said that the EPC would break up if any attempt was made to have any direct or, indirect alliance with the Congress.

Noting this bitter opposition to their proposal for an alliance with Indira Congress, the Right C.P. leaders tried to mollify the feelings of the EPC partners by saying that it was just a suggestion and that, in any case, the unity of the EPC would be preserved. They, however, implored their partners to give serious thought to their "suggestion" as, in their opinion, the concept of anti-Congressism was outmoded.

Subsequently, the Right Communists' National Council resolution was endorsed by their State Council, and again the leaders of this party tried to get the EPC to accept their proposal for an understanding with Indira Congress. At this second meeting of the EPC held, on October 16, barring a faction of the Bolshevik Party, none supported the Right C.P. The Right C.P.'s proposal was, therefore, shelved, at least for the time being.

Although at the end of the EPC meeting a statement was issued to the effect that the constituent parties were unanimous on the question of preservation of their unity, there is no doubt that the Right C.P.'s National Council resolution

has plunged the EPC into a deep crisis. The spokesmen of the Forward Bloc and SUC have said that they are keeping a close watch of the movements of the Right C.P. leaders. A leader of the PSP(dissident) has said that the Right C.P. should be driven out from the EPC.

Attitude of Rest of the EPC

Most of the constituents of the EPC are afraid of striking any alliance with the Congress for the simple reason that they are afraid of losing whatever influence they have among the people. These parties have noted that in spite of the treachery of the Right C.P. and the Bangla Congress, the people of West Bengal are heroically resisting the savage attacks of the police, CRP and the reactionary vested interests.

While declaring their opposition to the Congress, these parties have, however, reiterated their resolve to fight the CPI(M) also. They are very eager to have the Bangla Congress in their midst in spite of the fact that this party stands for the stepping up of repression on the people. They are also maintaining their unity with the Right Communists who are now openly working for an entente with the ruling Congress. Anti-Communism and opposition to the Congress cannot go together. Anti-communism only serves to strengthen the hands of the reactionary ruling classes.

The Forward Bloc and the SUC have already begun speaking out against the atrocities committed by the police and the CRP. They have declared their intention to launch a movement to protect the rights and interests of the peasants. They want to uphold the worker's right of gheraoing. They have also expressed the desirability of holding a fresh poll at an early date for installing a popular government.

By pitting themselves against the CPI(M) they will not be able to achieve any of these objectives. On the contrary, their opposition to the CPI(M) will inevitably land them in the camp of reaction, however much they say they dislike it. There is a lesson for them in the fate of the RSP in Kerala

which in the beginning took up a pose of opposition to both the Congress and the CPI(M), but has ultimately joined the company of Indira Congress.

The RSP in West Bengal is continuing its policy of keeping away from both the EPC and the CPI(M)-led Six-Party Committee. The crisis in the EPC has emboldened it to drop a hint to the Forward Bloc and the SUC that all of them join together and form a Socialist Front to fight both the Congress and the Communists. Apart from the contradiction inherent in this move, it is unlikely that the Forward Bloc and the SUC will throw in their lot with the RSP and go into political wilderness.

Bangla Congress Plans

After toppling the U.F. Government, the Bangla Congress has come out in its true colours. It has surpassed even the Congress in supporting the attacks of the police and the CRP on the people and in demanding more stringent measures against the democratic movement. It stands for a long spell of President's rule and revival of the Preventive Detention Act.

After cleverly keeping the Right C.P.-led EPC waiting for a long time on the issue of joining it, the Bangla Congress has come out with its own proposal for a democratic front. This proposed front will comprise the Bangla Congress and such other parties as may choose to join it. According to this proposal, the Bangla Congress has to be allotted 120 seats and the Indira Congress 90 in the next election. If the Right C.P. joins this front, it may be allotted about 50 seats and the remaining 20 seats may be distributed among the other parties that will fall in line.

The leaders of the Bangla Congress, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee and Sri Sushil Dhara during their last visit to Delhi, tried to convince the leaders of the Indira Congress that the Bangla Congress and Indira Congress together would get a majority of seats in the next election. The leaders of the Indira Congress are reported to have kept their decision on the proposed

democratic front pending and are watching the developments that are taking place in the Right C.P.-led EPC. The fixing of a date for the next poll in West Bengal will largely depend on these developments.

By putting forth its proposal for a democratic front the Bangla Congress hopes to bully the Right C.P. and its EPC partners into submission. It has based its tactical line on the assumption that it is not possible for the Right C.P. and its EPC partners either to fight the election independently or to make a rapprochement with the CPI(M). This move of the Bangla Congress has put the Right C.P. in a difficult position. Parties like the Forward Bloc, SUC, SSP and PSP (dissident) have, however, strongly reacted to it.

The F.B. and SUC leaders have said that the Bangla Congress will not be allowed to join the EPC if it forms a front with the ruling Congress. They have added that it will be wrong to think that those parties of the EPC who consider the Congress as their main enemy will compromise their anti-Congress policy and agree to an indirect alliance with the Congress(R) to win the election.

Savage Repression Continues

By unleashing a reign of terror the Congress-dominated Centre hoped to reduce the influence of the CPI(M) and thereafter to arrange for a fresh poll in West Bengal. But its plan has miscarried. Repression has not broken the backbone of the democratic movement. On the contrary it is growing from strength to strength and, consequently, the influence of the CPI(M) of the toiling masses is also steadily increasing. This has alarmed the ruling party and its stooges.

A hue and cry, is therefore, being raised on the question of law and order and on this pretext elections are being deferred and repression on the people is being further intensified. All manner of people from the extremists to the anti-social elements are being aided and abetted by the police to murder the organizers of the democratic organizations and the CPI(M). The arrests of two top-ranking extremists of

Andhra Pradesh from the house of a prominent Congress leader in North Calcutta a few months ago and the reported recent meeting of the Police Commissioner of Calcutta with Congress workers and anti-social elements in a private residence in North Calcutta are not isolated incidents. The attack of the police on the small hamlet of Chikarmari in North Bengal has shown how in the name of curbing the extremists, repression is being let loose on the people.

The savagery of the police is evoking protests from all sections of the democratic people. The Right Communists cannot ignore this reality for fear of the people. At the same time, they want to give an alibi to the police. While shedding crocodile tears for the victims of police repression, they hold the CPI(M) responsible for all this.

According to a report in their weekly, *New Age*, dated October 4, 1970, the CPI(M) has introduced crime and criminals into politics with far-reaching and disastrous consequences and this is providing the police with an opportunity to arm itself with draconian powers and come down heavily on the people and their movement. After giving a horror account of police atrocities the report concludes that there is no mass upheaval against the threatened police take-over of the State as the CPI(M)'s policy has not only brought in the police but is making it acceptable.

So the cat is out of the bag. The revisionists are making a public confession that the police is acceptable to them. As regards the canard that the CPI(M) has brought crime and criminals into politics, the boot is on the other leg. The people of Baranagar, Durgapur and Tribeni know through bitter experience what type of criminals the revisionists are employing in collusion with the police to murder the workers of the CPI(M) and the democratic organizations.

It is in this background the State Committee of the CPI(M) has concluded that in the coming days the ruling party will resort to more cruel methods to suppress the people's struggles. The Party will take the necessary steps to give protection to its workers and defend people's movements.

Behind the Wrath of Bourgeois Press Reviewers*

On Neville Maxwell's "India's China War"

M. Basavapunnaiah

Neville Maxwell, who served as the South Asia Correspondent of *Times* (London) and spent eight years in India between 1959 and 1967 and reported on the entire course of the India-China border dispute, has written this voluminous account, running into more than four hundred and fifty pages.

The author has brought his account up to the end of 1969, and concluded with the observation: "While the borders thus settled down into an armed truce, diplomatic relations between China and India were also frozen in a sort of limbo" and "it was years before any one in India was bold enough to suggest that one day relations with China would have to be mended, and when Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister, did put out feelers to that effect in 1969, she was criticised in Parliament." The author of the work would have been able to note certain rays of hope in the thawing of these frozen India-China relations, if he had covered his account up to September-October of 1970.

Before we ourselves go into the merits and demerits of the book, we have to note the spate of comments on it in the Indian bourgeois Press. Almost all the leading newspapers in the country have published long reviews by their leading columnists. From reading these lengthy comments in the Indian Press one gathers the impression that though the reception to the book is mixed, some trying to see certain

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valid points raised by Maxwell, the majority reaction seems to be hostile, criticising it as a biased account in favour of China.

At The Same Old Job

Before we examine whether it is biased or otherwise, we have to note that these commentators and reviewers, with all their posture of injured innocence and fervent patriotism, are, once again, at their old job, the job of inciting public opinion in the country with their exciting versions of the border dispute, and thus objectively assisting the situation between the two big neighbouring countries of the world to remain frozen.

It is this, if not any other reason, that evokes our interest both in the book and the Indian Press reviews, and we intend to objectively and dispassionately examine the account of Maxwell and do our little bit to assist the process of improving instead of further freezing, the distressing India-China relations which have existed for over a decade.

To cite some Press comments, *The Hindu* of Madras has published an article by J.B.Appaswamy. Stating that public opinion in India takes it for granted that India had done everything correct to settle the border dispute with China, but it could not succeed due to Chinese intransigence, that if it was defeated in war it was lack of military preparedness, etc., he writes: "These beliefs are challenged by Mr. Neville Maxwell in his new study *India's China War* in which he seeks to show that India's border claims were far from historically sound and that Peking was provoked into a war by India's forward policy of setting up posts in disputed territory"... "Mr. Maxwell's thesis cannot be lightly dismissed" since he acted as the Delhi Correspondent of London *Times* during that period and "he has had access to official files and is probably familiar with the contents of the unpublished Henderson-Brooks report on the military campaign."

The Political Problem

After discussing the points of the border dispute, its merits and demerits, he concludes, "the political problem raised by the war of 1962 still remains unresolved and Mr. Maxwell's book gives us a new perspective on it..." "by insisting from the start that the frontiers that India claimed were defined, traditional and historically valid, Mr. Nehru made it impossible to negotiate them fresh"... "Public opinion in India should consider whether it is worthwhile to pay the price of permanent hostility to China for the sake of a border in Ladakh, which remained undemarcated as a result of fluctuating strategies in the past."

The Times of India has published two review articles by Girilal Jain, who writes: "By producing a highly provocative, partisan and distorted account of the Sino-Indian border dispute, Mr. Maxwell has in some ways rendered a service to this country." The columnist, after making certain sharp remarks as to how Mr. Maxwell was allowed access to secret files of the Government of India, and arguing at length how the Indian side was just and correct, states, with the Lhasa revolt in March 1959, and the subsequent developments "the old policy visibly collapsed." "But Mr. Nehru had in advance worked out an alternative policy. The uproar in the Press and Parliament, which Mr. Maxwell has diligently detailed, denied him the necessary room for manoeuvre and may account for two serious mistakes he committed by allowing posts to be set up behind the Chinese line in Aksai-Chin and beyond the McMahon Line as shown in the map attached to the 1914 Simla Convention accords. But the overall strategy was not unsound as Mr. Maxwell would have us believe."

"Briefly, Mr. Nehru's calculations were that China's growing isolation from the international community, specially the Soviet bloc, and India's prestige and friendship with the two super-Powers strongly favoured New Delhi and that he would compel Peking to reach an honourable agreement provided the Indian army could fill the empty spaces and

prevent China from making good its claim, specially in the Western sector, before negotiations could begin.”

“It is self-evident that Mr. Nehru relied a great deal on the support of the United States and the neutrality of the Soviet Union,” and did not expect Chinese resistance and retaliation. “As it turned out, Mr. Nehtu’s calculations were proved wrong. The Chinese retaliated and made good their claims in the Western sector,”

This commentator, after vehemently defending the soundness of the Indian stand on the border dispute and criticising that “Mr. Maxwell’s book is full of contradictions and inaccuracies, it tears statements out of context” etc, concludes that the 1962 war “was not a great disaster and it did not prove that the Chinese were planning a major aggression against this country. India would have gained some advantage if it could hold on to some parts of Aksai-Chin. But for defence purposes, the Karakoram range is quite adequate.”

He, in a separate third article on the question, “How to end the stalemate”, expresses his despair thus: China’s “dispute with India over the borders has for all practical purposes been frozen to the satisfaction of China. No sane person here thinks it feasible to change these to his country’s advantage”. “The Chinese have been and are in all probability still prepared to give up their claims in NEFA against an Indian acknowledgement of their sovereignty over Aksai-Chin. But whatever one’s view of the advantages or disadvantages of such a deal for this country, no Government here can in the foreseeable future go in for it.” As “the situation has changed greatly since 1962,” “it should therefore be possible for the two countries to feel their way towards some degree of understanding.”

New Light On The Subject

Another review of Maxwell’s book in *The Statesman* by Inder Malhotra, has the following to say: “Mr. Neville Maxwell’s work would merit even greater attention because he was

involved in reporting the conflict from the vantage position of the *Times*' India Correspondent during the crucial years, and has lately devoted a two-year sabbatical research on the subject." Then the reviewer says, the author's approach "can briefly be summed up in three points:"

"First, the frontiers bequeathed to free India by the departing British were far from being firmly defined and accepted, leave alone demarcated, as India claimed."

"Secondly, according to Mr. Maxwell, India placed itself firmly on a 'collision course' with China when it declared the entire border including Aksai-Chin, non-negotiable, except for 'minor rectification here and there' and Mr. Nehru ordered the establishment of Indian posts along the border."

"Mr. Maxwell's third point relates to the much-discussed forward policy. Like many others, he holds this responsible for triggering off the war with China."

Inder Malhotra characterises Maxwell's account as having a "pronounced pro-China bias", that it "is not only compelling in its conciseness and vividness but also throws a revealing new light on the subject," the subject of the "military debacle" of 1962, that "his perspective and well-documented analysis of the debacle confirms two widely believed conclusions" etc. He reveals his mind in the very opening para of the review thus: The India-China border war "may have imposed on the ground the Sino-Indian boundary as the Chinese wanted it to be, and achieved Peking's wider objective of demonstrating to the world China's supremacy in Asia, but it certainly did not solve the boundary question between Asia's two largest countries. On the other hand, there has lately been an undercurrent of feeling in the country that the apparently unceasing and implacable hostility with China is doing India no good, " that "the deep freeze in India-China relations has deprived Indian foreign policy of much of its leverage. Others, especially the super-Powers, more particularly, the Russians, tend to take India for granted. To Pakistan, the Sino-Indian hostility has been a god-send; even Nepal is not averse to exploiting it."

Defence Expert's Review

Another significant review of Maxwell's book by K. Subrahmanyam, Director, Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi, is published in *The Hindustan Times*. This reviewer observes: "Mr. Neville Maxwell's book *India's China War* has already been subjected to extensive comments by a number of journalists in this country. By and large, the comments are not commendatory. One correspondent reflected the official view that it had woven a string of half-truths and misrepresentation around a pre-conceived conclusion. It is natural for an ordinary Indian to get indignant over the book."

"The author's bias and distortions are so blatant throughout the book that one is sorely tempted to dismiss the work as purely polemical. But it would be wrong to do so for two reasons"—to throw light on how "classified top secrets are reported not to be available even to the topmost officials of the Defence and External Affairs" departments, and on the truth or otherwise of the common belief that the political executive in the country was at fault in not properly equipping the defence forces, etc.

He continues: "We may analyse this book by dividing it into three parts. Firstly, Mr. Maxwell's interpretation of the dispute up to the Nehru-Chou En-lai meeting in April 1960. This gives away his entire approach to the question and reveals the extent of his general bias. Secondly, his narration of the forward policy and events leading up to the border war, based on unpublished Indian army documents. This sheds light on the elaborate alibi which has been constructed to explain away the deficiencies in the decision-making structure in the foreign and defence policies of India, which in fact were responsible for the debacle of 1962. And lastly, his account of the border war, highly distorted and even malicious in places, which yet throws fresh light on some of the events of the period." Subrahmanyam takes great pains to offer elaborate arguments in defence of everything *basic* in India's border policy with China, and goes hammer and tongs at Maxwell and his version of the entire problem.

To establish how "unbiased" our Indian commentators are and how 'biased' Maxwell is, it requires this extensive presentation of their views and our readers should excuse us for these lengthy extracts from the reviews by leading Indian journalists. It is presumptuous on the part of our Indian bourgeois journalists to assert that on the issue of the India-China border dispute they alone can present an unbiased and objectively correct account of facts and conclusions, leaving aside whether Maxwell's account can be proved biased or otherwise.

But on one thing we fully share with our Indian journalist friends when they bitterly complain that the correspondent of *The Times* (London) was given access to all 'top secret' files in the Defence and External Affairs department while denying any such opportunity to either the journalists or, for that matter, even to the members of Indian Parliament. But here again, they woefully misfire their criticism and attack certain individual officers in the concerned departments of the Government of India, while missing the Himalayan truth that Indian defence and diplomacy is still so slavishly dependent on Anglo-American imperialists, that no defence secret can be kept beyond their easy reach. Utter dependence for much of the military hardware and spares ties Indian defence to the apron strings of the U.S. and British Governments. Regrettably, no bourgeois commentator on Maxwell's book touches on this aspect, they vent their anger on him for securing access to all such so-called 'top secrets', which had been denied to them.

Most of these commentators on Maxwell's book may draw some solace by controverting him on some footling points and crying hoarse that it is full of conflicting arguments and contradictory conclusions. They may also draw the comfort that they were able to present a "truly patriotic and national" version of the India-China border war, biased in favour of India as against the pro-China biased account of Maxwell. If this is all that these "patriots" aim at, after nearly a decade of the Sino-Indian border war and its aftermath, it is really sad—for them, for the country and its future.

A careful examination of Maxwell's account and the numerous reviews of the Indian journalists would prove that the reviewers are shy of either pin-pointing the main points of Maxwell's account or rebutting them standing on solid ground themselves. Some of them even display half-baked military knowledge in arguing the Indian case in terms of defence strategy, that this 'pass' is the key to border defence and that 'hill-top' is vital for offensive military operations, not realising what all these mean in the context of present-day military technology and modern defence weapons, and completely ignoring the most vital aspect of the question, the socio-political, national and international repercussions.

Marx on Boundaries

While at the moment not eager to enter into a controversy over this aspect either with Maxwell or with his Indian critics, we, as Marxist-Leninists, are reminded of some very salient observations of Marx on the subject. He asks the question: "but, in good faith, is it not altogether an absurdity and an anachronism to make military considerations the principle by which the boundaries of nations are to be fixed?... "If limits are to be fixed by military interests, there will be no end to claims, because every military line is necessarily faulty, and may be improved by annexing some more outlying territory; and, moreover, they can never be fixed finally and fairly, because they always must be imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered, and consequently carry with them the seed of fresh wars." (*Civil War in France*)

It is precisely this correct outlook on the question of the Sino-Indian border dispute that the CPI(M), after it broke away with right C.P. and also while it was a part of the once united Communist Party, had been consistently advocating with the slogan of a political settlement of the dispute through peaceful negotiations, warning against the disastrous consequences of a military conflict on both India and People's China. For no other reason than firmly upholding and advocating this principled stand, the only correct stand which

can ever bring about the resolution of the Sino-Indian border dispute, the party was not only maliciously slandered for years as an “anti-national, traitorous, China lobby,” etc., its leaders and activists numbering over a thousand, were thrown behind the bars, under the hated Defence of India Rules for more than two and half years during the 1962-66 period. Do most of these so-called unbiased and objective-minded critics of Maxwell’s account who, today, wail that the border policy which ended in the border war of 1962 had resulted in the “imposition on the ground the Sino-Indian boundary as the Chinese wanted it to be,” “that the apparently unceasing and implacable hostility is doing India no good,” that the dispute is god-send for the Pak Government and such others to exploit against our country, that “the deep freeze in India-China relations has deprived Indian foreign policy of much of its leverage,” that it would be better “for the two countries to feel their way towards some degree of understanding,” etc., realise the great mischief done to the CPI(M) and the immense damage for the country by their chauvinist anti-China and anti-Communist campaign for years? Neither they nor their ruling bourgeois patrons show any such moral and political courage, and they are busy finding fault with Maxwell’s account, denouncing it as biased in favour of China, as a distorted version of facts. etc.

Maxwell’s Main Points

What are the salient and substantial political points that stand out from Maxwell’s account, besides the part dealing with the military tactics?

First, Maxwell for the first sixty-four pages of his book captioned “Historical Introduction: The Limits of Empire” deals with the situation that prevailed on both the Eastern and Western sectors of the Sino-Indian border, citing authentic and authoritative evidence in support of his conclusion. His conclusion regarding the Western sector is: “After 1899, however, there was, as far as the historical record shows, no further attempt by Britain to get China agree to

a boundary adjustment in the North-West. The sector from Afghanistan to Nepal remained undelimited, a problem in the mid-twentieth century for the two inheritors of Britain's power on the sub-continent, India and Pakistan, and for the People's Republic of China." (p. 36)

"For all the discussion in London and India about the boundary between Kashmere and China and the variations in conception of where, in Britain's interest, it should lie, there were no matching moves of troops or administrators. The frontier territory continued as it had always been, bleak, hostile and empty"... "The threat that nourished British desire for a boundary which would leave Aksai-Chin within India continued to the end of their rule, however."

Then, coming to the Middle and North-Eastern sector, Maxwell, quoting from a document, "Foreign office Memorandum, August 1912," states, the main aim of the British was that 'Tibet while nominally retaining her position as an autonomous State under the suzerainty of China, should in reality be placed in a position of absolute dependence on the Indian Government, and that there should be set up an effective machinery for keeping the Chinese out on one hand and the Russians on the other.'

"The Simla Conference thus ended in diplomatic hugging-mugging, with two participants in what was meant to be a tripartite conference openly signing a secret declaration;... But the central conclusion remain wholly clear, and was accepted as such by the British Government at the time: *the Simla Conference produced no agreement to which the Government of China was a party*. McMahon admitted this himself: 'It is with great regret that I leave India without having secured the formal adherence of the Chinese Government to a Tripartite Agreement,' he wrote in his final report to London. ('The fact (is) that the negotiations convened in Simla last year broke down,' the British admitted in 1915, and went on to explain why—because the Government of India had been 'unduly anxious to secure the best terms they could for Tibet'). Secondly, China who denied that Tibet enjoyed sovereign

identity or the treaty-making powers that go with it, stated formally, emphatically and repeatedly at the time that she would not recognise any bilateral agreement between Tibet and Britain.” (p. 49, emphasis original)

Maxwell concludes: “In the north-west, the British had made no further formal move about the boundary alignment after their abortive approach to Peking in 1899, and there had been no boundary delimitation whatever. That task was left to the successor Powers, India and Pakistan. In the north-east, the McMahon Line had secretly been agreed with the Tibetans; but from the beginning it had been repudiated by China, and was in practice being ignored by Tibet.”

“That in spite of those advantages, Britain left unresolved boundary problems to the inheritors of her authority on the sub-continent must be counted a considerable failure, and it was one which would cost India dear.” (pp. 64–65)

Notwithstanding the voluminous evidence adduced by both the Indian and Chinese Government during the days of the Sino-Indian border dispute between ‘59 and 62’, the fact that remains unchallenged is that no mutually agreed boundary line was either accepted or demarcated on the ground between the British Government on the one side and any of the Chinese Governments on the other, and both the successor Governments, i.e., India which came into existence in 1947 and People’s China which was established in 1949, inherited the disputed borders, whether the dispute was live or dormant.

The official version as was narrated by the then Prime Minister Nehru did not question the veracity of this particular fact, and we are at a loss to know how our Indian critics of Maxwell on this point, can brand Maxwell as biased towards China. They have simply avoided mentioning this starting point of Maxwell.

Second, following from this premise Mr. Maxwell has proceeded to his next logical conclusion that the failure of the two predecessor Governments, namely, the British Indian Government, and the pre-1949 regimes of China, to secure

a settled boundary between the two, did not leave a really international boundary between the two in the strict, accepted and modern scientific sense of the term, and it was incumbent on both, the newly established independent Government of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China, to secure such settled boundaries between the two countries.

Any assertion of the international boundary unilaterally by either India or People's China, Maxwell maintains, sows seeds of collision instead of paving the road for an amicable settlement of a mutually agreed boundary line.

The simple fact that after twentythree years of Indian independence and twentyone years following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the international boundary between the two remains a hotly disputed issue, still unresolved, even though an acrimonious controversy and conflict has continued since 1959 leading to a tragic border war in 1962, corroborates the truth of Maxwell's contentions. Maxwell's critics, who willy-nilly accept this truth and fact of life, attempt to gloss over this point, while formally realising the urgency and necessity of resolving the border dispute, but pleading that "no Government can in the foreseeable future go in for it."

Does it not show a howling self-contradiction in Maxwell's critics who are at pains to detect his conflicting and contradictory statements?

Government Of India's Stand

Third, Maxwell's important contention is, according to the documents and data he has cited in his book, the Government of India for its own reasons took up the position that there existed no question of a boundary dispute, that there was an accepted international boundary, and it was not prepared for talks and negotiations with the Government of People's China on that score. He cites Sir G.S.Bajpai, India's first Secretary-General, after his retirement and serving as the Governor of Bombay, who wrote to the External Affairs Ministry in 1952

urging India to take the initiative in raising the question of the McMahon Line with the Chinese Government, warning that to China the McMahon Line might be one of those "scars left by Britain in the course of her aggression against China...who...may seek to heal or erase this scar on the basis of frontier rectifications that may not be either to our liking or our interest;" K.M.Panikkar, Indian Ambassador to China, had advised against the raising of the issue with the Chinese Government, while stating that if "China raised that issue we can plainly refuse to open the question and take our stand that the Prime Minister took in his public statement that the territory on this side of the McMahon Line is ours, and there is nothing to discuss about it."

The author of *India's China War* also quotes Nehru's statements in Parliament in 1950: "The frontier from Bhutan eastwards has been clearly defined by the McMahon Line which was fixed by the Simla Convention of 1914. The frontier from Ladakh to Nepal is defined by long usage and custom." Answering questions Nehru closed his statement saying: "Our maps show that the McMahon Line is our boundary and that is our boundary, map or no map. That fact remains and we stand by that boundary, and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary."

Maxwell, as many in India and abroad, is fully aware of the fact that as far as the McMahon Line is concerned the Government of People's China was inclined to accept it, as part of an overall settlement of the entire border between India and China. And yet the Government of India's stand that "there is nothing to discuss about it" with the Chinese Government, a stand which subsequently was virtually extended to the North-western sector, according to Maxwell, was a "collision course" whether one intended it to be that or not.

Position On Western Sector Changed

Maxwell's critics may have their own ideas about the approach and role of the Chinese Government in adding to this

collision course, but how can they deny the truth that it was objectively a collision course which led to the 1962 border war, the dispute remaining unresolved, and a sort of cold war continuing between the two largest States of the world? Do events and life prove that it was a non-collision course, easing the tension and paving the way for the settlement of the dispute through peaceful talks and negotiations?

Fourth, Maxwell is critical of the Government of India's Forward Policy and shows how Prime Minister Nehru was shifting his stand regarding the Western sector from his earlier position—as it finally turned out, as described by the *Times of India* reviewer of Maxwell's book: "in any case, it is pertinent to remember that the Sino-Indian conflict and the war in 1962 were the result of disagreement not over the McMahon Line but over Aksai-Chin."

On August 31, 1959, Nehru, answering a query by Dewan Chamanlal, M.P. in the Rajya Sabha stated: "First of all, I would like to distinguish between the position in the North-east and the position in Ladakh. The position in Ladakh is different from the position in the North-Eastern Frontier Agency and these borders. All these borders are part of the so-called McMahon Line. If you accept the McMahon Line you accept all that frontier, really from Burma onwards to a good long way to Nepal. That does not apply to the Ladakh border which was for all these long years under the Jammu and Kashmir State and nobody knew exactly what was happening there although some British officers went hundred years ago and drew a line and the Chinese did not accept that line. That matter is clearly one for consideration and debate but that does not apply to this area."

Again on September 4, 1959, Nehru, answering questions in the Rajya Sabha, made the following observation: "Then there was a reference to certain regions in Ladakh. It is rather difficult for me to make any accurate statement about that. But so far as the corner of the Aksai-Chin area is concerned, that is the area across which the Chinese built a road two years ago or more, a road from Gangtok to Yarkand,

which passes through that area, that has been and is claimed by the Chinese as their territory, and I believe in their maps, too, not the new maps but the old maps, that is shown as their territory. That is disputed and there are two viewpoints about that. I do not know how many Chinese are there. I cannot say because so far as we are concerned, we have no representative, we can have none. It is not an inhabited area so far as areas go. It is at an average of 16,000 to 17,000 feet altitude and treeless, grassless almost or hardly of any kind, without any living thing there. It is frightfully cold, so I cannot give any information as to how many Chinese may be in that particular corner of Ladakh-Aksai-Chin area”...

“I cannot get any information. It is totally—I will not say totally—but it is not in our reach. It will take, if I send a party of explorers with exploring kit, about a month to get there”...“In places like this, decisions can only be made by conferences, by agreement. Countries do not—should not—go to war without proceeding in those other ways over such matters.”

Maxwell cites Nehru’s statement in the Indian Parliament which reads:

“...This Place, Aksai-Chin area, is (Indian) in our maps undoubtedly, but I distinguish it completely from other areas. It is a matter for argument as to what part of it belong to us and what part of it belongs to somebody else. It is not at all a dead clear matter. I have to be frank to the House. It is not clear. I cannot go about doing things in a matter which has been challenged, not (only) today but for a hundred years. It has been challenge to the ownership of this strip of territory...It has been in challenge all the time.

...I cannot say what part of it may not belong to us, and what parts may. The point is, there has never been any delimitation there in that area and it has been a challenged area.”

The author opines, “Nehru’s tentativeness about the Western sector did not last long even in his domestic utterances, and its disappearance can be traced to the return from London of

Dr.S.Gopal, Director of the Historical Division of the Ministry of External Affairs."

One may agree or disagree about Dr.Gopal's contribution to bringing about the change in Government of India's stance on the Ladakh border, but the change was obvious, and Maxwell says that this change had added to what he describes as the collision course. He also maintains, as against this stand of the Government of India, that the Chinese Communist Government was consistent in its stand on the border issue, namely, that it was always showing its readiness to accept the McMahon Line in the North-eastern sector, whatever their reservation, and was never prepared to yield its claims on the Ladakh sector, all along holding the view that the international border between India and China was a disputed issue and should be settled through mutual talks and negotiations.

Maxwell mentions Nehru's earlier sober utterances and replies such as: "that will be a struggle for life and death; not as the honourable member says—forgive my mentioning it—'go and occupy that land; force them out'." "Let us not boast. The issues are too grave for boasting. Let us not talk about how we will go and kick them out," "my whole soul reacts against the idea of war anywhere", "war between India and China would be one of the major disasters of the world," etc., and contrasts them with his later statement like that of October 12, 1962, openly giving a call to the military to "throw the Chinese out",etc., which culminated in the tragic border war.

The numerous Indian commentators who review Maxwell's book do not utter a word on this point of the author, may be because most of them and the Indian bourgeois Press had a big part in working up anti-Chinese passions in the newspaper-reading public and war-hysteria in the country and thus, steadily, forcing Nehru to change his earlier sober stance to the later 'hard line'—the hard line of asserting that what India claims as its international border between China and India was an irrevocable border line, maps or no maps, whether

People's China and India together settle and accept that border line or not.

It is rather interesting to note that all the bellicose forces that had a hand in leading India up to the garden path on the Sino-Indian border dispute and the dead-end that has been reached, have nothing to offer now than to give voice to the despair that the border war "may have imposed on the ground the Sino-Indian boundary as the Chinese wanted it to be," that "unceasing and implacable hostility with China is doing India no good," that the "deep freeze in India-China relations has deprived Indian foreign policy of much of its leverage, " that "whatever the advantages or disadvantages of such a deal (China giving up its claims in NEFA and India reciprocating in Aksai-Chin—M.B.) for this country, no Government can in the foreseeable future go for it" and the like.

When it is stated that the policy so far pursued regarding the international border between India and China which ended up in what is frequently described as the 'NEFA debacle', that "the dispute with India over the borders has for all practical purposes been frozen to the satisfaction of China and no sane person here thinks it feasible to change these to his country's advantage", what does it convey except admitting that it was a collision course and not a course for solution of the dispute? Why find fault with one who says it?

Communist Proposal of 1959

We neither place our trust and confidence in a London *Times*' correspondent like Maxwell, as was done by the Government of India and several officials of the Defence and External Affairs departments for impartial judgements, nor do we go into scurrilous attacks on him if certain facts cited by him are either unsavoury or cut the ground under one's untenable stand. For the benefit of all those who are either enamoured of seeing some "new light" in Maxwell's account written in 1970 or still fond of controverting some of his main political points, we draw attention to a resolution of

the Communist Party on this issue, adopted as early as November 15, 1959. It clearly states:

"In the interest of abiding friendship between our country and China, it is of utmost importance that the frontier between the two countries which stretches over hundreds of miles, should be settled finally and in its whole length."

"After carefully considering every factor, all the arguments advanced, the National Council feels that such settlement is possible if political and administrative realities are taken as the most important factor in the formal delimitation of the frontier."

"As regards what is generally known as the McMahon Line, it has been stated by the Government of China that the Line is illegal because it was the result of exchange of secret notes and was moreover never recognised by any Central Government of China. The Government of India, however, takes a different view of the matter."

"The National Council feels that whatever the origin of the McMahon Line may be, the fact cannot be ignored that for several years this has been the frontier of India and the area south of this Line has been under Indian administration. The National Council holds that the area south of the McMahon Line is now a part of India and should remain in India."

"As regards the Western border, the Government of India has taken the correct stand that the traditional border in this sector should be accepted. There is, however, a dispute as to what exactly is the traditional border, Pandit Nehru had stated in Parliament that this was 'a complicated matter... a vague area so far as the frontier is concerned because the frontier is not at all clear as in the case of the McMahon Line.' All this makes it obvious that the proper delineation of the traditional line would require friendly discussion between our Government and the Government of China."

"The National Council urges that the Governments of India and China should start negotiations without either of them making the acceptance of its own stand by the other as

a condition precedent for the starting of negotiations. Meanwhile, it is of paramount importance that border incidents and clashes are scrupulously avoided. For this, it is essential that pending final settlement, the status quo is maintained by both sides, no intrusions are made by any side into the territory held by the other and firing and similar harmful occurrences are avoided at all costs." (*The India-China Border Dispute and the CPI*, pp. 14,15,16)

If this 'home-made' Communist proposal for resolving the border dispute some eleven years ago was not palatable and looked as a "traitorous, anti national and China lobby" affair, and the 'foreign made' Maxwell formula of 1970 pleases them so much as to describe Maxwell's books "giving us a new perspective", we do not have a grudge on that score, because it is all a matter concerning the taste of the bourgeois landlord classes in India who are always fond of foreign goods, foreign capital and collaboration with it and foreign military aid for national defence.

Erroneous Political Assessment

But the question involved here is not whether the Indian ruling classes and other political parties were quite ignorant of all these facts connected with the border problem. The real issue was their totally erroneous political assessment of the national and international situation, and a thoroughly impractical and chauvinist outlook on the question of solving the delicate and complex Sino-Indian border problem. In Maxwell's opinion, "from beginning to end, Nehru and his colleagues were unwavering in their faith, that whatever India herself did along the border, China would not attack. That was the basic assumption of the Forward Policy, a military challenge to a militarily far superior neighbour."

This view of the author of the book cannot be dismissed as baseless, since such a dismissal would imply the attribution of another improbable and totally absurd assumption to the leaders of the Indian Government and its military generals—that the Indian armed forces had become that strong

and superior as to inflict an armed defeat on the war-seasoned People's Liberation Army of China. At any rate, it is useless to go into all these questions at this stage, though one thing stands proved—that both the political and military assessments which guided the border policy up to the stage of the border war of 1962 were totally faulty and defective as amply demonstrated by the war and events following it.

We are of the considered view that the so-called NEFA military debacle, which Indian commentators are too eager to discuss at length and in detail, and on which Maxwell too spends more than a hundred pages in his book, is in reality a *big political debacle* of the Government of India's Sino-Indian border policy. It is meaningless either to extol the Chinese victory in this one military engagement or to draw parallels of Dunkirks, etc., with the defeat of the Indian side. We will leave all these military enthusiasts to their display of military knowledge with which we totally disagree, since one such victory or defeat cannot prove anything worthy in terms of military strategy and tactics. But Maxwell, by poking his nose into the dreary details of different generals' conduct, political leaders' instructions, etc., which is neither wanted nor well meaning, has marred his otherwise objective account of the border dispute and its utility for the Indian reader.

But there is considerable truth in what he states: "The Indian role in international affairs after the border war was never what it had been before. Largely this no doubt reflected the impact of that debacle; an India whose weakness had been so brutally exposed, and who, for all her protestations to the contrary, seemed to be in tacit alliance with the United States against China, could no longer claim the role of leader of the non-aligned countries. But beyond that, the 1960s were to be for India the beginning of a period of mounting domestic difficulties. The border war and its consequences perhaps accelerated these, but they were it seems inherent in the country's political and economic development, and India's international role was bound to be diminished as her economic straits and internal political weakness intensified." (pp. 436-437)

To conclude, Maxwell's *India's China War*, whatever bias it has shown to China's case or whatever other defects it contains, —does one good service, at this stage of Indian and world development, namely, forcing a revival of the discussion over the frozen Sino-Indian border dispute, thus providing another opportunity to Indian public opinion as well as the powers-that-be to re-examine the issue so that they can find their way towards a solution of the problem. No one can predict an easy and quick solution, as it not only demands a correct and principled new stand on the part of the Government of India but it also requires a correct attitude and approach from the Chinese Government, both of which are not yet discernible.

CPI(M) Continues Principled Stand

But one thing is dead certain, the dispute now or ever cannot be resolved through military means, and military vying with each other is damaging to both the countries, more so to India.

Secondly, no mutually accepted and settled international border between the two biggest countries can come into existence, now or at any distant future, if our Indian Government refuses to revise its stand that our international border is what we had inherited from the former British rulers, on maps, and there is nothing to talk and negotiate in that regard.

Thirdly, the present frozen situation on the border, following the border war of 1962, and the continuation of the cold war between the two countries, work increasingly to do greater harm to India's cause, more than it does to the Chinese.

It is precisely these serious considerations concerning our people's and country's vital interests that prompted the CPI(M) to risk the wrath of the Government and other chauvinist forces and boldly and consistently advocate the slogan of the settlement of the dispute through peaceful negotiations, opposing military methods of solution. The rejection of this only reasonable solution during the last eleven years has not

done any good to the country; such continued rejection bring still more disastrous results to our people in future.

If our principled appeal does not make any sense to our ruling classes, for their sake, we cannot advocate some nonsense as our Right Communists have been doing when they say that the Chinese Communists had invaded our motherland with a greedy eye on the rich plains, oil-fields and tea-gardens of Assam and that a war against them in defence of the country in collaboration with the Government of India was the only patriotic duty of the Indian Communists.

West Bengal's Massive Answer to Central Government*

General Strike and Hartal on December 8, 1970

In deep hatred and anger against the diabolic crimes of the Central Congress Government in West Bengal people in every walk of life went on an all-complete general strike and hartal on December 8, 1970, in all the districts in the State.

In massive protest against the indiscriminate shootings and killings by the police, in defence of the peasantry's right to peacefully harvest the crop from the land they have occupied and tilled against price-rise and inroads into working class rights, against the Naxalite murder campaigns and the draconic black laws, workers in all the factories, employees of all firms, students and teachers of all educational institution in all the towns and the millions of peasants and agricultural labourers in the districts struck work for twentyfour hours in response to the call issued by the Rastriya Sangram Samity, the 12th July Committee and other political parties and mass organisations in the State.

The 230,000 jute workers in the 71 mills at Howrah, Hooghly, 24 Parganas and Calcutta went on an indefinite strike on December 7. The long-standing demands of the jute workers include gratuity, eight per cent bonus, special allowance for badli workers while they have no job, house-rent, etc. The CITU, INTUC, AITUC, the two UTUCs are leading the jute workers. The conciliation talks in New Delhi have so far failed because of the recalcitrant attitude of the jute barons.

*Published in "People's Democracy", Calcutta, December 13, 1970.

During the twentyfour hours of the general strike and hartal on December 8, all business activity in the sprawling city of Calcutta came to a total standstill. All public transport including trams and buses were off the roads, no workers reported for duty. Except police vans, there were no vehicles on the roads of the city. The Howrah and Sealdah railway stations were completely immobilised. All air flights to and from Dum Dum were suspended. The port remained totally paralysed. Factories, offices including those at Dalhousie Square, courts, schools and colleges had their shutters down. At Taltollah, Park Circus, Tiljala and many other localities impressive processions were taken out and rallies organised.

The police fired 25 rounds and arrested 51 people in the city during the day.

Identical was the picture at Howrah, Hooghly, 24-Parganas and other districts where hundreds of processions came out on the streets under the auspices of the CPI(M) and other parties and mass organizations. At Dum Dum, there was no activity in the big and small factories including Jessop, HMV, Aluminium, Hindusthan Steel. At Behala, Pioneer Plastic, Everlight, EIC, J. Stone and other concerns were closed. All institutions including the Railway workshop at Bijpur were deserted. The National Rubber, Bengal Pottery, Hindustan Gas at Tangra remained closed.

Burdwan presented a similar picture of complete success of the action. At Durgapur all the concerns including the steel plant, MAMC, Durgapur Projects, Chemicals, AVB, OGP, Alloy came under the all-inclusive sway of the strike. The hartal extended in all its completeness to the coalfields of Ranigum. All was silent around the Asansol-Burnpur-Chittaranjan industrial grid.

In the North Bengal districts, the tea garden workers of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri struck work in full. All the transport workers in Malda, Cooch-Bihar and West Dinajpur joined the hartal. In short the whole of North Bengal kept company with the southern region in making the day an unprecedented success.

Congratulating the people on their total participation in the general strike and hartal, Comrade Promod Das Gupta, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M), in a statement said : In the teeth of heinous police and CRP attacks, the people through their resistance struggles have froged the mightiest unity and cohesion. The democratic masses have come forward and joined the struggles in defence of the peasants' right to harvest in the face of jotdars Congress and police attacks. The all-complete hartal is a clear expression of this solidarity. The CPI(M) appeals to the people that this fighting unity of the democratic masses must be carried forward and the conspiracy of the oppressive ruling clique must be defeated.

In another statement Manoranjan Roy (CITU), K. G. Bose (12th July Committee), Arobindo Ghose (State Government Employees Co-ordination Committee), Abdullah Rasul (Kisan Sabha), Subhash Chakravarti (Students Federation), Buddhadev Bhattacharya (Democratic Youth Federation), Sukumar Roy (Biplabi Bangla Congress), Madhuri Das Gupta (Mahila Samiti), have greeted the people on their massive participation in the historic general strike and hartal.

On December 6, the day before the jute strike began, Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta :

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions condemns the recalcitrant attitude of the pared for a long-drawn strugpartite negotiations in Delhi which was reponsibile for the failure of the negotiations. The Central Government also has failed to take a firm stand during the negotiations and to compel the jute barons to concede the long-standing demands of the jute workers. The strike of over two lakh jute workers from December 7 has now become inevitable and the entire responsibility for this lies on the jute magnates and the Central Government.

"The CITU calls upon the jute workers to be prepared for a longdrawn struggle till the jute barons are made to see reason and come down for a reasonable settlement with the

unions in the jute industry. The CITU appeals to all unions in West Bengal irrespective of their affiliations to support the just struggle of the jute workers.

“The CITU fully supports the call of the Rashtriya Sangram Samiti for observing General Strike and Hartal all over West Bengal on December 8 in protest against the use of PVA Act and other draconian laws to curb the trade union and democratic rights. The CITU is confident the working class and the people of West Bengal true to their militant traditions, will show their determination to fight against all suppressive measures of the Congress Government and for the establishment of popular Government in the State at an early date.

“The CITU welcomes the fact that almost all central trade union organisations are supporting this protest action. This will enhance the sense of working class unity and solidarity which is absolutely essential to beat back the offensive of the Congress rulers.

“The CITU also welcomes the fact that several political parties are lending their support to this mass action. The grim reality of repression and fighting mood of the masses are forging an indestructible unity before which the present rulers of West Bengal will have to retreat. The CITU calls upon all workers and toilers to cement this unity against the common foe on December 8 which is bound to go down as one more historic day in the life of the people of West Bengal.”

Review of Kerala Election by the Central Committee of CPI(M)*

Kerala Elections : Central Committee Review

The Kerala elections, the capture of a majority of seats (69) by the Mini-Front-Indira Gandhi Congress combine, the formation of the Right Communist-Muslim League Ministry with the Indira Gandhi Congress supporting it from outside, the talk of a Kerala pattern of alignment—an effort at alliance of the Right Communists and other traditionally known democratic parties with the Indira Gandhi Congress against the CPI(M) and against the growing mass movement headed by it, have all to be properly assessed and the tasks facing our Party and other democratic parties have to be formulated.

Kerala Election Results

After the 1970 elections, the position of various parties in the Assembly is as follows :

	<i>New Assembly</i>	<i>Old Assembly at the time of dissolution</i>
Indira Congress	32	5
Kerala Congress	14	5
Congress (O)	4 ‡	4
Muslim League	12	14

*Published as a booklet.

‡Won as Independents with the support of the CPI (M) and its allies but after winning formed the Syndicate Group.

	<i>New Assembly</i>	<i>Old Assembly at the time of dissolution</i>
C.P. (Right)	16	20
R.S.P.	6	6
P.S.P	3	3
S.S.P.	7	4
I.S.P.	3	9
CPI (M)	32	49
KTP	2	1
KSP	2	1
Independents	—	11 ‡
	<hr/> 133	<hr/> 133

Thus it is clear from the seats won that the major beneficiary is the Congress, with the Indira Gandhi Congress, Kerala Congress and the Syndicate Congress together having 50 members, as against 14 in the old Assembly. The major loser is our Party which has now only 32 MLAs as against 49; and even including our close allies, the KTP, KSP and SSP it has only 43 as against 56 at the time of the dissolution of the old Assembly. The Mini-Front parties—the Right Communists, the League, the RSP, the PSP—have now only 37 seats as against 53 at the time of the dissolution including nine of the ISP who withdrew after the dissolution of the Assembly from the Mini-Front, won three seats and sits with the CPI (M) and its allies now.

The bourgeois Press and the Right Communist Press in India and its supporters abroad are tom-tomming this as a big victory for the progressive new coalition and as a big defeat for both the extreme reactionary triple or grand alliance of the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and Syndicate as well as the “adventurist Left-sectarian” CPI (M). Let these enemies gloat over their success! But a closer examination of the

‡ Two Karnataka Samiti, three elected on SSP tickets but sitting as Independents. One KKP (defector from the KTP), two Naxalites (K.P. R. Gopalan's Group) and two others, all expelled from the CPI(M) and one unattached Independent.

electoral results would show that there is no need for our Party or for the real democratic forces to get demoralised or dismayed with the electoral success of the enemy.

It is true that we have not been able to give an electoral defeat to the Congress-Right Communist-Mini-Front combination and prevent the formation of their Ministry in Kerala with its avowed aim of suppressing and destroying the CPI (M). As against the U.F. Government of 1967-69 against the Congress, the Mini-Front Government of the Right Communists with Congress backing formed in 1969 October, and its coming back to office after the elections are a temporary setback to the democratic movement.

An Analysis of the Loss of Seats

The loss of seats by our Party and front is mainly due to the Mini-Front parties headed by the Right Communists and especially the Muslim League joining hands with the Congress against our Party and our allies. Though we and our front made a big advance among the masses during the last five years, and especially during our ministerial period and later through the hutment dwellers' and other toilers' struggles, that advance among the masses was not enough to overcome this combined strength of the vested interests and give us victory in the majority of seats.

In 1957, our Party and Independents won 65 seats, because of multiple contests between the Congress, League, PSP, RSP and ourselves, even though we failed to achieve a united front of democratic parties. The Congress did not attempt to forge a front with the PSP and the League. They were confident of their victory on their own and did not expect our Party to win. During that election, out of these 65 seats we won, about 30 seats were won because of triangular and quadrangular contests. It is interesting to note that in that election, the Communist Party and its Independents contesting 120 seats out of 126 seats, polled 40.5 per cent of the votes, winning 65 seats, while the Congress contesting 124 seats polled 37.8 per cent of the votes winning 43

seats; the PSP contesting 66 seats polled 11.6 per cent and won nine seats (it had then an understanding with the League for mutual support); the RSP contesting 29 seats polled 3.4 per cent but won no seat; the League contesting 18 seats polled about 4.7 per cent and won eight seats.

In 1959-60, the Congress combining with the Muslim League, PSP and RSP launched against our Ministry the anti-Communist "liberation" struggle. The President dismissed our Ministry. Then the Congress-League-PSP combination was able to reduce our seats to 29, though our vote increased to 44 per cent. The vote of the anti-Communist front was 54 per cent (in which the Congress share was 35 per cent), the seats they won were 94. The RSP contesting separately 12 seats polled 1.2 per cent and won one seat.

Again in 1965, we and our Independents contesting 90 seats, won 44 seats, including one seat of the KTP against 36 of the Congress and 24 of the Kerala Congress. The SSP and the Muslim League with whom we had electoral adjustments won 14 and 12 seats respectively. Our front had 58 and Muslim League 12 seats, while the Congress and Kerala Congress held 60 seats, the remaining three being seats won by the Right Communists. If the Congress and Kerala Congress had been united, in spite of our electoral adjustments with the Muslim League and the SSP, we would have lost 14 seats. This shows that open division in the ruling class parties and no cross-firing among democratic parties are a decisive factor in winning the seats in the present electoral system. In 1970, if the Syndicate and Kerala Congress had also joined the Mini-Front-Indira Gandhi Congress alliance, our front would have lost another 30 seats.

It is also interesting to note that in 1965, our front's vote combined with the Muslim League vote was 40 per cent (our front includes SSP, CPI (M), KTP, KSP and Independents) and the Right Communist-RSP combination ten per cent, while the Congress, Kerala Congress, Swatantra and Jana Sangh had a combined poll of 48 per cent. In 1967, with the forging of the seven-party United Front, bringing

into its fold the Right Communists and the RSP as well, this United Front polled about 53 per cent of the votes while the Congress, Kerala Congress, Jana Sangh, Swatantra and Karnataka Samiti polled 45 per cent, a loss of three per cent in the voting strength of the divided ruling class parties, and the unity of all democratic parties against them brought overwhelming victory for the democratic forces. But in 1970, the above parties along with the Syndicate Congress could poll only 32 per cent; the League, the Right Communists, the RSP and PSP polled 24 per cent; while our Party and front along with the ISP polled about 40 per cent of the votes. But the increased percentage of votes of the Right Communists, the RSP and the PSP from ten per cent in 1965 to 16 per cent in 1970, while it is known that their mass influence had fallen sharply, is entirely due to the Congress giving a considerable number of its own votes to these parties. So we can assume that the three Congresses, the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party still have a voting strength of about 40 per cent. So one should not underestimate the hold of the vested interests from the apparent fall in the voting strength of the Congress from 38 per cent in 1957 to 19.5 per cent of the Indicate Congress in 1970 or 31 per cent of all the three Congress.

The vote of all the reactionary parties representing the ruling classes, all the three Congresses, the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party continued to vary from 48 per cent to 40 per cent during this whole period of 1956-1970. The Communist movement reached its peak influence in 1960. When it polled 44 per cent as against the 54 per cent vote of the combined front of the Congress, Muslim League and the PSP. But later due to the betrayal of the Right Communists, giving up Marxism-Leninism, advocating National Democracy, an alliance with so-called progressive sections of the ruling Congress, the Communist movement got split. The Right Communists carried on a vicious campaign against our Party, the CPI (M), as Chinese agents and wholeheartedly backed Nanda's slanderous "White Paper" and the detention of more

than 1,000 Marxist Communist leaders. It was under such circumstances when the Kerala mid-term elections were held that the lowest voting for the Communists was registered in 1965—24.3 per cent for the CPI (M) and 9.1 per cent for the Right Communists, a total of 33.4 per cent as compared to 44 per cent in 1960. It was again in that election that the ruling class parties, the Congress, the Kerala Congress, Jana Sangh and Swatantra polled 48 per cent, their highest vote. Even in 1967, these ruling class parties were able to keep up their percentage at 45 per cent, as against 53 per cent of the combined United Front of seven parties.

But now in 1970, these ruling class parties could claim influence only on 40 per cent of the voters in spite of the democratic facade the Indira Gandhi Congress got from its alliance with the Right Communists, the PSP and the RSP. The vote of the CPI (M) and its Independents alone being 30 per cent, the CPI (M) has become the single largest political party in Kerala, and the front it is heading commands influence on as large a section of the Kerala people as the reactionary ruling class parties combinedly can!

Further, the mass of the voters who are today behind the CPI (M) and the democratic front headed by it, come from the agricultural labour, the rural poor, the workers and urban poor, far more steeled in class battles and far more conscious than at any earlier period.

The ruling Congress Party, once in 1960 was forced to seek adjustments with other petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties, the Muslim League and the PSP, to fight the united Communist Party and its growing influence and to destroy the impact of the first Communist Ministry. Now, in 1970, once again, the ruling classes are forced to cover their ugly nakedness with not only the old traditional petty-bourgeois and bourgeois democratic parties but for the first time, to seek the cover of treacherous Social-Democracy, which calls itself "The Communist Party of India" to hoodwink the masses and to continue their class domination.

Now, in 1970, when the parties of the ruling classes

themselves are divided and the mass base of all these ruling classes and their parties is being shattered, the Right Communists have betrayed the masses, broken the united front against the Congress, led other parties also into the anti-Marxist front with the Indira Gandhi Congress, the dominant party of the bourgeoisie and landlords. Yet, though this anti-Marxist front was able to snatch seats from the CPI (M) and its front, and come back to ministerial office in the Kerala State, they were unable to either undermine the mass base of the CPI (M) and its allies or stop the fast growing alienation of the masses from the parties of the ruling classes, as seen by their vote of 40 per cent. It is true that the Indira Gandhi Congress manoeuvre to preserve ruling class domination and its hold over the masses and prevent their fast growing alienation from these parties through the services of the Right Communists and the other traditionally known democratic parties, had to a certain extent succeeded. It is now for our Party to move these masses under the influence of these parties to a clearer understanding of the issues, through economic and political struggles, and bring them over to the Marxist Party and its allies and to further isolate the ruling class parties, as well as their hangers-on.

Let us examine a little more closely the mass base of the different political parties in Kerala as revealed in the 1970 election, Let us begin with our own Party.

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Much is being made of the fact that our Party has lost about 27 sitting seats in the whole of Kerala. This is given as proof that the masses are deserting us. But they do not speak about the new seats which we have won. On the whole, our front consisting of the CPI(M), KTP, KSP and SSP and Independents have now only 13 seats less, i.e., 43 as against 56 at the time of dissolution of the old Assembly.

Let us now consider the reason for the loss of about 30 sitting seats:

In the Malabar area, excluding Malappuram district (where

the Muslims are in majority), the Muslim votes vary from 15,000 to 35,000 in each constituency constituting 20 to 30 per cent. Taking it that the Muslim League vote polled in most of these constituencies even in 1965 varied from 8,000 to 15,000, if these votes had gone to the Congress instead of being polled in favour of the CPI (M), we and our allies would have lost all those 17 seats which today we have lost in the whole of Malabar area. But in spite of League support to the Congress or its front candidates, we can assert that our Party candidates have increased their vote from 5 to 15,000 in each one of these constituencies.

Take the Nadapuram, Meppayur, Perintalmanna and Nilambur constituencies. Here the Muslim League in 1965 fielded its candidates separately from our candidates and got 13 to 14,000 votes in each of the first three and 9,000 in Nilambur. In all these four constituencies, our Party's voting strength in 1970 increased by 4,000 to 6,000. But when these Muslim League votes went to the Congress combination in 1970, our increased mass influence and voting strength were not enough to counter this and we lost the seats. This has happened in all other constituencies where we were defeated in the Malabar area.

But the fact remains that in all the constituencies in the Malabar area, we have improved our mass influence. In Palghat district we increased our vote from five to 10,000 in almost all the constituencies over 1965. We won all the seats, even though the Muslim voters in half a dozen seats vary from 10,000 to 23,000 as in Pattambi, where Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad contested. In Beppur constituency, in Kozhikode district, where Muslim voters number 35,000, constituting 40 per cent of the total electorate, Com. Chathunni Master, CPI (M) leader, won over his Muslim League rival by a margin of over 2,000, polling 5,000 more votes than in 1965. This became possible only because we have been able to win a large section of the Muslim voters to our side.

In the Cochin area, i.e., Trichur and Ernakulam districts, practically in each constituency our poll increased by 6,000

to 10,000 votes except in Perumbavoor and Karimanur. Our vote in 1970 is higher by about ten per cent than in 1965. In spite of this, we lost about eight seats, and that is due to the combined vote of the Congress, Muslim League and Kerala Congress against us.

In the Travancore area, in Alleppey district our vote in all the constituencies has increased from 10,000 to 20,000 except in Kallupara where it is only 5,000. The percentage increased to 44 from 27.

In Quilon district, our vote has increased from 5,000 to 15,000 in every constituency. Our percentage of vote has increased to 30 from 17 in 1965. This big rise is due to the impact of the agricultural labour movement in Alleppey district.

In Kottayam district our vote has increased in many constituencies by seven to 10,000 and in Vaikom by about 18,500 votes. The percentage has gone up from 21 to 33 but we pooled less in Devicolom, Poonjar and Palai and lost deposits in the last two.

In Trivandrum district, too, our vote has increased by four to 10,000 in almost all the constituencies except Nemom, Trivandrum -1, Kilimanur and Attingal where we polled 3,500 votes less than in 1965. Though we lost our traditional seats, we gained two seats in triangular contests, Parassala and Neyyattinkara. Our percentage in the district has gone up only by six from 34 to 40.

So, the picture that emerges from an analysis of the voting figures is that though the mass base of our Party and our close allies has increased throughout Kerala significantly during the last five years from 25 to 32 per cent (excluding the SSP), it was not yet enough to overcome the combined pull of the Mini-Front parties and Indira Gandhi Congress. The increase in our mass influence as reflected in our increased vote also reflects the mass politicalization during the entire period, the result of innumerable struggles of workers and the rural poor and the middle classes that has been waged during the period of our Ministry with our Ministry

not permitting the police to intervene against the fighting masses. It also reflects the effect of many beneficial measures which the U.F. Ministry undertook opposing the vested interests and the Central Government.

The biggest achievement of our Party, during this period, that is reflected in this election is the conscious effort to develop the agricultural labour movement in the State, on the question of their wages, and the right to homestead. There were innumerable struggles of the agricultural labourers, in the Kuttanad area of Alleppey district and in certain other areas. The movement to assert their right of ownership to homestead or to hutment dwellings from January 1, 1970 had vastly enlarged our influence among these sections. This struggle was markedly taken up in Alleppey and Ernakulam districts. The big jump in our voting strength in Alleppey and to a lesser extent in the neighbouring districts of Kottayam, Quilon and Ernakulam is the result of the successful development of this movement. But the fact remains that our Party has failed to develop similar movements in the other districts; the lesser advance in the electoral vote polled by us in these districts brings out this failure as well.

In the Narakkal, Tripunithura, Paravur and Perumbavur areas, our comrades did not adopt proper tactics in relation to the poor and middle peasant owners, those who own less than two acres on whose lands hutment dwellers are living. The law itself has allowed the ownership right to be exercised up to an extent of ten cents on one-acre owners and up to 20 cents on two-acre owners, to be shared among the hutment dwellers, if there are two or more than two dwellers living on such a plot. In carrying out this struggle our comrades should have exerted maximum efforts to see that some mutual agreement was arrived at between the hutment dwellers and the small owners, or showed alternative plots on Government land or on neighbouring landlords' surplus land not allowing the conflict between the agricultural labourers and small peasant owners to develop. In these constituencies our comrades have echoed and supported the

demand that every hutment-dweller should get ten cents each, even on the small owners' plots going beyond the law itself. This alienated some of the small owners' vote to the extent of two to three thousand votes and these seats were lost. But in Alleppey district, where much wider struggles were conducted, because of correct tactics, the bonds between the agricultural labourers and the middle peasants got strengthened. Even a few such stray mistakes would be taken advantage of by our enemy who would project them and propagate them on a large scale to instil fear in the middle peasant that even their land rights are not safe under the Communists and thus to alienate them. All mistakes and measures that bring the middle peasants into permanent clash with the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants have to be rectified urgently, in order to safeguard our movement. While these mistakes are to be immediately rectified, and while it is also necessary to take up the demand of the middle peasants, it is necessary to stress that the main weakness, in fact, of our Party in Kerala is that in the larger part of the State it has not yet been able to take up the issues of the agricultural labourers and the rural poor and develop their movement.

The Samyukta Socialist Party

The old Socialist Party under Sri Pattom Thanu Pillai in the Travancore-Cochin State converted itself later into the PSP. It joined hands with the U.F. in the 1954 mid-term elections, later betrayed its election pledges, broke away from the U.F. and formed a minority Government with its 17 members backed by the Congress, but was later ditched by the Congress. Even in 1952, it contested 71 out of the 108 seats in Kerala State, and won ten seats; in the Malabar area, it contested 21 seats and won four seats; the total vote it polled was 7.3 lakhs (14.5 per cent).

In 1957, during the second general elections, it had an understanding with the Muslim League, contested in the whole of Kerala 66 seats, polled 6.8 lakh votes, (11.6 per cent) but

could win only nine seats. In 1960, it joined hands with the Congress in its anti-Communist campaign along with the Muslim League; it was allowed to contest 33 seats, polled 11.5 lakhs (14.1 per cent) and won 20 seats; but once again was elbowed out by the Congress.

It was only in 1965, by which time it had become the SSP, that it came to electoral adjustments with the CPI(M), contested 29 seats, polled 8.3 per cent of the votes and won 14 seats. In the 1967 general elections, as one of the seven parties of the United Front, it won 20 seats out of the 22 seats contested, polling 5.5 lakh votes (8.7 per cent). Again, its anti-Communism raised its head and it got split into three groups, the ISP (9), PSP (3) and SSP (4) and another three sitting as Independents. Though the ISP group after the dissolution of the Assembly broke away from the Mini-Front and had electoral adjustments with the CPI(M) and its allies and contested ten seats, it could win only three seats, polling three percent of the votes. The PSP, allying with the Congress and the Mini-Front, contested seven seats but could win only three polling 2.7 percent of the votes wholly because of Congress and League votes.

The SSP group which stood all along from 1965 with the CPI(M) contested 16 seats, polled 4.7 per cent of the votes, and won seven seats. But out of these seven seats, except Chittor, Aryanad and Ettumanoor, all the other four seats, Kazhakuttam, Kuttanad, Muvvattupuzha, and Nattika are seats won through the new upsurge of the masses led by the CPI(M) and its allies.

We can say that because of their confused and inconsistent and wrong policies, the Socialist parties and groups have lost heavily during these two decades.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party

Out of the 14 seats that were allotted to this party by the Congress-Right Communist combine, we need not take into consideration the eight seats which they have not contested for more than a decade. The vote it polled, defeat or victory

of its candidate in these constituencies, are to be taken as that of the Congress, in its various forms—such constituencies being Irikkur, Kuzhalmannam, Kunnathunad, Mararikulam, Ambalapuzha, Kuttanand, Akalakunnam, Karimanur and Aryanad. In their traditional constituencies of Karunagapalli, Quilon, Eravipuram, the RSP-Congress combine could poll only the same amount of votes as they did in 1965 and retained their seats while the Marxist Party and the candidates of its front increased their poll from five to 10,000 votes. In Kunnathur and Trivandrum II, the RSP-Congress combine increased their vote by about 6,000 in each and won, though the CPI(M) and the SSP increased their vote by about the same number. The other seat the RSP won was Kunnathunad in Ernakulam district against M. K. Krishnan, our former Forest Minister with the support of the Congress. The RSP had not contested this seat for more than a decade. The highest amount of vote it got on its own in the State was in 1957, when it polled about two lakhs (3.4 per cent); its 1970 vote of 3.3 lakhs (4.4 per cent) is mainly that of the Congress combine. Its real mass base cannot now exceed a lakh in any case. It is confined to a part of Quilon district. In Kerala it is notorious for its anti-Communist stand throughout its existence except for brief periods.

The Right Communist Party

This party boasts of its great victory of winning over 50 per cent of the seats it contested and breaking into the Malabar base of the Marxist Party from which it had been excluded after 1965. It boasts of the three seats it has won in this area!

Of the three seats the Right Communists have won in the Malabar area, the Manjeswaram constituency was always a stronghold of the Karnataka Samiti from 1957. The Right Communist did not dare to contest it either in 1965 or 1967. Now in 1970, the Congress with all its vote could get the Right Communists to poll only 37.5 per cent of the votes as against the Karnataka Samiti candidate's poll of 35 per cent

and the CPI(M) vote of 27.5 per cent. This the Right Communists claim as their victory !

As far as their second victory in Malabar is concerned, it is Tellicherry. In 1965, their candidate, Sri V. R. Krishna Iyer, polled 7,000 votes, a bare 13 per cent of the votes and lost his deposit against the CPI(M) whose vote was 51 per cent. The CPI(M) had the full support of the Muslim League at that time. The Congress could poll only 36 per cent. Now with the League, Congress and the Right Communists joining together, they could muster a vote of 28,000 as against the CPI(M)'s 26,700. The Syndicate Congress had a separate candidate and he polled 6,000 votes, 10 per cent. Thus the Right Communists won this seat. It is wholly on Congress and the League vote they have got this seat.

Take their third seat in Malabar, Nadapuram. In 1965, the Right Communists polled 2,000 votes, 3.6 per cent and lost deposit. Even then, the Congress vote was 14,600 and the League vote was 13,900. The 1970 vote of all these parties is only 34,760 as against the CPI(M)'s 30,560. The Right Communists won the seat. It is again the Congress and League vote that gave them the seat.

To give another example of the Right Communists gaining mass influence.

In Kodakara, from where Sri Achutha Menon has got elected now, his party polled, in 1965, 19,000 votes and the Congress polled 16,000 and the Kerala Congress 5,000. Now Sri Achutha Menon has polled 24,000 and the Syndicate Congress 7,300 — a fall of 9,000 votes for this reactionary combine whereas the SSP, the ally of the CPI(M), increased its poll from 7,000 to 21,000, i.e., by 14,000. But for nearly 5,000 votes being declared invalid due to the confusion of ballot papers between the Lok Sabha (to which a by-election took place at the same time) and Assembly constituencies, Sri Achutha Menon would have been defeated.

But for the Congress and League support, the Right Communists could not have won a single seat. They have also lost their mass influence even when compared to 1965.

They are surviving only as appendages of the Congress, and serving the nefarious game of the Congress, the party of the ruling classes, of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. (See Table I in the Appendix)

From that table, it is also clear that the Congress had conceded many seats to the Right Communists where they polled zero to ten per cent or less than half of the Congress vote. There is also a fall in the Congress-Right Communist combined vote between 1965 and 1970 and a correspondingly large increase in CPI(M) vote in many of these constituencies.

The Muslim League

The Muslim League, out of the 21 seats it contested, won 12 seats, of which nine are in Malappuram district, two in Kozhikode district and one Kasargode, in Cannanore district. It lost the Cannanore, Kozhikode, Ponnani, Mattancherry seats, inspite of Indira Gandhi Congress-Right Communist support to it, to candidates supported by all the other parties. It lost the Guruvayoor and Kazhakuttom seats to Marxist front candidates in triangular contests. United opposition to the League-Congress-Right Communist combination reduced this combine's percentage of vote as compared to 1965, drastically as shown below :

Tirurangadi	From 80 to 50	Cannanore*	53 to 47.4
Tanur	87 to 72	Kozhikode II	55 to 45
Kuttiyuram	68 to 56	Mattancherry	50 to 30
Tirur	77 to 51	Guruvayoor	47 to 36
Kondotti	76 to 61	Kasargode	48 to 45
Malappuram	73 to 64	Ponnani	68 to 44

So, though the Muslim League maintains its influence on the mass of Muslim voters, broadly in the whole of Kerala, in Malappuram district where the Muslim masses are in a

*The second column shows the fall of percentage of Muslim League vote in comparison to 1965 when it got the vote of the Marxist Party and its allies, as against its 1970 vote when it got the vote of the Indira Gandhi Congress-Right Communist combination.

majority, there is a big fall in the percentage of vote of the League-Right Communist-Congress Combination. This indicates that Party has made a considerable dent in this area even among the Muslim masses.

We knew that the Muslim League and its leadership had never participated in any mass struggles and democratic movement. Our Party is also aware of the fact that the dominant leadership of the Muslim League represents the interests of the Muslim landlord, trader and capitalist sections, though the mass following is rallied behind it on the basis of defence of the interests of the minority Muslim community. But taking the realities of the concrete Kerala political situation into account, and considering that it would be incorrect to equate the oppressed minority political-cum-communal organization with that of the majority Hindu communal organizations such as the Jana Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, our Party had adopted the political approach of bringing the Kerala Muslim League into the anti-Congress democratic united front, if only the League leadership abandoned its anti-Communist stances and agreed to fight against the anti-people policies of the Congress Government. History has proved that such an approach to the Kerala Muslim League was correct, and the breaking up of the monopoly of Congress power in the State, reducing the Congress Party to a bare minority of nine in the Kerala Assembly and setting up of the anti-Congress U.F. Government which administered the State for thirty months with all its achievements, demonstrated its positive results. If the League leaders made a volte-face and turned anti-CPI(M) and pro-Congress and deserted the U.F. in the last quarter of 1969 typical of their opportunist class character, it does not disprove the correctness of our political approach. Our Party was not guilty of either forgetting the aspects of the League's communal orientation and calling it a "progressive, democratic and left" organization, or denouncing it as an arch-reactionary one as the Right Communist renegades have done denouncing the League reactionary in 1964-65 and hugging it as "progressive and Left" in 1969-70.

But remembering the class character of the Muslim League leadership, which consists of landlords, trader and capitalists, we should have made determined and serious efforts to approach the Muslim masses on their economic problems, roused their democratic consciousness and brought them into common mass movements and organizations. But there is a big failure in this regard. We have not taken up the land problem, hutment question or agricultural wages or demands of fishermen or other artisans coming from the poor Muslims against their own Muslim landlords and business interests. It is only by taking up such issues of the Muslim peasantry and Muslim poor that we could have drawn them into the democratic movement more closely, isolating the reactionary leaders of the Muslim League. We did not unleash such mass struggles and thus allowed the Muslim League leaders to consolidate their influence among the Muslim masses on the same old basis of community and obscurantism, allowing them to pose that all the beneficial things and rights the Muslims achieved were due to the League leadership.

We did not expose them when they demanded the removal of check-posts and free trade in rice in the State; opposed whole-sale trade being taken over by the State. (They knew that the Central Government was not permitting rice-mills being taken over by the State Government; and also that the Food Corporation of India was not prepared to take over distribution of food grains except at Taluka headquarters and that, too, under constant pressure from the State Government towards the end of 1969, yet the Muslim League leaders and the Right Communists, instead of attacking and fighting the Central Government, let loose a malicious campaign against the CPI(M) Food Minister.) We did not expose their education policies and utter partiality in sanctioning schools; their opposition to the impending land legislation, that made them finally throw their lot with the Mini-Front and the Congress, and overthrow our Ministry. It was only under the pressure of the mass campaign launched by us and the Kisan Sabha that ultimately they were forced to agree to

the land measure being enacted by October 17, 1969. Nor did we expose the shady deals of the Muslim League Ministers or of some Muslim League leaders.

But when the League leadership deserted us, and joined Mini-Front Ministry, and its Home and Police Minister let loose police repression, we swung to the other extreme. Instead of patiently explaining to the Muslim masses where their leaders' policies and actions were going to lead them — to the betrayal of the very interests of the Muslim masses by their hugging with the Congress — we made the Muslim League as a whole our main target of attack. And in the election, we made it a point to do everything to defeat the League, even going to the extent of supporting candidates whose links are known to be with the Syndicate Congress.

It is wrong on our part to have relegated to the background the principle of differentiating the masses from the leaders and to forget that our approach to them, in agitation and day-to-day work should be entirely different from the attitude we adopt to their leaders. Further, we have forgotten that our Party has a special political stand and approach with regard to the Muslim minorities, as an all-India policy. In our dealings, after the League leadership's betrayal, we tended to relegate all this to the background.

It we had a proper understanding that the united front which we had forged with the League and others was yet only an electoral united front, and that we have to necessarily go a long way to make it a fighting front for the demands of the people against the vested interests and the Central Government, we would have adopted different tactics towards the League leadership. We would have sharply criticised their wrong doings and obscurantist and anti-democratic preachings and actions and would have made special efforts to draw the Muslim masses into common struggles.

It was right on our part, after the League leaders' open betrayal of the U.F. Ministry by joining hands with the Congress to have made a determined effort to defeat them. We were right in putting up nationalist Muslims as Independent

candidates in five constituencies and our working vigorously for them. But it was wrong on our part to have extended support to the other five candidates who were known to be closely associated with the Syndicate Congress, which in its turn was actively linked up with the Jana Sangh. If we had a proper understanding, it would have been possible to find effective Independents, who would honour their pledge to be really Independents, and who would have nothing to do with the Syndicate Congress. We would not have given an opportunity to the Right Communists and the ruling Congress to carry on a malicious lying campaign against us throughout India that we had aligned with the reactionary Syndicate alliance and confuse the democratic masses and especially the Muslim masses, however limited and temporary this confusion and doubts might be. If we could not find such Independents, we could have put up our own Party or front candidates against the League. Further, if we see the record of the previous elections, in all these League strongholds, it was our Party candidates who had polled 25 to 35 per cent of the votes against the League as well as the League-Congress combination in 1960. In such a situation, putting up our Party candidates would have helped to further extend our influence among the Muslim masses.

The Three Congress Parties

These elections in Kerala have shown that the bourgeois-landlord classes, in the main, when confronted with the powerful challenge of the CPI(M) and its allies, have rallied behind the Indira Congress and government, as they found the Syndicate alliance had neither any mass appeal nor the ghost of a chance of victory. The Syndicate Congress is relatively a very minor force in Kerala. Of the 39 seats the Syndicate Congress contested, it could save deposits only in 12 and it polled only 3.5 per cent of the total valid votes, as against the 19.5 per cent of the Indira Gandhi Congress. In the ten constituencies where non-party Independents were put up against the League, four were elected and grouped

themselves as the Syndicate Congress Group in the Assembly. These dozen constituencies where the Syndicate Congress could save its deposits are mostly in the Travancore-Cochin area. Perhaps even this good showing in these few constituencies might be due to the electoral agreement with the Kerala Congress.

As we had expected, the Syndicate, Kerala Congress and Jana Sangh candidates were withdrawn in favour of the Indira Gandhi Congress-Right Communist combination, as for example, in Pudukally, Shertallai, Aranmula and Pattambi and in certain constituencies like Aroor, Mankada, Perintalmanna and Nilambur, where though they did not formally announce their withdrawal, they switched their votes to the Indira Gandhi Congress combination, to defeat our Party's candidates.

The Kerala Congress contesting 32 seats polled 500,000 votes (6.6 per cent) and won 13 seats, including one Independent supported by it. Together with the Independent who won from the Kovalam constituency it has now a legislative bloc of 14. Its main base is Kottayam district and certain adjoining areas of Alleppey, Quilon and Ernakulam districts. It is in this part that it has polled most of its votes (450,000). In these constituencies, its percentage is 37 per cent while that of the Indira Gandhi Congress-Right Communist combination 29 per cent, and that of the CPI(M) and its allies 32 per cent.

The election results show that the Indira Gandhi Congress in some measure was able to confuse the masses with her radical slogans and certain measures like nationalization of banks and de-recognition of princes and by her propaganda against the policies of the grand alliance of reaction. It has been able to slow down the growing disillusionment and Left orientation of the masses towards the policies and programme of the CPI(M). It has come forward before the eyes of the people as a fighter against the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh alliance, and fighter for a new deal for the masses. In this process, the Indira Gandhi Congress has been aided

by the Right Communists and other traditional democratic parties. We have not yet succeeded in debunking the ruling Congress propaganda and showing how this party is not fighting the reactionary grand alliance, but in the name of fighting them, has been really attacking the people, the democratic movement and the CPI(M).

We have much to do to expose the pro-Big-Business, landlord and anti-people policies of the Indira Gandhi Congress, and show how these policies and actions are nothing but carrying out the Syndicate slogans in practice and how the real fight against the Syndicate-Swatantra-Jana Sangh alliance, as well as Indira Gandhi's anti-people policies can be conducted by forging an independent democratic front and not by kowtowing to either of the Congress alliances. We lost sight of the masses who are rallying behind Indira Gandhi's apparent radical postures, and failed to initiate our slogans of propaganda, agitation and action to win them over from their leaders' anti-people policies and actions.

Some of Our Shortcomings

The Kerala election results have shown that our mass influence has grown as compared to the Congress-Mini-Front combination, and especially, in those districts where big agricultural labourers' struggles and hutment-dwellers' struggles have been conducted. The influence of the League on the Muslim masses is still dominant. The Indira Gandhi Congress has emerged as the real Congress, reducing the Syndicate to an insignificant force in Kerala and the Kerala Congress remains a strong force in the Catholic belt of Kottayam and round-about. Indira Gandhi has been able to swing large sections of youth and students among the Congress masses behind her. She has reduced the traditional democratic parties like the Right Communists, PSP and RSP to be more or less appendages of her Congress and uses them to cover up the ugly face of her bourgeois-landlord regime with the garb of democracy and Socialism. Polarization is taking place between the Indira Gandhi Congress and her Mini-Front on

the one side and the CPI(M) and its allies on the other side. The old anti-Congress united democratic front stands broken. The new regime of a Right communist-headed Mini-Front Government depending on the Indira Gandhi Congress has come into existence, pledged to carry out the programme of the Indira Gandhi Congress. This pattern is being held as a model for the whole country, especially for Bengal!

But the main defect in the functioning of U.F. Ministry, as well as the functioning of the U.F. and the tactics pursued in functioning them, is that it is not fully and correctly based on the understanding given in our Central Committee resolution, *New Situation and Tasks*, adopted in April 1967 immediately after the fourth-general elections: "...A closer examination of the nature of the political power that rests with the States and the scope of relief these State Governments can offer to the people, reveal their extreme limitations" though "the coming into existence of several opposition parties' Governments in States have roused big hopes and expectations among our people..." "Our Ministries without either entertaining undue illusions about giving relief in a big way or courting despair that nothing can be done under the present set-up should always bear in mind that they, as the Party's representatives should strive to tender our bona fides... In a word, the U.F. Governments that we have now are to be treated and understood as instruments of struggle in the hands of our people, more than as Governments that actually possess adequate power, that can materially and substantially give relief to the people."

Though we accepted this resolution and tried to implement it and even came out in furious conflict with the Right Communist leader M. N. Govindan Nair's "administration and agitation cannot go together" slogan in particular, our functioning of the Ministries was on the basis that our Ministries could give substantial relief to the masses, through the State Government, even forgetting the courts and the judiciary and of the whole State structure! We functioned as if we would have plenty of time and the bourgeois-landlord

Congress regime at the Centre would permit us to run the U.F. Government for the full term of five years.

We have also in practice tended to forget that "the deepening crisis and its devastating results have placed before the people only two alternatives: either all the anti-imperialist and democratic forces are speedily organized and united to lead an assault on the big bourgeois-landlord regime and go forward to carrying out the democratic transformation or allow the big bourgeoisie to surrender our national independence and sovereignty to the U.S. and other imperialists, step by step, *and to mount brutal attacks on the people's livelihood and liberties, perpetuating their naked class rule and ruthless exploitation.*"

Hence, we lost the sense of urgency in the functioning of our Ministries, in the unleashing of mass movements and in uniting the democratic forces and developing the U.F., and in gearing up our mass organizations and the Party to meet the expected offensive of the ruling classes. The practice of our Party had been dominated with bourgeois parliamentary illusions and was to work within that constitutional limitation. We have not yet seriously moved to function as a serious proletarian revolutionary party ready to meet at any moment the class enemy's offensive, while utilizing every opportunity, the parliamentary victories as well as all the legal possibilities. We have not been able to impart this consciousness to our Party at all levels, and this becomes glaring in the context of the Ministry's functioning.

If we had had this sense of urgency and the correct revolutionary perspective, we could have, within the first few months, come out with a series of land reforms legislations, each one separately dealing with one specific issue conferring benefits on the agricultural labour, poor and middle peasants, homesteads rights, proprietary rights to the small tenants, lowering ceilings, debt relief, graded tax on the larger landowners, exempting the poor, etc.

We could have initiated measures to effectively prevent the employers' attacks on workers through prolonged closure

of their enterprises to starve them to surrender, apart from not allowing the police to intervene against the toiling masses in their struggles against the employers. We could have also initiated schemes for giving relief to the unemployed, as we had been able to increase the emoluments of State Government employees and teachers. We could have enacted many a labour legislation and would not have allowed T.V. Thomas, the Right Communist Minister, nor the Labour Minister to come out with labour policies, which our Party had to openly repudiate.

In dealing with bureaucratic officials, and especially recalcitrant police officers, we tried to keep them under the leash, resorting to the usual practice of transfers, etc.

Our Ministers got bogged down in individual representations, transfers and promotions. Our local committees, instead of mobilizing the masses at the village and local administrative level forcing the local officials to carry out measures and orders beneficial to the people, tended to rely on Ministers doing all this for them by issuing orders from above. The impossibility of doing this and the necessity to build a *de facto* new people's administrative structure that would attend to the needs of the people, is not grasped by our Party committees and cadres.

We have no illusions that many of these radical measures to implement the agreed minimum programme of the U.F. would be allowed to be on the Statute Book by the Central Government or by the courts or would be implemented in practice by the bureaucracy. But if we had boldly initiated them and pressed them both at the level of the Cabinet and the U.F. Co-ordination Committee, we could have tendered our *bona fides* to the people, and could have exposed the real culprits who stood in the way of these people's measures and could have unleashed mass movements to overcome these obstacles and press forward.

It is true that from the very beginning of our U.F. Ministry, whenever our Party initiated any agitation and struggle against the Central Government, the Muslim League representatives,

and the Right C.P and ISP leaders, were opposing them. Their slogan has been "We would function within the four corners of the constitution and courts." To give only the most glaring examples: on the food question, they were not prepared to launch a struggle against Centre's refusal to honour its promise of guaranteed rice supplies; Centre's refusal to grant prompt permission for the debt relief legislation and certain labour laws; Centre's pressure to modify the Land Reforms Bill in favour of plantation owners; Centre's imposition of its Ordinance to suppress the Central Government employees' strike, insistence on prosecution of the strikers; Centre's refusal to give necessary financial aid to meet the increased dearness allowance of Government employees or for relief to the unemployed or for rapid industrial development.

Our Central Committee resolution in the very beginning had warned about this possibility:

"The class character and composition of these Governments (Kerala and West Bengal U.F. Governments) do reflect in the policies they frame and implement and different parties and groups in these Governments try to put different imprints of their own, even on the commonly accepted governmental programme. This should not be lost sight of by our representatives.

"The Governmental programme adopted and endorsed by parties in the fronts cannot be taken for granted as far as the masses are concerned. The task of mobilizing the mass of the people around specific issues as they arise and carrying forward the unity of the allies in the fronts and Governments remains as an important one before our Party and its representatives in the U.F.s." (p. 62)

"Our Party should mobilize ever wider popular support to these programmes and expose every obstacle placed in their way and all attempts to torpedo them by the Central Congress government as well as its party's agencies working in the respective legislatures.

"In doing so our Party will have to preserve its independent identity and should not hesitate to come forward with

open criticism of the Ministries, if they are found drifting too far from the commonly accepted policies and popularly expected performances. Of course, earnest attempts by our Party's representatives should be made at the level of the Co-ordination Committees and U.F. Cabinets to prevail upon other partners and their representatives to strictly adhere to the policies, promises and pledges commonly made to the people." (pp. 67-68)

So, the failure of our Kerala unit is not that it has adopted a sectarian and bossist attitude towards other partners in the U.F. Ministry or even that we had been hasty in pushing radical measures to implement more than the agreed minimum programme as the Right communists and their ilk accuse us. But our failure has been that, faced with opposition from U.F. partners on many issues even to the limited extent we had initiated, we retreated and tended to bring forward measures and issues that would be more or less acceptable to them. A tendency of tailing behind the vacillating and opportunist back-sliding of U.F. partners was prevailing.

Our Kerala unit was criticized on these aspects by our Central Committee from time to time, and concrete guidelines were laid, and measures to be immediately taken up were suggested. Party ranks and lower committees also brought to light sharply the damage this tailist and drifting trend was causing to the movement and to the Party. Our State Unit strove to correct many of these short-comings in due course of time and gave a conscious lead to coordinate local mass struggles into Statewide coordinated struggles to overcome the obstruction of the vested interests and the Central Government. It had started vigorously exposing the manoeuvres and conspiracies of the Right Communists, the Muslim League and the ISP leaders.

The biggest success of this was on the question of the land reforms legislation. It was under the pressure of our Statewide intensive campaign for early enactment of the legislation that the other parties were forced to agree to give priority to the Land Reforms Bill. The Bill was seen through

the legislature in a matter of less than ten days. It was as early as in September 1969, long before the legislation was passed, long before our U.F. Ministry was toppled, that the State Kisan Sabha under our Party's leadership had firmly declared that it was going to implement the provisions of the Bill from January 1, 1970, irrespective of whether it was formally passed by the legislature or President's signature was obtained and even if the courts came in the way of its implementation. It was this decision and campaign that unleashed such a mass upsurge as forced the U.F. partners to fall in line to pass the legislation quickly and that also forced the President to give his consent before the deadline and later enabled the Mini-Front Ministry to declare that it had come into force from January 1, 1970. Based on these decisions, preparations were made which enabled the launching of the great hutment-dwellers' movement and ownership rights on one and a half lakh hutments were successfully asserted in face of brutal landlord and police attacks.

It is thus evident that our Party in Kerala *did strive its utmost* to utilize the U.F. Government as a weapon of struggle in the hands of the people, and it was this that increasingly endeared it to the workers and peasants, enhanced its revolutionary prestige and strength, became a cause for the panic and bitter hostility of the ruling classes and was at the root of the conflicts with several other parties of the U.F. and some of them deserting and betraying it.

In fact, it is this correct political line of ours that enabled the Kerala State unit of our Party to emerge as the first party both in terms of votes and seats in the State, a big advance when compared to the period prior to the year 1967 — all this in the teeth of opposition and disruption organized by the forces of international Right-revisionism and Left-adventurism on the one hand, and on the other, hostile attacks and conspiracies of the bourgeoisie and their accomplices inside the country.

Our Kerala unit in its resolution of October 3 stated: "The main weakness of our movement is that we have not

yet been able to liberate it fully from the theory of making the organised working class movement an appendage of bourgeois politics, the ill-effects of revisionism which developed in the united Communist Party. The revisionists in India, as everywhere in the world, had dissolved the working class which should stand in the forefront of the struggle for democracy and Socialism in bourgeois politics, for winning some partial economic demands. In opposition to this the task of fighting on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, of raising the working class which is awakening to elementary class consciousness through economic struggles to the position of the leader of a revolutionary political movement has yet to be accomplished.

"If all these weaknesses are to be overcome and the entire worker-peasant movement is to be organised and strengthened on a revolutionary basis, the shortcomings in the ideological and organizational work of the Party have to be speedily overcome. As an inalienable part and inevitable result of the revisionism that has come into policy matters, bourgeois methods of work are influencing us in day-to-day work, life outlook, organizational forms etc. The dark shadow of bourgeois parliamentarism which lengthened after 1952 has dimmed the revolutionary outlook of the Party. Instead of selfless and self-sacrificing day-to-day work, an atmosphere of luxury, power-hunger and personal rivalries corresponding to it has spread in the Party. The revisionist leadership of the undivided Party after 1952 changed the organization and style of work from top to bottom to suit this. Our Party had realized this and the C.C. adopted a resolution on organization in 1967 containing directives to reorganize the Party on revolutionary basis. But we have not been able to implement these directives or reorganize the Party on that basis. As a result, the Party which should organise revolutionary work has been engaged in bourgeois parliamentary activities and mass movements corresponding to them; as a natural consequence tendencies of power-hunger, personal rivalries, etc., which are part of the bourgeois

parliamentary approach began to raise their head here and there; the iron discipline which should characterize a revolutionary party was shattered and anarchic tendencies began to grow. A conscious attempt was made to give this the cover of 'inner-party democracy' and uncontrolled petty-bourgeois democracy took the place of democratic centralism in the party organisation. If at least now we do not in an organised way fight these wrong tendencies which came into existence in the united Communist Party, the Party and the democratic movement which should grow under the leadership of the Party will be shattered.

"A political situation has been created with the elections which contains all the possibilities to remove these weaknesses in the Party's approach, work and organization. The masses who have reposed their confidence in the CPI (M) and the front formed with the Party's active participation and the numberless workers who worked unstintingly for the Party are the biggest guarantee that the Party can be reorganized on a revolutionary basis and the revolutionary mass movement can be strengthened. The Committee assures the people of Kerala that it will engage itself in the task of further strengthening the movement with the help of these masses and selfless workers."

Conclusion

The meaning of the formation of the Right-Communist headed Mini-Front Government with the full backing of and in complete political alliance with the Indira Gandhi Congress for all India must be understood. The masses turning away from the Congress can be increasingly rallied by the united democratic forces and the Congress can be routed or curbed in several States. The Congress sees its doom approaching. It is therefore seeking the help of traitors to divert the attention of the masses, to utilise their power at the Centre to attack the democratic forces and secure a victory for itself. The Congress realizes that by itself it is getting too weak to withstand the onslaught of the masses. The Right Communist

leaders have become an open and unashamed agency to shore-up the weakening power of the Congress.

But the masses are moving forward, frustrating all the dreams of the Congress-Right Communists that this new pattern of treachery will produce stable results anywhere. The "Kerala victory" is bound to be a short-lived victory. Notwithstanding bribery and corruption from the Centre, the basic problems of Kerala will require an answer and that will not be forthcoming from either the Congress or Congress-Mini-Front combine.

But the people of Kerala and the people of India must take the challenge of the new pattern seriously. It is a pattern mostly meant for the Indira Gandhi Congress to secure victory at the next polls. Once that democratic facade is secured, with the aid of the treacherous parties, the way will be opened for large-scale repression against the people and unabashed police rule as seen in West Bengal. The so-called new pattern is a cover for police rule embellished by Right Communist justification and support.

The Central Committee while congratulating the people of Kerala on their splendid struggle and thanking the lakhs of people who have voted for us, calls upon them to be vigilant and strengthen their unity. It calls upon the people of Kerala to realize the great danger created by the formation of the Mini-Front-Congress combination. The joint efforts of the masses behind all parties are required to stem the danger arising from direct or indirect Congress rule. The tables can be turned by a united front of the fighting masses of Kerala against the attacks of the vested interests. The masses whichever party they follow, will be soon under the direct attack of the police. They all must unite and resist together the attacks of the Congress and its allies. Our Party pledges itself to fight for the unity of the people. It realizes that the treacherous leaders of some parties still continue to confuse and mislead their following and that their alliance with the Congress is not yet understood in all its implications. Our Party will make every effort to forge an irresistible united front against the Congress and its tools.

APPENDIX I**Declaration of the Kerala State Secretariat of CPI(M) of September 21, 1970.**

The Secretariat wants to warn the people that in line with the traditions of the Congress and parties allying with the Congress, the new Ministry will launch severe attacks on the mass movement and give it the cover of anti-Marxism. The Secretariat wishes to assure the people that it will be with them in their resistance to these attacks.

The invalidation by the court of some clauses of the Land Reforms Act has created a situation of grave danger facing the peasantry and we assure them that we will join all other democratic forces inside as well as outside the legislature for necessary measures to save the peasants from this danger.

The vested interests in the rural areas, are striving their utmost to deprive the hutment-dwellers, tenants and agricultural labourers of the benefits accruing to them from the Land Reforms Act. We assure them that we will do all that is within our power to defeat these efforts of the vested interests.

Policies that are being pursued in the name of "increasing agricultural production" and "green revolution" are such as help the big landlords garner huge profits while they harass the agricultural labourers. We would strive to unite all the working peasantry against these policies and for this purpose try to bring about amicable settlements of all disputes between agricultural labourers and middle peasants.

In the name of a "crisis in industry" the capitalists are resorting to retrenchment and wage-cuts. The workers are bound to wage struggles against these attacks as well as for the realization of their immediate demands. We make it clear that we will adopt such an approach as will help the fighting workers and their organizations.

The unemployed, the teachers, the Government employees and other sections of the middle class employees are facing several difficult problems. Policies pursued by the

Congress Government help the intensification, rather than the solution of these problems; it is to these Congress policies that "non Congress" parties like the Right Communists, the RSP and the PSP are extending their support. All these sections of the people will, therefore, have to carry on an energetic fight against the policies that will be pursued by the new Kerala Government. They can rest assured that we will stand with them in these struggles.

Small entrepreneurs and traders, all section of the peasants other than the very rich landowners and other small and medium property holders have to face the policies of the Central Congress Government which are detrimental to their interests. The new Kerala Government to be formed with the support of participation of the Congress will be such as helps a handful of big landowners and monopolists to secure all the assistance and concessions and deny their legitimate due to the small property owners. These small property holders can rest assured that we will be with them in their struggle against these policies of the Government.

Kerala State is being kept backward in several respects including industrial development. The local Congress itself had very often been reluctantly forced to join the protest registered by other parties against Central Government policies in this regard. Local Congress, however, have never been prepared to do anything effective to resist the policies which are detrimental to the best interests of Kerala. The main slogan of the Congress leaders during the recent election has been "Give your votes to those who do not countenance the anti-Centre struggle." It is under the control or with the participation of such a Congress that the new Kerala Government will be formed. Backwardness of Kerala, therefore, will undoubtedly continue. The Secretariat wants to make it clear we will play our role in the struggle against this.

In short, the policies pursued by the Congress and parties which are collaborating with it will further intensify, rather than help solve, every problem faced by every section of the

people in Kerala separately and by the people of Kerala as a whole. The overwhelming majority of the people of Kerala will therefore be forced to rally themselves against the new Government to be formed with the participation or under the control of the Congress. The Secretariat assures the people that our Party will strive to ensure the success of all these struggles; it will be with this objective that our Party will function both within the legislature and outside.

The Secretariat is sure that not only the voters who voted for us and the parties and individuals who stand with us, not only the active workers who made it possible for us to win such a large number of votes, but even those who voted and worked against us, would cooperate with us in these struggles. For, the new Kerala Government to be formed either with the support or participation of the Congress will be pursuing policies which are detrimental to the interests of the masses who have been rallied within the Indicate front and the Syndicate front. All these people will be obliged — tomorrow, if not today—to fight the policies pursued by the new Government. The people can rest assured that our Party will exert all its might to unite all these sections of the people and forge a real anti-Congress democratic front.

Appendix II

Central Committee Resolution On Kerala and Political Situation

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) which met in New Delhi from October 7 to 11 adopted the following resolution on the Kerala election and the political situation :

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) heartily congratulates the three million voters of Kerala who reposed their confidence in the CPI(M) and its allies, and pledges to carry forward the struggle against the bourgeois-landlord regime of the Congress party to ever new heights. It compliments its Kerala State unit for carving out

such a proud place for the Party among the people, through its selfless work and sacrifice in leading mighty class and mass struggles. The Central Committee further notes with satisfaction that this great advance has been registered overcoming the disastrous effects of the Right-revisionist and Left-adventurist disruption of the Communist movement on the one hand and against the combined onslaught of the Congress Government and its stooges on the other.

The results of the mid-term elections in Kerala, contrary to the false and mischievous propaganda of the ruling Congress party and its Mini-Front allies, conclusively prove that the CPI(M), far from being isolated from the people, has emerged, as the single biggest political force in the State, enjoying the confidence of ever-increasing sections of the workers, peasants and other democratic classes. The 30 per cent of the votes polled and 32 seats won by the CPI(M) and its Independents, in the teeth of the combined opposition of the ruling classes and their servitors go to demonstrate how the political line of the CPI(M) has scored tremendous successes.

The simple fact that the CPI(M) which, placed in a comparatively more favourable position during the successive elections of 1965 and 1967 could not secure more than 23 per cent of the total votes polled, and has now secured 30 per cent of the votes against a united anti-Communist opposition, shows the solid gains registered by the Party. In short the CPI(M), today on its own, has acquired as big a mass base in Kerala as the once-united Communist Party has during the election of 1960 which came in the wake of the notorious anti-Communist "liberation struggle" headed by the Congress party and its Central Government. The fact that the CPI(M) and its allies have scored 40 per cent of the votes polled, and secured 46 seats in the legislature, frustrating the foul efforts of the class enemies to completely isolate and smash the Communist Party of India (Marxist), confirms the correctness of its political line.

The CPI(M) rejects the Right Communists' slander, peddled

by the entire bourgeois Press, that it is allying with the Syndicate reaction, and warns all the democratic and progressive forces that this slander is deliberately coined and wilfully spread to cover up their own nefarious tactics of uniting with the ruling Congress and its Government, betraying the anti-Congress forces and the pledges given to them for years together. There are in fact a number of cases where either the Syndicate candidates withdrew in favour of the Indicate-mini-front candidates or the Indicate-mini-front candidates withdrew in favour of the Kerala Congress candidates in order that their common enemy, the candidates of the CPI(M) or its allies, be defeated. Further, in Pattambi where Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad was opposed by the Right Communist candidate, and in some other constituencies, the Jana Sangh gave its full support to the Congress-Mini-Front candidates against the Marxists.

It should be noted that this election took place against the background of certain very significant political developments in the country which show (1) that the crisis which has engulfed the bourgeois-landlord regime is ever deepening, (2) that the various parties representing the ruling classes are trying to devise ways and means of resolving that crisis at the expense of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people and (3) that certain bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties in the traditional non-Congress democratic movement headed by the Right Communist Party are helping the ruling classes in their attempt to save their regime.

The mid-term elections that took place in four States in early 1969, particularly the election in West Bengal, showed that the rapid fall in the popularity of the ruling party, evident in the fourth general elections, could not be reversed. Both the sections of the Congress leadership had realized that they could not stem the tide of the growing anti-Congress forces and continue their one-party monopoly rule and that a coalition with other parties was a necessity. They felt the need to meet the mounting wave of popular protest against the regime which assumed the political form of non-Congress

united fronts, particularly those of Kerala and West Bengal, by a coalition of forces which represent the ruling classes.

This realization however did not unite them. The differences over the question of coalition not only further intensified the inner-party crisis in the ruling Congress, but actually ended in a big split of the party into two in mid-1969.

The Syndicate wing was advocating an avowedly reactionary line of uniting with parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra with a view to launching a frontal attack on the lives and liberties of the people, a line of shifting the internal and external policies of the Government further to the Right. The Indira Gandhi wing, opposed to this reactionary alliance and its political line, sought to bolster the tottering rule of the Congress by seeking the support of some democratic parties. To this end, it sought to give a Left image to its policies by sponsoring such measures as nationalization of banks and advocating speedy land reforms. As pointed out by our Party, this was also a tactic of breaking the growing unity of democratic forces and isolating the revolutionary movement headed by the CPI(M).

Subsequent events have proved the correctness of this understanding. The Indira Gandhi wing of the Congress, behind the cover of these radical slogans, however, has been hatching plans to undermine their adversary, i.e., the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) and other parties, above all, the two State Governments of Kerala and West Bengal headed by these radical democratic forces. It was at the very time when the CPI(M) and its allies were doing everything to beat back the offensive of the Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine, to help the election of Sri V.V.Giri as the President of the Indian Union, to defend the nationalization of 14 major banks and so on, that they were hatching these conspiracies.

The Indicate Congress was able to hatch this conspiracy against the CPI(M) and other radical political forces precisely because the revisionist and some other pro-landlord-bourgeois

elements were as apprehensive of the growth of the militant democratic movement in the country as the avowed representatives of the ruling classes themselves.

It is useful to note in this connection that, as early as in the mid-fifties, a section within the Communist and Socialist movement had set before themselves and before the country the perspective of collaboration between themselves and the then united ruling Congress Party. The notorious deal struck between the leadership of the then PSP and the Congress in Travancore-Cochin in 1954 was the first straw in the wind, the first indication that as elsewhere in the world, Social Democracy in India was prepared to help the ruling classes out of the crisis.

This was followed by the open advocacy of a programme of "National Democratic Front including the Congress and Communist Party, leading to the formation of a coalition Government" by a section of the leaders of the then undivided Communist Party of India. This too, was the first indication that a section within the Communist movement had started on the road of collaboration with the ruling classes to save their regime from the deepening crisis engulfing them. It was this section of the leadership of the undivided CPI that subsequently transformed itself into the present Right C.P. They however could not have their way at that time because, due to the overwhelming strength of the Congress party, it was not prepared to have a coalition and therefore even some of the revisionist leaders did not consider it practical to pursue that line. A section of the then undivided CPI leadership however persisted in the advocacy of the line of collaboration with the Congress and forced a split in the Communist movement.

It was therefore with the greatest reluctance that, after the crushing defeat suffered by them in the 1965 mid-term election in Kerala, the revisionists thought it advisable to don the garb of anti-Congressism and to join the CPI(M) another democratic forces in 1967-69 in forming non-Congress Governments. Even after adopting this policy, however, they

persisted in their anti-Marxism and conspired with the anti-Marxists within these united fronts as well as with the Congress in order to weaken and "isolate " the CPI(M) within these united fronts. They therefore, saw in the Indira Gandhi Congress's search for "allies " in the anti-Marxist "Left" a golden opportunity to continue to advocate and practise their policy of collaborating with the ruling Congress Party and fighting the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) and its allies.

The character of this new alliance was seen in the nature of the regime established by the Mini-Front in Kerala which, as is well known, could not remain for a single day without the direct and open support of the Congress. It was seen also in the Presidential rule established in West Bengal with the direct and open support of the revisionists and their allies in the Eight-Party Combination and the Bangla Congress.

The very formation of the Mini-Front Government in Kerala and the establishment of President's rule in West Bengal were accompanied by a violent police-goonda offensive against the people. The landlord-capitalist classes who could not have their way when the CPI(M) Ministers were refusing to put the coercive State apparatus at their disposal, now have the administration at their beck and call. The firings, lathi charges, lock-up tortures, prosecutions and security proceedings etc., all of which were intended to crush the agrarian working class and other people's struggles in these two States after the formation of the Mini-Front Government in Kerala and the Presidential regime in West Bengal — go to show that the revisionists have become shameless agents of the ruling class in using the State machinery against the working people. It is therefore not surprising that the entire bourgeois Press which was hysterical in its attack on the first Communist-led Ministry in Kerala (1957-59), as well as on the 1967-69 United Front Governments of Kerala and West Bengal, paid glowing tributes to the "efficiency" with which the Right Communist-led Government of Kerala in

1969-70 maintained "law and order". It is equally significant that one of the promises made by the leaders of the Mini-Fron on the eve of the recent mid-term election was "a firm policy of preserving law and order".

Having thus proved their bona fides before the ruling classes the Right Communists became the most reliable ally of the ruling Congress in its twin aim of projecting a "Left-ist" image before the people and wielding the big stick against radical democratic forces. It was clear to Smt. Gandhi that the advancing tide of the militant mass movement which was getting politically crystallised in the united fronts formed in Kerala, West Bengal and certain regions in other parts of the country, could be arrested only if the ruling Congress got effective help from the revisionists and such other apparently leftist elements as the PSP, RSP and so on.

The mid-term election in Kerala was a test for this line of collaboration between the Indicate Congress on the one hand and the Right Communists and other 'Left' parties on the other. And the result has proved that this line had produced better results for the ruling classes than the one advocated by the Syndicate Congress and its allies. For combined as it was with one more measure of implementing the long delayed Ten-Point Programme (abolition of the privileges and privy purses of the former princes), the alliance forged by the Indicate Congress in Kerala with three "Left parties (the Right C.P., RSP and PSP) enabled it to pose before the people as a "progressive force". This naturally had considerable mass appeal and therefore enabled the Indicate Congress to secure the big bulk of the votes which used to be rallied behind the undivided Congress. One of the causes that enabled Indira Gandhi to mobilise the bulk of the Congress votes behind her was the fact that she was able to rally behind her the bulk of the vested interests in Kerala who were facing a formidable challenge from the revolutionary democratic movement headed by the CPI(M).

Coupled as this rally of the Congress votes behind the Indicate Congress was with the pooling of the votes which

could be mobilized by the constituents of the Mini-Front, the Congress was able to increase the number of seats won by it from five in the old Assembly to 32 now. The Mini-Front, too, gained out of this alliance in the sense that two of the four parties, who, on their own cannot expect to get a single seat (PSP and RSP), were able to get as many seats as they had in the Assembly that was dissolved ; the Right C.P. which had its seats reduced from 20 to 16 can also console itself with the fact that it would have lost all the 16 seats had it not the support of the Indicate and the Muslim League; as for the fourth (Muslim League), it is true that on its own, it may expect to get only about half a dozen seats, but it has been able to raise it to 12 (although this is two less than the 14 which it could secure in 1967).

The result of election therefore can well provide satisfaction for both the Indicate and the Mini-Front, particularly since the total number of seats secured by them all has enabled them to form a new Government. It is therefore understandable that all of them consider the result extremely satisfactory and that they should start talking of Kerala having set "a new pattern" for the rest of the country.

The "new pattern" set by the Indicate Congress and its Mini-Front allies in Kerala, however, has not prevented the further erosion of the popular influence and prestige of the Congress. For, despite the fact that in terms of the legislative strength of the Indicate Congress separately as well as of the coalition between the Indicate and the Mini-Front they have won the election the popular vote polled by the Indicate Congress, Right C.P., RSP, PSP and Muslim League was 49 per cent in 1965, 54 per cent in 1967 and 42 per cent in 1970. On the other hand, the combined total of the votes secured by the CPI(M), SSP, KTP, KSP and ISP was 34 per cent in 1965, 35 per cent in 1967 and 40 per cent in 1970 respectively. There is thus a fall of the vote secured by the Indicate combination between 1965 and 1970, while the votes secured by the CPI(M) and its allies registered a growth from 1965 to 1967 as well as from 1967 to 1970.

An equally important fact to be noted in this connection is that the "new pattern" set by the Indicate and its allies is riddled with internal contradictions. The very fact that the Indicate with its 32 member representation in the legislature is keeping out of the Ministry and allowing the 37 member Mini-Front to run the Government, with the leader of the 16 member strong Right C.P. heading the Government, shows that it is not easy to form and function a Government of coalition with such disparate elements as are included in the Mini-Front and Indicate Congress. The deep division between the all-India and Kerala units of the RSP on the question of joining the Ministry also underlines the difficulties involved in the formation of such a coalition. The problem that will arise in consequence of these internal contradictions will of course be sought to be resolved, since every one of these parties is interested in preventing the radical forces represented by the CPI(M) from advancing further and winning victories in the future. The very attempt at solving them would, however, give rise to new problems since there are innumerable contradictions among the various forces that constitute the Mini-Front-Indicate combination.

The biggest of these contradictions, is the way in which Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her colleagues of the Indicate Congress are trying to use the "spectacular victory" they secured in Kerala to further strengthen themselves throughout the country. However much the Right Communists might wish that their collaboration with the Indicate Congress begun in Kerala would extend itself to West Bengal and other States and ultimately to the Centre, Indira Gandhi considers the essence of the "new pattern" to consist in the emergence of her party as the biggest party in every State and in the Centre which therefore can dominate over its smaller "allies".

In Kerala itself, it is clear, the Right Communists are in the leadership of the Government only on sufferance. Even this much of elbow-room will not be allowed to the Right Communists in other States. For the only consideration on which "allies" will be chosen and positions given in the

alliance will be the extent to which a particular arrangement will help the Indicate Congress to dominate over its "allies".

This was clearly seen in Uttar Pradesh. In relation to Charan Singh, the Indicate Congress showed in the beginning the same spirit of apparent "self-abnegation" as was shown in relation to the Right Communist Party in Kerala. This, however, was only a stepping stone for the subsequent entry of the Indicate Congress into the Ministry, followed by the final act of throwing Charan Singh out. There is no reason to think that better consideration will be shown to the Right Communist party in Kerala or other "allies" that will be found in any other State. The essence of the "new pattern" as envisaged by the Indicate Congress is thus its own domination.

This however, will release forces of resistance to the intrigues resorted to by the leaders of the Indicate Congress. The brazen manner in which the office of the State Governor and the President of the Indian Union were misused by the Central Government in the party interests of the Indicate Congress in U.P. has already evoked protest from certain elements which it was the intention of the Indicate Congress to rally round it in its so-called "struggle against Right reaction and Left adventurism" parties like the PSP and DMK. It speaks volumes for the degradation of the Right C.P. that it alone of all parties in the country has taken a stand of support to the actions of the Governor and President.

The high-handed action of the Central Government in Uttar Pradesh has brought into the open the attempt made by the Indicate Congress to ride roughshod over all the opposition elements and, in the process, to violate the democratic rights of the elected legislature to decide who should hold the reins of administration in a particular State.

This of course is not the first time that the Central Government has used its own authority, as well as office of the State Governor to dismiss Governments which it does not like and to institute President's rule. The notorious Central Intervention in Kerala in 1959 and similar interventions in

West Bengal and some States in 1967-69 showed the callous attitude adopted by the ruling party at the Centre towards the principle of State autonomy and the rights of the legislature. The high-handedness of the Central Government, however, is no more confined to action against State Governments headed by the Communists, but has now developed into an all-out attack against the democratic rights of the legislature and State's autonomy itself. That is why almost all other democratic parties except the Right Communist Party have joined hands in raising their voice of protest against the Central action in U.P.

The effort of the Indicate Congress to set a "new pattern" which will enable it to rally the Right Communist Party and some other "left" parties to strengthen itself carries with it a number of contradictions which would further accentuate the crisis of the bourgeois-landlord regime. The more "spectacular" the victory won by the Indicate in collaboration with the Right Communist and other "left" parties, the deeper the contradictions among the various sections and groups of the ruling classes themselves. At the same time, the deeper the contradictions within the ruling classes and the more intense the crisis of the regime, the sharper will be the attack launched by the ruling party and its allies on the radical democratic movement represented by the CPI(M) and its allies and the more shameless will be the Right Communist defence of the regime.

Indicative of this latter fact is the disgraceful manner in which the National Council of the Right Communist Party in its latest political resolution has called for a fight to the finish against the CPI(M) as the essential pre-requisite for building what it calls "the unity of Left and democratic forces". Reading through those paragraphs of the resolution which deal with the allegedly "terroristic" activities of the CPI(M) in West Bengal, one is reminded of the notorious Nanda "White Paper" of January 1965 issued in justification of the country-wide arrests and detentions of the leading members of the CPI(M). That "White Paper", it will be recalled, was

based on the lie and slanders invented by the leaders of the Right Communist Party on the eve of, and immediately after, the break between the revisionists and Marxists in the Indian Communist movement. Having thus played the role of the star-prosecution witnesses in the frame-up against the CPI(M) in 1964-65, it appears that the Right Communists want to repeat the performance again. They have thus become the real shock-troopers of the ruling Congress Party in its policy of so-called simultaneous fight against Right reaction and left extremism which in really boils down to a verbal fight against Right reaction while directing frontal attacks against the advanced democratic movement led by the CPI(M).

It is not possible here to expose the innumerable lies and slanders with which the Central leadership of the Right Communist Party has packed its recent resolutions on the Kerala election and on the political situation in the country. While reserving a full and detailed exposure of these lie and slanders for a subsequent occasion, it is necessary to draw attention to the basic line running like a red thread through those resolutions. That line is of collaboration with the bourgeois-landlord regime in order to try to destroy the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M). It is worthy to note that the very political resolution which calls for "unity" with the Indicate Congress in order to "isolate" and destroy the CPI(M), catalogues a series of pro-landlord and pro-monopolist policies pursued by that very Indicate Congress which goes to show that this party is the most determined champion of the interests of the landlords and the monopoly bourgeoisie. Having made such a form all denunciation of the policies of the ruling party, however, the Right Communist National Council shamelessly defends the anti-democratic actions of that very Government in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. It echoes the voice of the Central Government that President's rule has to continue in West Bengal till such time as "law and order" as envisaged by the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes is re-established. As for Uttar Pradesh, there again the Right Communist Party has proved to be His

Master's Voice in defending the universally-denounced imposition of President's rule.

Note cannot but be taken of the role played by international revisionism in emboldening the revisionists in our country to adopt such shameless policy of defending the bourgeois-landlord regime and in launching violent attacks on the radical democratic forces in the country. Those who began with public denunciation of the CPI(M) at "a group which split the Indian Communist movement at the dictates of the Chinese C.P." have now ended with lauding the shameless intrigues of the Indicate Congress for maintaining itself in power as a "heroic struggle of the progressive Congress against Right reaction." It is from this laudation of the Indicate Congress as a "progressive" political party and the denunciation of those who fight against that Congress as "sectarian and adventurists" that they have come to the position of characterising the Right Communist betrayal of the radical democratic movement as an instance of "creative Marxism."

The Central Committee is distressed to note that certain circles in the international Communist movement are advertising this "victory" of the Indira Gandhi congress-Mini-Front combine against the CPI(M) and its democratic allies as a victory for democracy and progress in India. It is strange and monstrous that open collaboration and unity of the Right Communists with a bourgeois-landlord party and its Government, which has misruled the country for a quarter of a century and landed it in the present mess of economic-political crisis, is not seen as the grossest betrayal of the people and outright treachery to the cause of Marxism-Leninism. It is a shame that this is the contribution to the cause of Indian revolution and the working class of India by such international circles.

In spite of all this, the CPI(M) has been able to withstand the assault against it, precisely because it stood on the firm ground of the rapidly developing mass movement without being deflected from the correct path of uniting all sections of the democratic movement, with building the unity of the

working class and peasantry as the core of the unity of the democratic forces. The CPI(M) is determined to pursue this path and, in the process, to fight all forms of revisionism, whether of the Right or the "Left" type.

The 30 lakh votes secured by the CPI(M) and its allies (as opposed to just over 40 lakhs secured by all the bourgeois, petty bourgeois and landlord groups together) strengthens the confidence that the path chosen by the CPI(M) is correct. All the more remarkable is this heavy vote in favour of the radical democratic forces represented by the CPI(M) in view of the fact that all the odds were against it. The Indicate Congress and its Mini-Front allies saw to it that the election was conducted at the most inconvenient time and under the most difficult circumstances. The choosing of the season in which the bulk of the working people cannot participate in political activity and the rushing of the election without sufficient time for the rectification of the mistake in the electoral rolls, made it difficult for the radical democratic parties and groups to get their real mass influence adequately reflected in the size of the popular vote.

The Syndicate alliance which, some sixteen months ago, had embarked on its grandiose plan of taking over the reins of the Central Government and implementing its line of abject surrender to internal reaction and foreign monopolists, has received a number of setbacks and has been thrown on the defensive. However, it would be wrong on the part of democratic forces to underestimate the danger represented by it. The democratic movement must therefore continue to exercise its vigilance against it.

The Indicate Congress and its political line, no doubt, have scored some initial success for the ruling party. A careful analysis and examination of the developments, during the last one year, reveal how shaky and short-lived are these successes of the Indira Congress and its allies. Events have begun to show that the Indira Congress and its government are no less trustworthy defenders of the monopolists and big landlords, and that they do not hesitate to suppress the class

and mass struggle of the people with an iron hand. The free use made of the Central Reserve Police through the agency of the Achutha Menon Government in Kerala and direct President's rule in West Bengal and the arrests, lathi-charges, shootings and tortures in jails and police custody which are practised on a mass scale, are speedily shattering all such new illusions. These repressive measures, used by several State Governments led by the Indira Gandhi Congress against the struggling workers, peasants, middle class employees students and others, are on the increase, and they are wanting to arm themselves with still more draconic laws and powers to beat down the fighting people. The deepening crisis and the rising curve of mass struggles are speedily unmasking the democratic and socialist facade of the Indira Congress, making it increasingly difficult for its servitors to freely sell Indira Gandhi's "new radicalism" to the people.

The CPI(M) is aware that it was under the impact of the developing economic-political crisis that not only the ruling Congress party was split into two, but several other political parties, too, faced disunity, disintegration and splits among them. It is again under the same impact that the new alliances sponsored or forged by the bourgeois-landlord parties are coming up against innumerable hurdles and obstacles, leading to new splits. The Indicate's alliances with Charan Singh, BKD, Gurnam Singh's rebel Akalis, Badal's Akali Dal and the Mini-Front's short-lived alliance with the Kerala Congress, ISP etc., go to demonstrate how shaky, unstable and shortlived these opportunist alliances are, and now how these anti-democratic and anti-CPI(M) conspiracies are sure to flounder under the impact of the crisis and ever-surging mass struggles on numerous economic and political issues. For that matter the Kerala experience shows not only the momentary success of Indira Congress and its political strategy to rally behind itself several traditionally anti-Congress parties and groups, it also shows how unstable and vulnerable it is and how it has failed to completely isolate the CPI(M) and smash it as it had dreamed.

The CPI(M) conscious of the new possibilities opened up before the democratic and revolutionary movement for rapid advance, and not for a moment forgetting the new dangers posed by the ruling classes and their new conspiracies and attacks on the growing mass movements, pledges to carry forward the struggle for democracy and socialism with renewed determination and steadfastness.

The CPI(M) assures the three million voters of Kerala who solidly voted for the Party and its allies that it will serve them with still more determination.

The CPI(M) appeals to all democratic parties and groups to realise the menace posed by the Syndicate alliance on the one hand and Indicate alliance on the other to the genuine democratic and Socialist movement in our country and come forward to untiedly fight against this twin menace. The CPI(M) is confident that the ranks and followers of certain democratic parties whose leaders are taking them to either the Syndicate or Indicate camp will awaken to the new dangers facing the common people and do everything in their power to reverse the disastrous course taken by their leaders.

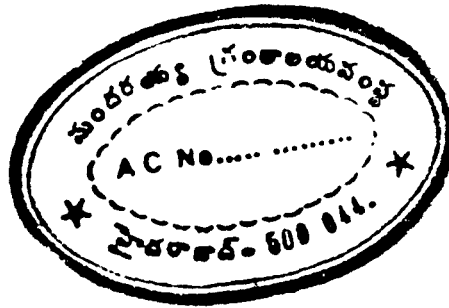


Table - I
Votes Polled By Different Parties During 1957-70

1957	1960	1965	1967	1970
				10 1,82,808*
CPI (Marxist)				
120 23,63,874	125 35,58,072	90 15,08,225	61 15,32,785	90 20,98,360
(65) 40.5%	(29) 44%	(43) 24.3%	(54) 24.4%	(32) 28%+2.4%
KTP & KSP				
—	—	5 60,036	4 1,01,928	6 1,40,300
		(1) 1.0%	(3) 1.6%	(4) 1.8%
Right Communists				
—	—	82 5,65,593	24 5,73,191	32 7,17,671
		(3) 9.1%	(20) 9.1%	(16) 9.5%
Congress				
124 22,09,251	82 28,45,341	133 20,26,272	133 22,25,026	58 14,60,963
(43) 37.8%	(63) 35%	(36) 32.5%	(9) 35.5%	(32) 19.5%
Kerala Congress				
—	—	62 8,90,147	61 4,89,622	33 5,07,600
		(24) 14.3%	(5) 7.8%	(14) 6.8%
Syndicate Congress				
—	—	—	—	10* 90,000
				39 2,61,057
				(4) 3.5+1.2%
Muslim League				
18 2,72,620	12 4,01,925	22 4,02,230	15 4,24,159	21 5,96,333
(8) 4.7%	(11) 5%	(12) 6.3%	(14) 6.8%	(12) 8%

Table - I (contd.)

Votes Polled By Different Parties During 1957 70

	1957		1960		1965		1967		1970
PSP (SSP)									
66	6,77,082	33	11,46,028	29	5,15,684	22	5,46,250	16	3,53,554
(9)	11.6%	(20)	14.1%	(14)	8.3%	(20)	8.7%	(7)	4.7%
					SSP		SSP	10	2,36,759
								(3)	3.1%
									ISP
								8	2,01,265
								(3)	2.7%
									PSP
RSP									
29	1,96,905	12	95,840	8	72,520	6	1,70,498	14	3,31,968
(0)	3.4%	(1)	1.2%	(0)	1.2%	(6)	2.7%	(6)	4.4%
Others‡									
	1,17,342		56,911		1,91,294		2,20,762		3,31,362
(1)	2%	(2)	0.7%	(2)	3.0%	(2)	3.5%		4.4%
	58,37,000		81,00,000		62,20,000		62,80,000		75,10,000

Notes : Figures include Independents aligned to different political parties. Slight Changes may be necessary due to some faulty listing of Independents. Total valid votes are rounded to the nearest thousand.

In 1957 and 1960, the votes in double member constituencies had two votes each. As such, the electors would be smaller than the actual total valid votes polled. But percentages do not make much substantial difference.

*Non party Independents against League in ten constituencies in 1970. Two-thirds of their votes taken to be that of CPI(M) and its allies and 90,000 in round figures taken to belong to Syndicate.

‡Others also include Karnataka Samiti (1960 to 1970, in two constituencies), Jana Sangh, Swatantra, during 1965-1970, having 0.7 to 1.2 per cent of votes.

Table - II

*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
Parties in 1970*

CPI(M)

CANNANORE DISTRICT

1. Nileswaram
2. Payyannur
3. Madayi
4. Irikkur
5. Kuthuparamba

KOZHIKODE DISTRICT

6. Beppore

PALGHAT DISTRICT

7. Pattambi
8. Ottapalam
9. Palghat
10. Alathur
11. Kollengode
12. Malampuzha
13. Kuzhalmannam
14. Srikrishnapuram

TRICHUR DISTRICT

15. Wadakkancherry
16. Kunnamkulam

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

17. Vadakkekara
18. Ankamali

KOTTAYAM DISTRICT

19. Devicolam
20. Peermedu
21. Kottayam

ALLEPPEY DISTRICT

22. Aroor
23. Mararikulam
24. Ambalapuzha
25. Haripad
26. Chengannur

Table — II (Contd.)

*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
Parties in 1970*

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

27. Neyyattinkara
28. Parassala

CPI (M) INDEPENDENTS

QUILON DISTRICT

29. Pathanamthitta

TRICHUR DISTRICT

30. Trichur Town

ALLEPPEY DISTRICT

31. Aranmula

QUILON DISTRICT

32. Ranni

KSP

33. Mannarghat
34. Irinjalakuda

KTP

35. Palluruthy
36. Guruvayoor

SSP

37. Muvattupuzha (Independent)
38. Aryanad
39. Kazhakuttam
40. Ettumanoor
41. Nattika
42. Chittoor
43. Kuttanad

ISP

44. Peringalam
45. Badagara
46. Mavelikkara

INDIRA GANDHI CONGRESS

CANNANORE DISTRICT

1. Edakkad
2. Taliparamba
3. North Wynad

Table — II (Contd.)
*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
 Parties in 1970*

KOZHIKODE DISTRICT

4. Quilandy
5. Perambra
6. Balussery
7. Kalpetta
8. S. Wynad
9. Kozhikode-I

MALAPPURAM DISTRICT

10. Nilambur
11. Thrithala

TRICHUR DISTRICT

12. Chelakkara
13. Manalur
14. Ollur
15. Chalakudi
16. Mala

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

17. Paravur
18. Narakkal
19. Tripunithura
20. Ernakulam
21. Alwaye
22. Perumbavoor

KOTTAYAM DISTRICT

23. Podupally

ALLEPPEY DISTRICT

24. Shertallai
25. Kayamkulam
26. Pantalalam

QUILON DISTRICT

27. Konni
28. Kottarakara
29. Kundara

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

30. Attingal
31. Vamanapuram
32. Vilappil

Table — II (Contd.)
*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
 Parties in 1970*

RSP

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

1. Trivandrum II

QUILON DISTRICT

2. Eravipuram
3. Quilon
4. Karunagapally
5. Kunnathur

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

6. Kunnathunad

PSP

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

1. Nemom
2. Trivandrum—I

CANNANORE DISTRICT

3. Hosdurg

RIGHT C.P.

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

1. Nedumangad
2. Kilimanoor
3. Varkala

QUILON DISTRICT

4. Chathanur
5. Adoor
6. Krishnapuram
7. Chadayamangalam
8. Punalur
9. Pathanapuram

ALLEPPEY DISTRICT

10. Alleppey

KOTTAYAM DISTRICT

11. Vaikom

TRICHUR DISTRICT

12. Kodungallur
13. Kodagara

CANNANORE DISTRICT

14. Tellicherry
15. Manjeswaram

KOZHIKODE DISTRICT

16. Nadapuram

Table — II (Contd.)
*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
 Parties in 1970*

MUSLIM LEAGUE

CANNANORE DISTRICT

1. Kasargode

KOZHIKODE DISTRICT

2. Meppayur
3. Kunnamangalam

MALAPPURAM DISTRICT

4. Tirurangadi
5. Tanur
6. Tirur
7. Kuttipuram
8. Kondotti
9. Malappuram
10. Manjeri
11. Mankada
12. Perintalmanna

KERALA CONGRESS

ALLEPPEY DISTRICT

1. Kallupara
2. Tiruvella

KOTTAYAM DISTRICT

3. Kaduthuruthi
4. Palai
5. Poonjhar
6. Akalakunnam
7. Changanessery
8. Vazhoor
9. Kanjirapalli
10. Udumbanchola

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

11. Karimannur
12. Kothamangalam

**KERALA CONGRESS AND
 SYNDICATE INDEPENDENTS**

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

13. Thodupuzha

TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

14. Kovalam

Table — II (Contd.)

*Names of Constituencies Won by Different Political
Parties in 1970*

SYNDICATE CONGRESS

1. Cannanore
2. Kozhikode-II
3. Ponnani
4. Mattancherry

(All four won as Independents)

Table — I(b)

In 1965 and 1970

Districtwise Votes Polled by CPI(M) and Its Front Allies District

	1965		1970	
	(000)	%	(000)	%
Cannanore	326	46	363	43
Kozhikode	295	47.5	321	43
Malappuram	150	29	217	31
Palghat	398	54	280	54
Trichur	202	31	307	41
Ernakulam	241	33.5	355	43
Kottayam	143	21.0	247	33
Quilon	129	17.0	264	30
Alleppey	192	27	366	44
Trivandrum	202	34	277	40

Table — III

Seats the CPI(M) and allies won, where there is a large percentage of Muslim voters and indicating considerable influence on Muslim masses.

Note : Considering 60 to 70 per cent of the Muslim voters had voted in the 1970 election, and if all that vote had gone to the Congress, the CPI(M) and its allies could not have won these seats. A considerable Muslim vote had come to the CPI(M) candidates. Whatever Muslim vote the CPI(M) had 1965 has been retained and further improved.

(Figures of total Muslim votes are in thousands)

	1965	1970
1. Neeleswaram: Muslim votes		16(18%)
CPI(M)	30.55	34.72
Congress	14.18	—
M. League	7.30	29.35
2. Payyannur: Muslim votes		12(14%)
CPI(M)	29.54	32.50
Congress	17.06	24.88
3. Madayi: Muslim votes		22(27%)
CPI(M)	26.78	31.93
Congress	15.03	24.15
4. Irikkur: Muslim votes		20(27%)
CPI(M)	27.28	28.77
Congress	17.03	27.01
		(RSP)
5. Kuthuparamba: Muslim vote		18(23%)
CPI(M)	26.5	28.28
	(SSP)	
Congress	20.42	27.54
		(PSP)
6. Peringalam: Muslim vote		14(18%)
ISP	34.58	34.00
Congress	19.80	25.56
7. Beppur: Muslim votes		35(40%)
CPI(M)	25.34	30.26
Congress	14.96	—
M. League	11.46	27.95
8. Pattambi: Muslim Votes		23(30%)
CPI(M)	19.99	27.85
Congress	7.82	—
C.P (Right)	12.21	24.42
9. Ottapalam: Muslim votes		14(19%)
CPI(M)	20.80	22.06
Congress	12.56	19.82

Table — III (Contd.)

(Figures of total Muslim votes are in thousands)

	1965	1970
10. Srikrishnapuram: Muslim Vote		18(27%)
CPI(M)	16.57	21.56
Congress	9.66	19.11
C.P.(R)	4.58	—
11. Mannarghat: Muslim votes		15(19%)
CPI(M)	16 10	23 63 (KSP)
Congress	7 50	19.80
C.P.(R)	3.94	—
12. Palghat: Muslim votes		12(15%)
CPI(M)	17 75	23.11
Congress	13.26	17 65
Jana Sangh & Swatantra	8 26	15.56
C.P.(R)	2.25	—
13. Guruvayoor: Muslim votes		16(23%)
CPI(M)	—	26.04 KTP
Congress	19.83	—
C.P.(R)	6.56	—
M.League	20.32	20.99
14. Nattika: Muslim votes		15(20%)
CPI(M)	27.70	28.08 SSP
Congress	24.42	26.35 CP(R)
Jana Sangh	—	7.27
15. Vadakkekara: Muslim votes		12(15%)
CPI(M)	25.28	32.54
Congress	22.93	29.75 CPR
K. Congress	4.89	—
16. Muvattupuzha: Muslim votes		10(14%)
SSP	5.55	20.65
Congress	14 66	—
C.P.(R)	11.28	18.53
K.Congress	18.93	14.72 Sw.
17 Aroor: Muslim votes		10(15%)
CPI(M)	19.43	34.10
Congress	14.85	—
C.P.(R)	6 54	28 87
K. Congress	10.18	2 24 J.S & Sw.

Table — III (Contd.)*(Figures of total Muslim votes are in thousands)*

	1965	1970
18 Haripad : Muslim votes		12(15%)
CPI(M)	17.18	30.56
Congress	23.64	23.72
Independent(K.C.)	14.93	12.56
19. Cannanore : Muslim votes		25(30%)
M. League	31.45	30.55
Congress	24.52	—
Independent	—	33.54
20. Kozhikode- II: Muslim votes		38(44%)
M League	30.03	26.80
Congress	21.12	—
Independent	—	29.95
21. Mattancherry: Muslim votes		17(22%)
M.League	24.93	17.46
Congress	15.95	—
Independent	—	38.58

Table — IV

(Deduct Congress-League vote of 1965 from C.P. (Right) vote of 1970, then the Right Communists could not have won any seat. Voting figures given in 000s to the nearest hundred.)

	1965	1970
1. Manjeswaram		
C.P.(R)	Nil	18.7
Congress	21.0	—
CPI(M)	15.1	13.6
2. Tellicherry		
C.P.(R)	7.3	28.2
Congress	19.8	—
CPI(M)	27.3	26.7
3. Nadapuram		
C.P.(R)	2.0	34.8
Congress	14.6	—
M.League	13.9	—
CPI(M)	26.2	30.6
4. Kodungallur		
C.P.(R)	13.8	24.8
Congress	25.3	—
CPI(M)	11.5	24.3
5. Kodagara		
C.P.(R)	18.8	23.9
Congress	16.4	—
SSP	7.2	20.8
6. Vaikom		
C.P.(R)	15.3	25.5
Congress	15.3	—
CPI(M)	6.5	25.1
7. Alleppey		
C.P.(R)	12.7	28.0
Congress	14.0	—
CPI(M)	9.9	19.0
8. Pathanapuram		
C.P.(R)	14.0	26.7
Congress	13.2	—
SSP	2.6	17.0
		CPI(M)
9. Punalur		
C.P.(R)	13.8	25.4
Congress	14.6	—
CPI(M)	6.3	22.0

Table — IV (Contd.)

(Deduct Congress-League vote of 1965 from C.P. (Right) vote of 1970, then the Right Communists could not have won any seat. Voting figures given in 000s to the nearest hundred.)

	1965	1970
10. Adoor		
C.P.(R)	15.3	23.3
Congress	8.9	—
CPI(M)	6.8	20.0
11. Krishapuram		
C.P.(R)	16.3	33.7
Congress	19.8	—
CPI(M)	15.3	4.1
		(ISP)
12. Chathanur		
C.P.(R)	16.7	28.3
Congress	8.8	—
CPI(M)	4.6	2.9
		(ISP)
K.C.	17.5	14.8
13. Chadayamangalam		
C.P.(R)	14.2	31.4
Congress	16.3	—
SSP	16.3	20.0
14. Varkala		
C.P.(R)	10.8	26.4
Congress	21.1	—
CPI(M)	12.4	20.6
15. Kilimanoor		
C.P.(R)	—	29.4
Congress	17.6	—
CPI(M)	17.9	21.3
16. Nedumangad		
C.P.(R)	9.6	21.6
Congress	16.3	—
SSP	7.1	17.8
		CPI(M)

An Analysis of Sitting Seats Lost by the CPI(M)

(Note: In almost all the seats, if the Muslim League vote and the Right Communist vote had gone to the Congress, our front would not have won these seats in 1965. In 1970, in spite of increased votes by our front candidates, we could not get majority over the combined vote of Congress-League-Right Communist combine. If the Muslim League vote is deducted from the vote of the CPI(M) and its allies in 1965, the increase in their vote in 1970, will be seen as spectacular).

[(?)... Muslim votes not available when the table was compiled. We can take it that at least 60-70 percent of Muslim voters had polled their votes in 1970.]

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>Totals estimated Muslim '70 in each constituency</i>	<i>Increase or decrease in CPI(M) & allies' votes over 1965</i>
<i>1&2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
1. Edakkad				
CPI(M)	30,716	27,559	16,000	-3,000
Congress	23,072	31,119		
2. Taliparamba				
CPI(M)	29,430	30,526	19,000	+1000
Congress		22,638	31,435	
3. Tellicherry				
CPI(M)	27,284	26,711	24,000	-500
Congress	19,766	28,171 (CPR)		
4. N.Wynad				
CPI(M)	18,078	15,888	15,000	-2000
Congress	10,046	26,301		
5. Nadapuram				
CPI(M)	26,224	30,559	?	+4000
Congress	14,582	—		
M.L.	13,885	—		
C.P.(R)	2,039	34,761		
6. Meppayur				
CPI(M)	23,998	28,408	?	+4500
M.L.	13,727	—		
Congress	15,555	30,759		

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>Totals estimated Muslim & voters in '70 in each constituency</i>	<i>Increase or decrease in CPI(M) & allies' votes over 1965</i>
<i>1 & 2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
7. Perambra				
CPI(M)	25,065	31,305	20,000	+6000
Congress	16,205	35,383		
8. Kalpetta				
KTP	17,549	19,509	?	+2000
		(SSP)		
Congress	9,966	29,950		
K.Congress	11,187	5,380		
9. Kozhikode-I				
CPI(M)	27,671	26,619	22,000	-1000
Congress	25,125	30,416		
10. Nilambur				
CPI(M)	17,914	23,987	?	+6000
Congress	10,753	26,798		
M.L.	8,868	—		
K.C.	5,289	1,682		
11. Thrithala				
CPI(M)	21,815	24,700	?	+3000
Congress	15,806	25,822		
12. Perintalmanna				
CPI(M)	17,426	23,805	?	+6500
M.L.	12,388	28436		
Congress	5,446			
13. S.Wynad				
SSP	20,256	16,123	?	-4000
Congress	15,076	28,337		
14. Kunnamangalam				
SSP	30,360	23,975	?	-6000
Congress	13,118	35,599		
15. Balusseri				
SSP	29,598	29,699	?	+100
Congress	23,407	30,896		
16. Quilandy				
SSP	33,910	33,286	?	-600
Congress	24,903	37,023		

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>Totals estimated Muslim voters in '70 in each constituency</i>	<i>Increase or decrease in CPI(M) & allies' votes over 1965</i>
<i>1 & 2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
17. Hosdurg				
SSP	30,558	22,224	16,000	-8,000
Congress	17,116	29,568 (PSP)		
18. Chelakkara				
CPI(M)	17,180	22,960	12,000	+5800
Congress	17,280	—		
C.P.(R)	3,150	25,270		
19. Ollur				
CPI(M)	20,180	29,410	3,000	9300
Congress	19,500	31,850		
C.P.(R)	6,080	—		
20. Narakkal				
CPI(M)	17,140	24,240	3,000	+7000
Congress		24,710	27,970	
C.P.(R)	3,900	—		
21. Tripunithura				
CPI(M)	24,390	30,170	2,000	+5800
Congress	22,020	30,470		
C.P.(R)	1,260			
22. Alwaye				
SSP	21,560	28,060 (CPM)	20,000	+7000
Congress	22,660	30,080		
23. Perumbavoor				
CPI(M)	21,270	24,240	13,000	+3000
Congress	12,560	28,680		
K.Congress	12,870	2,990		
24. Kunnathunad				
CPI(M)	20,830	26,060	12,000	+5000
Congress	22,640	29,940 (RSP)		
C.P.(R)	4,800			
25. Kothamangalam				
CPI(M)	14,920	21,600	12,000	+7000
Congress	18,200	14,700		
K.Congress	18,930	22,930		

Constituency	1965	1970	Totals estimated Muslim voters in '70 in each constituency	Increase or decrease in CPI(M) & allies' votes over 1965
1 & 2	3	4	5	6
26. Kanjirapally				
CPI(M)	17,470	20,560	8,500	+3000
Congress	11,135	8,990		
		(M.L.)		
K.Congress	18,210	22,310		
27. Pudukpally				
CPI(M)	15,570	22,500	?	+7000
Congress	13,740	29,780		
CPI(R)	1,700	—		
K.Congress	13,430	—		
28. Shertallai				
CPI(M)	11,950	28,060	3,000	+16000
Congress	13,190	28,520		
C.P.(R)	7,790	—		
K.Congress	15,070	1,800		
		(Withdrawn)		
29. Panthalam				
CPI(M)	20,240	28,260	8,000	+8000
Congress	15,090	35,370		
C.P.(R)	4,040	—		
K.Congress	13,280	—		
30. Kayamkulam				
SSP	17,520	28,010	8,000	+11000
		CPI(M)		
Congress	17,180	32,280		
RSP	1,200	—		
K.Congress	15,520	—		
31. Attingal				
CPI(M)	25,600	22,110	?	-3,100
Congress	23,520	33,640		
32. Kilimanoor				
CPI(M)	17,910	21,270	?	+3300
Congress	17,570	29,430		
		(C.P.-R)		
33. Vamanapuram				
CPI(M)	16,970	21,310	?	+4400
Congress	18,020	23,120		

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>1965</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>Totals estimated Muslim voters in '70 in each constituency</i>	<i>Increase or decrease in CPI(M) & allies' votes over 1965</i>
<i>1&2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
34. Nemom				
CPI(M)	17,760	17,700	?	—
Congress	15,040	29,800 (PSP)		
C.P.(R)	2,880	—		
35. Trivnadrum-I				
SSP	14,870	16,310 (CPM)	?	+1500
Congress	14,640	23,460 (PSP)		
C.P.(R)	2,580			
36. Vilappil				
SSP	15,650	20,920	?	+5000
Congress	21,850	27,930		
C.P.(R)	4,650	—		

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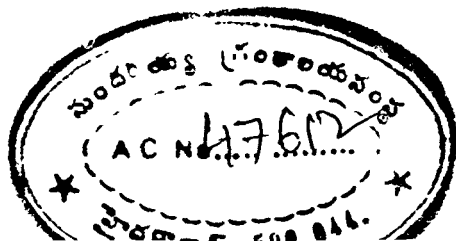
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