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Introductory Note

This Volume (Volume No. XVII) contains documens for the period 1975-77. This was the most significant period in the contemporary political history of India since independence. The unfair methods adopted by Smt. Indira Gandhi to win in her constituency in 1971 Lok Sabha election, were the subject matter of a court case and the Allahabad High Court in a historic judgement set aside the election of Smt. Indira Gandhi which made it imperative on her part to resign from the Prime Ministership. But, instead of relinquishing the responsibilities of the Prime Ministership in honouring the verdict of the Allahabad High Court, Smt. Indira Gandhi imposed National Emergency in the whole country and through most undemocratic manoeuvres made the verdict of the Allahabad High Court inoperative and continued as the Prime Minister of India suppressing all opposition through terror and large-scale arrests. Thus the democracy as enshrined in the Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, was completely subverted. The civil and democratic rights of the people were withdrawn, meetings and demonstrations were prohibited and personal rule of Smt. Indira Gandhi became the order of the day.

Under the National Emergency the freedom of Press was completely suppressed by Smt. Indira Gandhi's regime and the most rigid censorship was imposed throughout the whole country.

The people of India and all non-Congress opposition parties

unitedly stood against the National Emergency and despite arrests of thousands of political workers and political leaders all over India, the demand for withdrawal of National Emergency and restoration of democratic and civil rights gained tremendous support in every part of India.

Com. A. K. Gopalan, leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Indian Parliament, strongly opposed the resolution on National Emergency brought before the Lok Sabha and his speech secretly circulated all over India created a tremendous impact.

Smt. Indira Gandhi soon found that she herself and her party were completely isolated from the people of India and the more she felt it, the more she became ferocious in imposing ruthless measures to impose her rule.

During the National Emergency our Party. i.e., Communist Party of India (Marxist), had to go underground in many places as open functioning was risky and practically impossible. We were able to maintain contact with workers, peasants and democratic masses and our mass organizations were able to maintain living links with workers and employees, peasants, landless labourers, youths and students and women and the democratic minded people all over India. Our Party also maintained close links with democratic parties which were opposed to National Emergency and were eager to fight against it unitedly.

The Right Communist Party and its leaders played a very sinister role during the National Emergency. They not only supported the National Emergency but also carried on systematic campaign against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) for which on a number of occasions CPI(M) leaders had to issue public statement to expose their canards.

The unity of the Indian people and the consolidation of the democratic forces finally compelled Smt. Indira Gandhi to hold election to Lok Sabha in 1977. (She was also assured of victory in police reports.) As soon as the Lok Sabha election was announced by Smt. Indira Gandhi on January 18, 1977, our

Party demanded withdrawal of National Emergency and restoration of full democratic and civil rights and freedom of Press to ensure a free and fair election. All non-Congress political parties supported the demand and millions of people all over India demonstratively asked the Government to ensure a free and fair election. Smt. Indira Gandhi was compelled to concede this demand.

The decisions taken by the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) during these historical developments will be found in the documents given in this Volume.

The major political battle in the Lok Sabha election of 1977 was against authoritarian rule and for restoration of democracy. In this political battle Smt. Indira Gandhi's party faced a miserable defeat and the Janata Party, which won majority in the Lok Sabha election, formed the Government in New Delhi. But this Janata Party was a combination of several political parties and with divergent political views and its ramification were seen during the functioning of this Government though at the initial stage it roused people's expectation all over India. Our Party supported it from outside. We have also given relevant documents in this Volume on these developments.

We lost Com. A.K. Gopalan, the Polit Bureau Member of the Party and an outstanding parliamentarian and the topmost leader of the Kisan Movement in India during this period. This was a great loss to us.

During this period the Chinese Communist Party lost their outstanding leaders — Com. Chou En-lai, Com. Kang Sheng, Com. Chu Teh and Com. Mao Ze-dong. Their deaths were not only great losses to the Chinese Communist Party but also to the International Communist Movement.

The statement of Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Berlin Conference of 29 Communist Parties of Europe is an important political document included in this Volume. The resolutions on Language Policy and on Prohibition, adopted by the Central Committee of the

Communist Party of India (Marxist), are also important political documents of this Volume.

Our Party demanded complete withdrawal of the 42nd Constitution Amendment brought in by Smt. Indira Gandhi's regime prior to 1977 Lok Sabha elections to strengthen her personal role and our document on it is included in this Volume.

From the very beginning of the Janata Party's Government in New Delhi, following 1977 Lok Sabha elections, our Party consistently demanded fulfilment of the commitment made to the people and for complete reversal of the policies of Smt. Indira Gandhi's Government in order to usher in pro-people policies in all spheres of the Government functioning and this stand is borne out from several statements and resolutions of the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee given in this Volume.

We are confident the readers of this Volume will find the documents included in it most useful to understand the nature and implications of the historical developments of this period.

Jyoti Basu

(JYOTI BASU)
Chief Editor

May 2, 1998

Foreword

Very profound changes had taken place in the life of Indian polity unequalled and extraordinary since the days of independence; the country was shackled with Internal Emergency at one stroke on top of the External Emergency that had been in force since 1971, clamped at the time of Bangladesh freedom struggle. The period from 1975-77 was marked with an another big stride forward—the Congress party was reduced to a minority at the Centre for the first time, and Indian politics twisted towards the new direction getting through a new chapter. In any event our Party played a very crucial role in this juncture.

It is only fair to say that we did not get the wind of the sudden imposition of Internal Emergency and authoritarian compulsion of the ruling classes to silence the voice of the democratic opinion with such a haste although we warned the people about the rapid drive of the ruling party toward one-party dictatorship. Despite official claims to have grapped with the economy, the economic situation was leading a precarious end while the ruling classes were shifting the burdens of the crisis on the common man with mass lay-offs, retrenchments, intensifying unemployment both educated and uneducated, sharp spiraling of prices, high indirect taxation, continued attack on the livelihood of village poor, ruination of small growers of commercial crop and foodgrains so as to enable the monopolists and landlords to ensure their loot. The crisis sparked off massive struggles everywhere that started with the historic railway strike in this phase. In the backdrop of grim economic

situation, the policies of severe exploitation and ruthless repression, the division within the ruling class, and simmering bakruptcy and squabble within the ruling party, tempers of resistance had begun to boil over across the country. In the wake of all such developments came the infamous rule of Emergency, draconian repressive legislations, 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, pre-censorship system rescinding all rights and liberties of the people.

The Polit Bureau of the Party immediately reacted that there was no more democracy. All fundamental rights were snatched away in the name of maintaining public order but the statement of our PB, like statement of condemnation from all quarters had been allowed by the pre-censorship Act to see the light of the day. What a unique scientific prediction that Lenin made as far as eight decades back: "Bourgeois democracy, although a great historic advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor...."

"There is not a single State, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "violation of public order", and actually in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a nonslavish manner." In this Indian context, we were quite aware as expressed in our documents circulated during Emergency escaping the strictest preventive laws that the ruling class would never be able to maintain that darkest regime, the great urge for democracy would bound them to submit, sooner or later.

In the midnight of June 26, 1975, the entire repressive machinery of the government swung into action rounding up thousands of leaders and cadres of the opposition, including Jaya Prakash Narayan and all opposition leaders. Over a thousand leaders and cadres of our Party were arrested that night. Meetings and demonstrations were banned except the meetings

of the ruling party and its the-then trusted ally, the Communist Party. Pre-censorship regulations provided that only what the government wanted to be printed could find into the news columns of the newspapers. It was with such heinous muzzling of the press that the ruling party went into its gruesome scheme of forcible sterilization, bulldozing of urban slums, increased workload on the workers, wholesale dismissal of workers by the monopolists, dismantling system of collective bargaining and inhuman torture on peasants and all sections of people. Taking advantage of the situation, the monopolists, the landlords and the vested interests were having a field day. In the inner-party circulation of our information bulletins, we kept the entire Party aware of the on-going developments and asserted that the situation was bound to have turned against the ruling party due to the pressure of the democratic urge of the people.

After few months, resistances started in factories and the rural areas. The fetters of Emergency failed to bind the workers and peasants to submit to the unlimited greed for profits and repression by the monopolists, landlords and vested interests. In a memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by five members of the Polit Bureau of the Party, A.K. Gopalan, Jyoti Basu, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, P. Ramamurti and Harkishan Singh Surjeet, on April 9, 1976, the Party underlined the basic stand we had taken. The memorandum noted that "the Emergency is being continued, and it is being sought to be justified on the ground that country is passing through an economic crisis. This is in addition to the political reasons being advanced for such continuation. The Party has been warning for long that pro-landlord, pro-monopolist policies would lead the country into a crisis, and has been making concrete proposals for alternative policies which alone would solve the crisis".

The memorandum, citing concrete cases, dealt with the severe repression meted out to suppress the right of dissent, the question of press censorship, the problems of functioning of opposition parties and mass organizations etc. It was made plain

that the Party's record was one of consistently carrying on a political-ideological fight against Rightist policies, whether pursued by internal and external forces, and against policies of the extreme Left. Similarly, the Party has been consistently fighting against those who base themselves on communalism and regionalism. The Party has also been fighting against policies which strengthen or compromise with feudal exploitation, against policies which help the growth of monopolies and increasing penetration of foreign private capital especially by the Transnational Corporations. But the Party, it was noted, had never hesitated to support the anti-imperialist position of the Government. The Party welcomed the improvement of relations with China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. It welcomed the decision to send an ambassador to China. It demanded to revoke the Emergency immediately, repeal the draconian Act MISA, remove the censorship, repeal the 39th Amendment to the Constitution, release of all leaders and workers of political parties and mass organizations who were under detention, withdraw all pending cases, restore democratic and trade union rights existing before the imposition of Emergency.

In the second half of 1976, the government found the situation suitable for taking the risk of elections and thought that it would be able to muffle up everything. Efforts at forming what was called a single viable opposition were afoot with the communal force BJP, other Right opposition parties, the Socialist Party and a section of the "Left Congressmen" who were expelled from the Congress party for airing their views against the policies of the party. Our Party had never subscribed to the formation of a single party by the merger or amalgamation of disparate parties, groups and elements differing in policies and political outlook to defeat the ruling Congress. The CPI(M) has since long been pursuing the policy, it is still relevant, of cooperating with any opposition party, individuals, groups and those sections of Congressmen who were and are willing to fight imperialism, communalism, Rightist policies and policies of the Congress. That was why the Party had

refused to have anything to do with the so-called grand Alliance of 1970-71. The Polit Bureau of our Party warned that, "In reality, the so-called national alternative that was being sought to be projected by the merger of these parties is bound to have a Rightist complexion. The platform evolved for the formation of this party has nothing to say against imperialism, Indian monopolists, their collaboration with multinationals and their penetration into the country's economy and its political and social life, and also against the vested interests in the country." Completing all the poll preparations for the ruling party the Prime Minister, in a radio speech on January 18, 1977 announced the decision of dissolution of the Lok Sabha and fresh elections in the middle of March without having any say about lifting of Emergency. Never before had India gone through an election in which the scales were so much weighed against the opposition.

Meanwhile, the Janata Party was formed at the initiative and guidance of Jaya Prakash Narayan when anti-Congress mass upsurge was sweeping the country at that time. The Central Committee of our Party reviewing the situation in its meeting in early February was clearly of the view that "the newly formed Janata Party cannot offer a viable alternative to the ruling Congress Party, no matter what its leaders claim and profess. It is well-known that most of the parties that comprise the Janata Party such as the Swatantra, BKD, Congress(O) and Jana Sangh were voicing their opposition to the ruling Congress from an extreme point of view, essentially representing the same vested interests which the ruling Congress Party represents. As such, the CPI(M) can neither conceive of political united front with the Janata Party nor of any electoral front with it with a common programme."

The division within the bourgeoisie seemed to be widened with one pitted against the other representing two political forces. While the Party distanced and demarcated itself from both the formations as well as entertaining no illusions about the Janata Party the Central Committee, however, was aware that all the parties that had merged into the Janata Party had

openly fought for democratic rights of the people and expressed themselves in defence of parliamentary democracy, ending the Emergency rule and draconian Acts, restoring the fundamental rights of the citizens enshrined in the Constitution and halting drive to the one-party dictatorship of the ruling Congress.

The crucial issue in that election was the withdrawal of Emergency and restoration of democratic and civil rights. Thus it was the prime task to prevent division of votes to inflict a defeat on the authoritarian rule of the Congress Party. The CPI(M) was, therefore, desirous of avoiding mutual contests within the Janata Party and it entered into seat adjustments with opposition parties and groups which were ready to restore back democracy and fundamental rights. At the same time the Central Committee called upon the State units to study the concrete conditions and the positions of the different opposition parties, groups and individuals in different States, and to work out election tactics according to the guidelines enunciated by the Central Committee. It cautioned the State units to be vigilant against supporting such opposition candidates who have lost their credibility among the people, which would compromise the positions of the CPI(M) among the public. The division of opposition votes almost all over the country was thus prevented resulting in rout of Congress in the election with the huge mass upsurge in the traditional Congress strongholds in the north. The victory was tremendously facilitated by the exit of Jagjivan Ram, the most respected leader, from the Congress, the formation of "Congress For Democracy" under his leadership.

The Janata and the CFD formed the government which was assured of support from our Party on the issue of undoing the evils imposed by the authoritarian policies of the Congress and for providing relief to the masses. The Central Committee of the Party met at the end of March to review the election results and called upon all Left parties and forces "to come together to join hands to put the democratic forces and movement on the path of firm and rapid advance. In these

momentous times when quick events are taking place, when the mass of the people is showing unprecedented initiative and sensitiveness to political changes, only the combined strength of the Left forces will succeed in guiding them firmly and decisively to inflict a complete defeat on the forces of dictatorship and authoritarianism".

Close on the heels of the Lok Sabha elections, election to the State Assemblies and the Union territories of Delhi and Pondicherry took place and people inflicted a crushing defeat on the Congress Party, despite the division of the Opposition votes thanks to the grabbing attitude of the Janata leader who ignored the task of common struggle, in every state that went into the polls. The Left Front in West Bengal attained a massive victory with the absolute majority secured by our Party itself routing the Congress. The people of West Bengal were the first to go through the horrors of the semi-fascist terror before it was extended to the rest of India under the Emergency. The Janata Party leaders in West Bengal paid little respect to the great sacrifices against this semi-fascist terror, and demanded 55% of the seats. The Janata leaders refused the handsome offer made by us and made themselves ridiculous in the election by securing only ten per cent of the seats.

This was a situation when the massive mandate can be utilized to consolidate the forces of democracy and to provide relief to the people. We warned, however, that it would be dangerous illusion to consider the Congress and its anti-democratic outlook as dead and relax the struggle against it as the Congress Party started capitalising on every mistake of the Janata Party leaders and improved its position in few months among the people compared with the complete isolation during the Lok Sabha elections.

Three months after the formation of the Janata-CFD ministry at the Centre, the Central Committee of our Party, noting the vacillations and hesitations of the Central Ministry over the solemn electoral promises, observed that while on some issues bold and proper initiative was taken, on many others there was prevarication, and its bowing down to the arbitrary

rules and regulations of the previous regime, pursuing the same economic policies of the Congress that were angering people more and more.

The communal elements who represented Jana Sangh, within the Janata Party were very much active immediately after the new Ministry took office. Far from adopting any principled stand on this issue the Janata leaders found themselves unable to resist this menace within. Our Central Committee which drew the attention of the Janata leaders met in New Delhi on 28-29 April, 1977 that the revival of the activities of the RSS was ominous. It said, "It was well-known that the RSS has created for itself a disreputable record as a paramilitary organization, directed against the working class, as well as the religious minorities. While the Left and democratic movement has rightly demanded the removal of ban on RSS imposed by the Congress Government, the working class and the other sections of the working people cannot be blind to the danger which a revival of the RSS on these lines would pose to all sections of the democratic movement".

It was growingly apparent that the Janata Party ruling at the Centre and the States were going the same way the Congress did, particularly relating to socio-economic issues. This led CPI(M) to discontinue in the coalition ministry in Tripura. While the Left Front Ministry in West Bengal achieved spectacular successes in different fields within few months, the Janata Governments in different States were showing miserable performances.

This Volume will surely enlighten the readers with our stand in the period of dramatic events during 1975-77.

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

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

May 17, 1998

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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
P.B.	:	Political Bureau
Polit Bureau	:	Political Bureau
INC/Congress	:	Indian National Congress
GOVT	:	Government
AITUC	:	All India Trade Union Congress
INTUC	:	Indian National Trade Union Congress
CITU	:	Centre of Indian Trade Unions
AIKS	:	All India Kisan Sabha
CKC	:	Central Kisan Council of All India Kisan Sabha
WFTU	:	World Federation of Trade Unions
AISF	:	All India Students' Federation
SFI	:	Students' Federation of India

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

1

Socialist Party's Retreat*

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', January 12, 1975

By adopting the new political line that they did at their National Conference in Calicut (Kerala), the Socialist Party has gone a step back from the position they had adopted over a year ago in collaboration with the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

That line, it will be recalled, stressed the need for "a radical alternative to the Congress regime". It was the result of their realisation that their earlier line was wrong, since the deepening economic and political crisis in the country can be resolved only if all the radical forces in the Opposition, as distinct from what the Socialists had themselves called the "status-quoist" oppositionists, join together and fight for alternate policies.

The demarcation of the radical political forces in the country as much from the "status-quoist" oppositionists as from the ruling party, is thus the crux of the political line jointly evolved by the CPI(M) and the Socialist Party. It was, in fact, a reversal of the earlier Socialist policy of making no distinction between the Leftist and the Rightist wings of the Opposition, clubbing them both in an amorphous anti-Congress Opposition.

That Socialist line did as much damage to the radical democratic movement in the country as the Right Communist line

*Refer Joint Communiques of CPI(M)-Socialist Party covered by Documents No. 27, Document No. 79. No.88 and No. 89 of Volume No. 16 of this series.

of open collaboration with the Congress party. The realization of the evil consequence of this policy made the Socialists, after the bitter lesson of the 1971 and 1972 elections abandon that policy and begin their groping towards the line of building the unity of the Left and democratic forces. A relatively long period of joint struggles and fraternal discussions enabled the Socialist Party and the CPI(M) at last, in September 1973, to agree on the common political line of trying to develop a radical alternative to the Congress regime.

The Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of the CPI(M) had hoped that this agreement in principle would be followed up by more meaningful dialogues with a view to consolidating the CPI(M)-S.P. unity and broaden it into the unity of Left and democratic forces in the country. Unfortunately, however, the Socialist leaders failed to respond to the proposals made by the CPI(M) in this direction. They, on the other hand, decided to follow the line laid down by Jaya Prakash Narayan of building up an amorphous unity of the "people"—a unity which makes no distinction either between the various classes, or between the Rightist and Leftist wings in the Opposition to the Congress regime. Our P.B. and C.C. have repeatedly expressed concern at this trend in the Socialist Party calling on them to come back to the line of building the "radical alternative" to the Congress regime.

The resolution now adopted by the Socialist Party at Calicut has endorsed the line of retreat from the radical alternative, though not fully. It permits the State units of the party to enter into such electoral arrangements as are suited to the conditions of their respective States. While in States like Kerala or West Bengal the Socialist Party is permitted to join the Left and democratic front from which Right oppositionists like the Jana Sangh and the Congress (O) are excluded, their units in U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan etc., are permitted to join these Right oppositionist parties in their electoral front. The party unit in Bihar is permitted, if it becomes necessary, even to merge itself in an electoral bloc, its candidates contesting as the candidates of the bloc with a common symbol for the bloc.

Socialist candidates there would be indistinguishable from the Jana Sangh, the BLD or the Congress(O) candidates.

Still more significant than the wording of the resolution are the speeches and statements of such spokesmen of the party as Madhu Limaye (who piloted the resolution at the National Conference) and Chairman Fernandes. They are credited with that the distinction between the Left and the Right is no more relevant in present-day India. It was on this very argument that, four years ago, the Socialist leaders joined the then Right oppositionist parties—the Swatantra, Congress (O) and Jana Sangh—in trying to give shape to the 'grand alliance'.

We would earnestly appeal to our comrades of the Socialist Party to have a broader perspective than of the Parliamentary or State elections that are imminent. Let them ponder over the overall national and international situation. They will then find that what is significant today is the struggle between the two systems of capitalism and Socialism on a world scale. The Right oppositionists, though politically opposed to the ruling Congress party, are committed to such policies in the matter of India's foreign relations as well as of her domestic problems as would strengthen capitalism, save it from the crisis that is engulfing it.

The Left and democratic forces, on the other hand, realise that the replacement of capitalism by Socialism on a world scale, with corresponding policies for India, is on the agenda. This is what is demarcating the Left and democratic, or radical forces, both from the ruling Congress as well as from the Right oppositionist parties. That is why we call the Socialist Party's Calicut resolution a stepping back from the line of building the unity of radical forces to create a radical alternative to the Congress regime, jointly evolved by the CPI(M) and the Socialist Party over a year ago.

We hope that they will have second thoughts on the line adopted by them now, join the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces to strive to create that radical alternative to the Congress regime to which they committed themselves over a year ago.

2

P. B. Statement On L. N. Mishra's Assassination*

Statement dated January 3, 1975 issued in Calcutta

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement in Calcutta on January 3, 1975 :

Sri L. N. Mishra, Railway Minister, Government of India, has succumbed to the injuries caused by a bomb explosion in Samastipur, Bihar. We are against such violent attacks and killing of individuals whether of the ruling or any other party, despite the fact that a large number of our Party members and supporters have been killed by the members of the ruling party in West Bengal, Kerala, etc. In Bihar where a big mass movement has developed against the ruling party, the cause of the people will suffer by such an act and the Government will attempt to utilise it against the movement. A serious probe into the incident is urgently necessary.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, January 12, 1975.

3

P. B. Protests Against Postponement of By-Election*

Statement dated January 24, 1975 issued in Calcutta

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on January 24, 1975:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly protests against the indefinite postponement of the by-election to the Trivandrum Lok Sabha constituency and not holding the by-election to the Sangrur Lok Sabha constituency although more than a year and a half has elapsed since the seat fell vacant.

The Election Commission had announced earlier that Presidential Notification would be issued on January 15, calling upon the electorate of Trivandrum to elect their representative to the Lok Sabha. On January 14, the Prime Minister went to Trivandrum and on the 15th, instead of the Presidential notification, the announcement was made by the Election Commission that the election to the Trivandrum constituency had been indefinitely postponed. No reasons have been given for this indefinite postponement of the Trivandrum by-election as no reasons were given earlier for not holding the by-election to Sangrur constituency. The only reason can be that the ruling Congress party has not settled its inner-party squabbles with regard to the candidates for these constituencies.

It is also significant that in Bihar when the Legislative Council had to be summoned to elect its Chairman, the election

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 2, 1975.

was indefinitely postponed when the Congress party found that a dissident Congressman had filed his nomination against the official nominee. These are blatant examples which show that the ruling party is prepared to set at naught all norms of parliamentary democracy, to deprive the electorate of its right to have its representatives in Parliament if it suits the party's interests.

The P.B. calls upon the Government to hold these elections immediately.

4

Sheikh Abdullah Takes Over*

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', February 23, 1975

The terms on which the agreement has been arrived at between the Central Government and the leaders of the State of Jammu and Kashmir headed by Sheikh Abdulla are not yet known. It is, therefore, premature to assess the impact of the agreement on the internal situation in the State.

Its impact, however, would not be confined to that particular State. The general political situation in the country as a whole will also be affected by the activities of the new Government of Jammu and Kashmir as part of the political-administrative work of the Central Government.

Sheikh Abdullah is once again entering the arena of political-administrative activity as a person who does not belong to the ruling Congress headed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He has made it perfectly clear that he is not going to join the Congress. He is nevertheless taking the reins of administration in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party, the majority of whose members owe organisational allegiance to and are under the discipline of the Central Congress leadership.

How would the Congress leaders at the Centre as well as in the State of Jammu and Kashmir establish and maintain relations with the new head of the Government of that State? Would he be obliged to—would he agree to—function as Congress Chief Ministers in other States do? If he does so,

*Refer Documents on Kashmir under Item Nos. 69, 73 and 101 of Volume No. 16 of this series.

can he carry his erstwhile followers in the State with him? If he does not, can the Congress Legislature Party in the State and the Congress High Command tolerate him in the Chief Minister's post for long? These are the questions to which the future alone will provide answers.

The Press interviews that Sheikh Abdullah gave at Madras, however, has shown the complexity of the situation. Answering questions on the J.P.-led movement and on autonomy for the States demanded by the DMK of Tamil Nadu, he made certain remarks which would not gladden those who are running a hysterical campaign against the "fascist and CIA agent" J.P., or those who denounce the DMK for its "fissiparous" demand regarding autonomy.

While demarcating his own method of "accommodation" from J.P.'s method of "confrontation", the Sheikh did not conceal his sympathy and support for the issues raised by J.P. and the "Gandhian character" of his movement.

On the question of State autonomy, too, he has his sympathy and support for the DMK demand even though he requested its leaders and other advocates of autonomy not to mix up their own demands with the demand of the people of Jammu and Kashmir for special status for their State.

These, however, are only the first remarks offered by the Sheikh on some national questions which are not directly related to his own State. After he takes over as the head of the Government in his State, he would have to express himself on several other questions of national importance. As a member of the National Development Council and in several other capacities, he would be consulted and would have to offer his views on a number of issues on which the Congress on the one hand and various parties of the Opposition on the other are fighting among themselves.

Where will he stand on each and every one of these issues—with the ruling Congress party or with the Opposition: and, if the latter, with which of the two broad streams of the Opposition—Left or Right?

For nearly 22 years, i.e., after his being thrown out of

Chief Ministership in 1953, the Sheikh did not have to express himself on any of these national issues. He was concerned solely and above all with the major question concerning the status of his own State. On this single issue he had to fight an arduous battle. He was supported in his battle by a relatively small section within the democratic movement in india, mainly the CPI(M), even though the latter was critical of the Sheikh's stand on some points.

This position is now being altered. He is being made part of the all-India Establishment, over which the Congress Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, presides. Would that Establishment be able to tame the reputed 'Lion of Kashmir'? Would he risk being thrown out of office once again by adopting positions which become highly inconvenient for the Prime Minister and her party? If he does not, would he be able to maintain his sympathy and support to the causes espoused by J.P., or to the State autonomy demanded by DMK leaders?

Time alone can provide answers to these questions. In the meantime, the internal problems of the Prime Minister's own party are getting more and more acute. State after State is witnessing serious internal rifts which have almost reached the breaking point in Bihar and, though to a lesser extent, in Kerala, too. Maharashtra is also having some internal convulsions which have led to a change of the Chief Minister.

This or that faction of the ruling party in this or that State is under the circumstance bound to seek the powerful support of the new entrant into the politics of the ruling party, however circumscribed his position may be in his own State. He would thus have the opportunity to influence developments in the rest of the country while the latter will influence his own position in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Along with the rest of the democratic movement, therefore, we eagerly watch the way in which the internal politics within the State of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the relations between the new State Government and the Centre shape themselves. We can only assure the Sheikh and his

colleagues in Jammu and Kashmir of support to their struggles for the preservation of the State's status and hope that they would extend their hand of co-operation to the democratic movement in the rest of the country in its struggle against authoritarianism.

5

Why The Boycott ?

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', March 2, 1975

It can be understood that the ruling party uses the customary President's Address to the first session of Parliament in the year for putting across its own ideas under the cover of Government policies. It may be unavoidable under the party system of parliamentary democracy. There is, therefore, nothing surprising in the fact that Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed in his first Address to Parliament made an evaluation of the economic situation in the country which is at total variance with reality, whitewashing the bankrupt policies of the Congress Government, or that he launched a general attack on the Opposition.

It was, however, totally impermissible for the President to use his august office for partisan propaganda in the interest of the ruling party. For, even though nominated by the ruling party and elected in the teeth of opposition from other parties, the person who gets elected as President is expected to be above parties. This alone guarantees his stature as the constitutional Head of State.

This healthy concept of parliamentary democracy with the party system was, for the first time in the history of the office of the President of India, broken by President Ahmed when, on the eve of the inauguration of the current session of Parliament, he visited his home state of Assam. That visit, though called "a State visit of the President", was used for the by-no-means-hidden propaganda for the Congress candidate contesting the by-election to the Lok Sabha from

Barpeta—the constituency which he himself had represented before being nominated as the Congress party's candidate for the Presidentship.

The Opposition, in Parliament, therefore, rightly decided to boycott the President's Address. All the Opposition groups except those who have reduced themselves to the position of "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition" joined the protest.

While the partisan use of the President's office by Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was the only, or the main, reason for the boycott of the President's Address by some of the Opposition groups, others including the CPI(M) wanted to protest against the entire policy of the Government whose statement of policy he was reading to the joint session of the two Houses of Parliament.

Far from solving the problems faced by the country, the policies of the Government are leading to their worsening. This obliges all sections of the people to come out in solid protest; every democratic political party, mass organization and also unattached individuals are naturally joining the protest which expresses itself in various forms in various parts of the country.

The Government, however, denounces all these protest actions of the people and the activities of organizations and parties which lead them as "reactionary" and even "fascist". The result is countrywide confrontations between the ruling party and its satellites on the one hand and the mass of the people as well as the political parties and mass organizations supporting them on the other.

It is in such a situation that the Government through the personality of the President claims that the "economic situation in the country is improving" due to the "correct policies adopted by the Government".

The President, the Ministers and other bigwigs of the ruling party and the Government can safely make such declarations from inside the protected chambers of Parliament. They may also get such declarations repeated by All-India Radio and other media of publicity. They, however, do not

dare make the very same declarations before the people who are going through increasingly difficult days.

The much-trumpeted "fall in the wholesale prices" is no indication of even a partial solution of the crisis but a temporary phase in the developing crisis. Even official documents like the Reserve Bank Report on Currency and Finance have made assessments which are contrary to the claims made in the President's Address.

It may, in this connection, be recalled that the spokesmen of the ruling party had given a few months ago the excuse that the inflation and other manifestations of the crisis are not confined to India but are part of a "global phenomenon". This is true in the sense that the capitalist world as a whole is in crisis and though India's crisis was not set off by that crisis, it is part thereof.

Not even the authoritative spokesmen of world capitalism would now claim that this "global phenomenon", i.e., the crisis in the capitalist world, has ceased to exist; they all acknowledge, on the other hand, that the crisis is continuing and is likely to become more intense in the months ahead. How then can India escape the fate of the rest of the capitalist world?

The working class, the peasants, the toiling middle classes and so on are, in fact, feeling the pinch of industrial stagnation, reduction in employment opportunities, shortages of essential goods and so on at the very time when inflation continues, though for the moment at a slightly lower rate than a few months ago. That is why they are obliged to go into militant action in protest against Government policies.

The boycott of the President's Address by almost the entire Opposition reflects this growing people's protest against Government policies.

6

CPI(M)'s Stand on March in Delhi on March 6, 1975*

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta from March 2, 1975, heard the report of the talks that the three-member delegation of the party had in the meeting that Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan had called with the representatives of the CPI(M), SUC, RSP and S.P. on February 17 at Delhi regarding the Delhi March on March 6, 1975.

In December 1974, when the idea of the march was mooted, the Central Committee, while declining to participate in the march, had already directed the Party units that they on their own, wherever possible, with other Left and democratic parties and groups should plan independent actions in support of common democratic demands, and to synchronise the Party's mass actions with J.P.'s movement, making the Party's independent position clear to the people.

The Polit Bureau notes that the Delhi march that is being planned is based on some of the most urgent democratic issues facing the people all over the country such as the lifting of the state of Emergency, repeal of the MISA and DIR, for electoral reforms and against corruption. Our Party takes a positive attitude towards these demands and therefore supports them.

It, however, notes that there is no indication of awareness on the part of the organisers of the march that the most burning issue connected with the question of free and fair

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, March 9, 1975.

elections is the ending of the semi-fascist terror through Congress-organised gangs with the protection of the police in West Bengal and the guarantee against the use of the administrative machinery for rigging elections as was done in the most brazen manner in the West Bengal elections to the Legislative Assembly in 1972 and on a smaller scale in some other States since then. The charter of demands does not include even such demands as the right to recall and proportional representation. Above all, the Party's perspective to build the unity of Left and democratic forces in the country is incompatible with the idea of all-in unity including parties of the Right.

The Polit Bureau, therefore, decides to adhere to the December 1974 Central Committee decision and while not participating in the march, the Party will independently campaign for such democratic demands and synchronise its actions.

7

Crisis of Sarvodaya

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', March 23, 1975

The Sarvodaya Movement is in a crisis unprecedented in its history.

Jaya Prakash Narayan announced his decision to resign from all the committees of the Sarva Seva Sangh while continuing to be an ordinary member. So have 20 out of the 24 members of the Executive Committee of the Sangh. Another 20 leaders of the Sangh who are not members of the Executive tendered their resignations.

The difference between Jaya Prakash and 20 out of the 24 members of the Executive Committee on the one hand and other leaders of the Sarva Seva Sangh (reported to include Acharya Vinoba Bhave himself) is whether members of the Sangh can participate in such movements as that of Bihar.

J.P., together with the majority in the Executive Committee, thinks that it would be against the spirit of the Sarvodaya movement if they were to remain passive onlookers to the cancer of corruption that is eating into the very vitals of administration and society; the sense of frustration that is spreading among the people because of their increa-singly miserable living conditions; and the consequent likelihood of violent outbreaks taking place all over the country unless a proper direction and leadership is given to the gathering discontent.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave and others, on the other hand, feel that it would be wrong for the Lok Sevaks (as members of the Sarva Seva Sangh call themselves) to associate

themselves with a movement which is irresistibly moving towards participation in electoral politics.

That a majority of the Executive Committee of the Sangh feel with J.P. that they have to be active participants in the movement of people's protest indicates the depth of the crisis into which the philosophy of Gandhism has fallen.

The beginning of the crisis should be traced to 1947 when a conflict of approach made its appearance between Mahatma Gandhi himself and the bulk of his lieutenants. While Gandhi stuck to his earlier position of keeping out of official positions, the bulk of his lieutenants went into ministerial and other offices and started exercising their newly acquired power in ways that distressed the Mahatma. The few months that were left after the attainment of Independence before Gandhiji was assassinated witnessed a deepening of this conflict.

The result was that Gandhiji became so disillusioned as to propose, in what may be considered his last political will and testament, that the Congress as a political party should be wound up and transformed into a Lok Sevak Sangh. The present Sarva Seva Sangh under the spiritual leadership of Acharya Vinoba Bhave is, in fact, a body that has been created in implementation of Gandhiji's last will and testament.

Non-participation in electoral politics, keeping away from official positions including that of membership of elected Parliament and State Legislatures, has thus been an essential ingredient of the philosophy and practice of Sarvodaya. Naturally, therefore, only a small group of convinced followers of Gandhian philosophy remained within the Sarva Seva Sangh as Lok Sevaks, although all the Central and State Ministers, M.P.'s, MLAs and so on belonging to the ruling party claimed to be sympathisers and supporters of the movement.

A few individuals like Jaya Prakash Narayan, who at that time were active in the political movement but who after a time started getting frustrated, also joined the movement in the 50s when Acharya Vinoba Bhave launched his Bhoodan and Gramdan movement.

Economic and political developments in the country during the sixties and early seventies, however, forced the majority of the leaders and members of the Sarvodaya movement to do some rethinking on the principle of non-participation in electoral politics. The increasing misery of the people, the growing corruption at the official and political levels of administration, the unmistakable trend towards authoritarianism and oppression—all these roused their conscience and dictated to them some form of mass political action which cannot be completely divorced from electoral politics.

In doing this, however, they have adhered to the Sarvodaya position of shunning electoral politics to the utmost possible extent; while organising demonstrations, bandhs, gheraos, etc., they insisted that no party should come with its flag or other symbols, that the "people" should be mobilised "above parties".

As for contesting elections whenever they are held, they put forward the idea of "people's candidates" with no allegiance to any political party; once elected, these representatives of the people are to be responsible not to their respective parties but to the "people's action committees" who will keep a watch over them.

Not that the parties have no role to play in organising mass action, in fighting elections and even in selecting candidates. They are welcome to play their role in all this, but every party that joins such a "people's movement" would subordinate itself to the "people's committees".

This will obviously raise a number of insoluble problems as the movement develops. After all, the existence and functioning of political parties do not depend on the will of a few individuals who are either at the top of these parties themselves, or, like J.P. and his colleagues, are outside their ranks. None of the political parties which have agreed to merge themselves in the J.P.-led "people's committees" can for long continue in this state of complete merger of their respective parties in the non-party people's movement.

Particularly serious will this be in those States where the

"people's candidates" will be returned by majority to the respective State Legislatures and then be in a position to form Governments. The very formation of Governments, including the selection of Ministers and distribution of portfolios, will give rise to those very problems which have arisen in the formation of other Ministries—single-party Congress Ministries as well as multi-party Coalition Ministries. Subsequently in the day-to-day functioning of the Ministries and in the solution of the innumerable administrative and political problems that they have to deal with, conflicts are bound to crop up. No amount of wishful thinking will make the group of non-party people's MLAs and MLCs rise above these political realities.

The CPI(M), for its part has made it perfectly clear that it cannot fall in line with the idea of non-party (or above-party) "people's struggle", "people's action committee", "people's candidates" and so on. It dissociates itself from the idea of submerging the political party with its own distinctive ideology and programme in the amorphous "people's action committee".

The Party rejects the idea that even in those constituencies where, because of the service that the Party has rendered to the people and therefore the people have reposed confidence in it, it has no right to set up its own candidates with its own election symbol, or that the candidates set up by the Party should contest only if his or her name has been endorsed by the "people's action committee". After the election, too, it insists that those MLAs, MLCs and M.P.s who belong to the Party should be responsible to the Party and that the so-called "people's action committee" cannot have the right to supervise over it.

Nor is this likely to be the stand of the CPI(M) alone. At the Calicut (all-India) Conference of the Socialist Party, for instance, the idea of the party losing its separate identity in electoral politics was seriously contested by a substantial section of the delegates. They were assured on behalf of the leadership that this will, if at all necessary, be done only in

Bihar. It is difficult to believe that any political party which has its own distinct ideology and programme which it does not desire to give up will agree to the idea of "a single opposition candidate" with "a common symbol".

While the political line adopted by J.P. and his colleagues is, thus, full of contradictions and difficulties, the line adopted by Acharya Vinoba Bhave and his colleagues will doom them to utter inactivity.

Vinobaji, let it be recalled, came to be respected and followed by millions in the fifties because he came out of the earlier Sarvodaya isolation into the mobilisation of the millions on a burning problem of the people—redistribution of land. With all the limitations imposed on him by his essentially Gandhian Sarvodaya outlook, the fact remains that he took up an issue which, in the background of the glorious struggle of the Telangana peasantry, had become the most important single national issue.

Once again in the seventies, J.P. has drawn the respect and following of millions of people because he has taken up some of the most burning political issues of the day—authoritarianism of the Congress Government, all-sided oppression of the people, administrative and political corruption, and so on. By keeping himself away from the mass movement that is building up around these burning issues, Vinobaji is today playing a role which is the very opposite of what he did in the fifties.

At the same time, as has been noted above, J.P. and his colleagues are up against difficulties, since they do not realise that political parties based on the fighting millions of the working people are part of the reality in modern times. Their hesitation to join such political parties and mass organisations as are fighting for the working people will doom J.P. and his colleagues to as colossal a failure as Vinobaji's keeping away from the mass movement itself.

8

Resolutions Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)*

In its Calcutta Session of March 7-13, 1975

(a) Observe 6th April Protest Day

The All India Co-ordination Committee set up under Jayaprakash Narayan's leadership, has given a call to observe April 6, 1975, as a protest day, demanding the repeal of Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Defence of India Rules and the Preventive Detention Act and for the lifting of the state of Emergency, and for the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights.

The erosion of civil liberties is now an all India phenomenon. Political parties, mass organizations and individual citizens are all now face to face with this menace.

The CPI(M) which faces semi-fascist terror attacks in West Bengal, is experiencing its extension to Kerala and welcomes the April 6 protest call and urges upon all sections of the people to make it a success. Despite its well-known differences with Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan on several issues connected with the movement led by him, the CPI(M) has been supporting the democratic demands advanced by him against the Congress Government and its drive for setting up a one-party authoritarian rule. It has been popularising these demands from its own platform and synchronising its activities for common protest on specific issues.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) calls upon its Party units and members to unite

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, March 23, 1975.

with all parties and mass organisations, including those of the Jana Sangharsh Samitis set up under J.P.'s leadership to make the April 6 protest day a grand success. It hopes that the sponsors of the day will facilitate this by observing it strictly as a civil liberties day.

(b) On Kashmir Agreement

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) welcomes the agreement between Sheikh Abdullah and the Government of India which provides for the permanent retention of Article 370 in the Constitution and recognition of a special status for the State. The C.C. hopes that despite limitations, the agreement will help to bridge the gulf that had grown between the people of Kashmir and the people of the rest of India.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has always maintained that the Kashmir problem must be settled between the leaders of the Kashmiri people and the Government of India by respecting the aspirations of the people and dispelling their apprehensions.

It always opposed the stand of the Jana Sangh which demanded the abrogation of Article 370. This stand was only helping other reactionary forces like the pro-Pakistan Awami Action Committee led by Mir Wazi in Kashmir which plays the same disruptive role.

However, the C.C. notes that the agreement with Sheikh Abdullah does not provide for full autonomy to the State as guaranteed by Article 370 of the Indian Constitution at the time of its adoption. It empowers the Central Government to impose President's rule without the concurrence of the State Government and takes away the right of the Kashmir Assembly to elect its head of State, as provided in their Constitution.

The C.C. warns that without satisfying the just aspirations of the people of Kashmir for full autonomy there cannot be a lasting solution to the problem. It appeals to the people of Kashmir to fight the forces of reaction and realise

their just aspirations by uniting with the democratic forces of India. They will have to continue their struggle for a better socio-economic life to end poverty.

(c) On Denial of D.A. to Central and State Govt. Employees

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the move of the Central Government to deny their employees the dearness allowance due to them even according to the recommendations of the Pay Commission set up by the Government itself.

The Central Government, after refusing to announce the grant of five instalments of D.A. that had fallen due, had entered into an agreement with a section of the leadership of the employees and granted only three instalments. No provision has been made in the budget for 1975-76 for any D.A.

Following in the footsteps of the Central Government, State Governments have refused for a long period the grant of any D.A. to compensate the phenomenal rise in prices of all essential commodities. Some of them have come forward with paltry enhancement of Rs. eight, half of which will be impounded under the Wage Freeze Act.

On top of all this, there is a move by the Government of India to enact a law imposing a ceiling on D.A. on all workers and employees. All these amount to imposing a wage-cut on the working class and the employees.

Many State Governments have resorted to victimisation to prevent the employees from resisting these attacks. In particular, the West Bengal Government has resorted to imposing break in service on a massive scale on all its employees who participated in protest actions against this policy. The C.C. condemns this vindictive action of the Government.

The C.C. emphasises that the Government has been enabled to resort to these measures by the disruptive activities of certain leaders who are acting as its agents in the trade union movement.

The C.C. appeals to the Central and State Government employees to overcome this disruption, forge unshakable unity in order to compel the Government to retreat from its course of denying D.A. and thus impose a wage-cut.

The C.C. congratulates the State Government employees of Tripura who have forged unity and decided to launch a strike from the midnight of March 18-19.

(d) On the Arrest of Biswa Goswami

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the arrest of Sri Biswa Goswami, Socialist Party's candidate in the recent Barpeta by-election, when he was emplaining for New Delhi in connection with his complaint before the Election Commission that the election was rigged. The plea of the Government that he was arrested for possession of ballot papers which are considered secret decuments is atrocious. For, he was carrying these papers to prove his charge of rigging. His party's legislator exhibited the same bunch of ballot papers in the State Assembly a few days earlier and the whole affair was a matter of public debate in Assam.

In the face of these facts, the high-handedness of the Government of Assam in arresting Sri Goswami is nothing but a crude attempt to prevent the latter from proving his allegation of rigging. This action of the Congress Government shows clearly who today is endangering Parliamentary democracy and in whose interest.

The Central Committee demands the immediate withdrawal of the case against Sri Goswami. It further demands the restoration to him of the seized ballot papers in order to enable him to seek remedies against the use of fraudulent methods by the ruling party in the election.

(e) On Toppling of UD Ministry in Nagaland

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes with regret that the twelve and a half months old UDF Ministry in Nagaland has been toppled by

resorting to fraudulent methods and the setting up of a new Mininstry led by the Naga National Organisation which is the creature of the ruling Congress party.

It is sickening to hear that five MLAs of Sri Vizol's UDF Government were kidnapped to bring about the downfall of the UDF Government. This charge has been levelled by Sri Vizol in a public statement.

The Central Committee condemns these methods of organising defections and plotting at the toppling of State Governments which are not to the liking of the Congress rulers at Delhi.

The Central Committee calls upon the people all over the country to protest against the undemocratic and authoritarian methods of the Central Government and appeals to the democratic forces in Nagaland to fight for their legitimate demands of States' autonomy in alliance and close co-operation with the rest of the Left and democratic forces in the country.

9

Rally for Civil Liberties

Editorial of 'People's Democracy' March 30, 1975

The campaign for lifting the Emergency in which the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has called upon the members and friends of the Party to join the Jaya Prakash-led movement on Sunday next is an important part of the struggle for civil liberties.

As is well known more than three years have elapsed since the end of the India-Pakistan war of December 1971, for which the Emergency was declared. That the Emergency still continues is clear proof that it was not to win the war but to facilitate the ruling class attacks on the common people that the Emergency was declared.

Both in 1971 and on the earlier occasion of the 1962 war with China, spokesmen of the Government had solemnly assured the people that the Emergency would never be used against the popular organizations and political parties which are against the Government. In fact, however, the Emergency declared on both the occasions was used against none other than the political opponents of the Government.

It was the provisions of the DIR that were used in 1962, and again in 1965, against those leaders and activists of the Communist Party of India who consistently opposed the Congress regime and who, on that account, had to break with the revisionists in 1964. At the present moment, too, the provisions of the DIR and other repressive legislations promulgated in the wake of the Emergency are being used

mainly against the CPI(M) and other uncompromising fighters against the Congress regime.

As the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has repeatedly made it clear, the Party does not see eye to eye either with Jaya Prakash, or with several political parties which have rallied themselves under his leadership in the National Co-ordination Committee formed at Delhi in November last. This, however, does not stand in the way of the CPI(M) responding to the call given by the National Co-ordination Committee headed by Jaya Prakash Narayan for the observance of April 6 as the Day for Demanding the Lifting of the Emergency.

No other party has had to face such heavy repression at the hands of the Congress Government as the CPI(M). In West Bengal alone, over a thousand of its active cadres have been brutally murdered and several thousands jailed, tortured, maimed for life. Among those who continue today under detention without trial under the DIR, MISA and other similar legislations, the largest number are the members and friends of the CPI(M), and that, too, in West Bengal. In other States like Kerala and in regions and areas in other States, too, where the Party is active in mobilizing the working people in struggle against the Congress regime and its class policies, the Party's leaders and activists have had to bear the brunt of the Congress regime's repression. The Party, therefore, is more interested than anybody else in developing the struggle for the restoration of civil liberties.

We, therefore, hope that the countrywide observance of April 6 as the Day for the Lifting of the Emergency would be the beginning of a countrywide joint campaign for restoration of civil liberties in general.

10

CPI(M) Leaders Meet Jaya Prakash Narayan*

On April 2, 1975 Comrade Jyoti Basu, CPI(M) Polit Bureau member and Comrade Saroj Mukherjee M.P. and West Bengal State Committee Secretariat member of the Party, met Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan in Calcutta and discussed several issues with him particularly those relating to civil liberties, free and fair elections and the continuing semi-fascist terror in West Bengal. Later leaders of the eight Left parties of West Bengal also met Sri Narayan to discuss mutual co-operation in the civil liberties movement. Here, too, Comrade Jyoti Basu was the spokesman on behalf of the eight parties.

In the earlier meeting Comrade Basu strongly discounted false and motivated rumours that had reached J.P. that the CPI(M) had entered into a bargain with Mrs Indira Gandhi on elections in West Bengal. Clarifying his talks with the Prime Minister, Comrade Basu pointed that he had squarely accused her of being directly responsible for the subversion of parliamentary democracy in the country and for all the woes and privations of our countrymen. The Congress party and its Government constitute the main danger to the people's lives and to democracy, and had to be faced not with bargains but with an all out struggle.

Comrade Basu explained to J.P. the stand of the CPI(M) on the civil liberties movement and the Central Committee resolution on the Anti-Emergency Day on April 6. He suggested

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Refer Documents under Item Nos. 1 and 7 of this Volume.

that notwithstanding differences on many social, economic and political questions, which are basic and will continue, it is desirable and possible for J.P. and his associates on the one hand and the CPI(M) on the other to move unitedly on the issue of civil liberties. The CPI(M) proposes joint, parallel or synchronised programmes of action on these issues. Which of these forms will be adopted may vary, according to circumstances.

Comrade Basu informed Sri Narayan that Comrades P. Ramamurti, Samar Mukherjee, Niren Ghosh and Jyotirmoy Bosu will join the convention on electoral reforms in New Delhi on April 12-13 on behalf of the Party. Comrade Basu commented however, that most of J.P.'s proposals on electoral reforms would have no relevance to West Bengal, unless the special situation there could be dealt with and the semi-fascist terror eliminated. The right to recall, for example, or limitation on election expenses meant nothing unless the right to live in the area of one's own choice, the right to campaign, the right to vote, etc., could first be ensured to all citizens, irrespective of political affiliations.

Sri Narayan agreed that the situation in West Bengal had to be highlighted in the all India campaign, and would figure prominently in the said convention. Sri Narayan spoke in detail on his views on non-party democracy, janata candidates, forms of movement, ways to fight corruption, etc., and said he respected the CPI(M)'s differences on these issues.

Sri Narayan listened to the eight parties' plan of movement and suggested joint movement with the Nav Nirman Samiti. He understood when the difficulties in this regard were pointed out to him, regarding the different approaches to the socio-economic problems facing the people. He was informed that preserving Left unity was the primary concern of the CPI(M) as also of the eight Left parties' combination in the matter of building up united movements.

11

Greetings to the People of Cambodia*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in its session in Calcutta on April 18-21, 1975

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) hails the people of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge on their historic victory in liberating their country from the tentacles of U.S. imperialism and forcing its puppet Lon Nol regime to flee the country.

This resounding victory against U.S. imperialism and its puppets after prolonged struggle lasting for five years will be a landmark in the history of the peoples' struggle against imperialism. It has demonstrated that once a people are united and are determined to take their destiny in their own hands, no power on earth, however mightily armed it may be, can stand before its advance.

The U.S. imperialists conspired and removed the popular Government of Sihanouk by a coup when he was away from the country and tried its utmost to put its puppet Government in saddle so that Cambodia might be a major military base for dominating South-East Asia and to militarily assist its puppet Government of Thieu in South Vietnam. They spent billions of dollars in aid of the Lon Nol puppet Government. The country has gone through unheard of ravages. Nearly a million people have fallen victims in the bombings and other outrages perpetrated by U.S. imperialism and its puppets.

This victory has been achieved with the valuable help rendered by Socialist countries. The C.C. particularly

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, April 27, 1975.

recalls the consistent support rendered by People's China to the struggle as also all facilities given by it to the Sihanouk Government. Tremendous also has been the help given to the liberation struggle in Cambodia by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as also the anti-imperialist unity of the three peoples of Indo-China.

This victory has gladdened the hearts of all the people fighting against the designs of imperialism as well as all freedom-loving people throughout the world. It has set in a process of heart-searching among the American people against whose interests the U.S. administration intervened in the Indo-China war.

The Central Committee, while once again greeting the people of Cambodia for the glorious page they have written in the history of the freedom movement, is confident that the victory gives tremendous inspiration to the people all over the world who are fighting all forms of imperialist exploitation and domination.

12

Resolutions Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)*

In Its Session in Calcutta on April 18-21, 1975

(a) Lift The Emergency

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) considers that the decision of the Union Government to hold the Gujarat elections by June under pressure of Sri Morarji's fast will enable the people of Gujarat to choose a legislature of their own liking and escape the grip of President's rule which puts them completely at the mercy of the bureaucracy.

The Government, however, refused to accede to the demand for lifting the Emergency. On the contrary, Smt. Gandhi claims that Sri Morarji also appreciate the Government's difficulty in revoking the Emergency in view of the international developments and Sri Morarji's reply makes matters worse by saying that it can be imposed again if the Government thinks it necessary.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) strongly protests against the rejection of the demand for lifting the Emergency, DIR and MISA in the name of meeting the dangers across the border—the arming of Pakistan and the U.S. moves in Diego Garcia. What are fundamental liberties and rights worth if just the show of hostility across the border can eliminate them in toto? Exceptional legislation is justified during war-time to crush the machinations of spies and not the liberties of the people. In India it is the common man—the workers, peasants, middle classes that are its victims

*Puolished in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, April 27, 1975.

when they fight against high prices or other forms of exploitation. Under it, thousands of political opponents of the regime including our comrades in West Bengal have been arrested and detained for years in Congress jails. The Emergency has become the normal law of the land. It has become an instrument of the ruling party's drive towards one-party dictatorship to extinguish the liberties of all Opposition parties. Under it any opposition to the ruling party is treated as sedition. The C.C. demands its immediate revocation and calls upon all mass organisations and political parties to come together to end the Emergency, DIR and MISA.

(b) Savage Sentences In West Bengal

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) is indignant at the savage sentences of death and life imprisonment of large number of working class and peasant cadre in West Bengal. The Congress regime in West Bengal let loose its organised armed goonda gangs backed by its police and 1100 CPI(M) cadre were assassinated from 1970 onwards after overthrowing the United Front Government. A large numder of cadre, on tramped-up charges or murder, are being kept in jail continuously during the last four to five years as undertrials. Now in the midst of the semi-fascist terror with no proper defence facilities possible, savage sentences of death and life imprisonment are being given to strike terror among the struggling masses.

The Central Committee demands that all these worker, peasant, youth and student cadre of the CPI(M) and of democratic organisations sentenced to death or life imprisonment be released.

The Central Committee demands that those who are still rotting in jails as undertrials over the last four to five years be forthwith released as neither quick disposal nor fair trials are possible in the semi-fascist terror conditions that are prevailing now in West Bengal.

The Central Committee takes pride in their steadfastness and withstanding all these sufferings inflected on them and

assures them that every effort will be made to mobilize the democratic forces and toiling masses to work for their release.

The names of those under these savage sentences :

1. Manoj Paul (Burdwan) : Sentenced to death

Life imprisonment:

24-Parganas

1.Ardhendu Datta 2.Pradip Dutta 3.Tapan Chakraborty 4.Ahmed Molla 5.Golam Molla 6.Babujan Molla 7.Panchu Mondal 8. Subhas Chowdhury 9.Ganga Malik 10.Kartik Malik

Burdwan

11. Bharati Tarafdar 12. Gadadhar Sar 13. Golam Dastugir 14. Zafar Chowdhury 15. Shazed Chowdhury 16. Jamay Sheikh 17. Pira Meer 18. Kalu Meer 19. Abu Tayeb 20. Waresh Khan 21. Sudhir Ray 22. Madan Bhattacharya 23. Tarapada Pramanick 24. Abinash Ruidas 25. Sanyasi Pramanick 26. Manik Kharat 27. Samar Maji 28. Sankar Ruidas 29. Lakshman Ruidas 30. Ajit Ruidas.

(c) Comrade Nalini Dinkar Mehta

The Central Committee mourns the death of Comrade Nalini Dinkar Mehta, Gujarat State Committee member of the CPI(M). She has been actively participating in working class and democratic movements in Ahmedabad and Gujarat for over three decades. It conveys its deep condolence to Comrade Dinkar Mehta.

(d) Comrade Clemens Dutt

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) mourns the death of Comrade Clemens Dutt at the age of 81, brother of Comrade R.P.Dutt and like his brother, one of the founder members of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Comrade Clemens Dutt translated a large number of writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin into English and enabled the Communist cadre to study deeply Marxism-Leninism. The Central Committee conveys its condolences to the family of Comrade Dutt and to the C.P.G.B.

(e) Sikkim Development

The Central Committee welcomes the decision to end the rule of the Chogyal who has been collaborating with the U.S. imperialist interests and conspiring against the people of Sikkim. With the exit of the Chogyal the people of Sikkim should have full powers to shape their own political and economic institutions to manage their internal affairs.

Instead, the Government of India not satisfied with the facilities given to it for defence and external affairs of Sikkim which was conceded to it in the 1950 Treaty, proposes to absorb Sikkim in India as one of the constituents of the Indian Union on the plea of a referendum organised by the Dorji Government. The Central Committee condemns this move as it would destroy the democratic right of the Sikkim people to manage their own internal affairs. The Committee calls upon all democratic parties in India to raise their voice of protest against this attack on the rights of the Sikkim people. It further calls upon them to demand the withdrawal of the undemocratic Constitution imposed on Sikkim by the India Government.

13

The Only Line of Advance*

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', May 4, 1975

In November last, when Jaya Prakash Narayan took up Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's electoral challenge and called for a contest between the Congress candidates and "people's candidates" in every constituency, and when almost every other Opposition party gave its support to this idea, the CPI(M) was almost alone in expressing its dissent.

Unlike J.P., who stands for a "partyless democracy" and equates political parties with unprincipled struggle for power, the CPI(M) looks upon the existence of and struggle among the various political parties as the reflection of the class and social conflicts which nobody can wish away.

The CPI(M), for instance, is a party which tries to give organised form to the aspirations and struggles of the working class and other sections of the working people. So do other Left and democratic parties, though, unlike the CPI(M), they are more inclined towards the non-proletarian sections of the working people and do not firmly base themselves on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

Parties of the Right Opposition, on the other hand, represent the interests of the landlords and capitalists, even though for various political reasons they are bound to take up cudgels against the ruling party; they, therefore, champion the cause of the democratic rights of the people in which the Left and democratic parties are also interested.

*CPI(M)'s Dissenting Stand on Jaya Prakash Narayan's Approach to Electoral Alliance Against Congress.

J.P. with his contempt for Marxism-Leninism would like to believe that these differences between the Left and Right Opposition parties on the one hand, and within each of these two groups themselves, are "hair-splitting controversies" which have nothing to do with real life. Hence his insistence that the "people's movement" and "people's struggles" which he is trying to develop should be organised and led by "non-party people's committees", even though active leaders of every party may participate in the leadership of these committees and individuals.

Hence, too, his insistence that the battle of election to which the Prime Minister has challenged him should be fought with candidates chosen by (and after election, responsible to) "people's committees", rather than to political parties. He explained this idea by agreeing that political parties may initially select their candidates, but that any candidate chosen by a particular political party would be approved as people's candidates only if he or she satisfied the people's committee.

This idea did in the beginning appear to be acceptable to all those Opposition parties which joined the J.P.-led Sangharsh Samiti in Bihar and the National Co-ordination Committee at the Centre. The CPI(M), for its part, expressed its dissent and said that it could not renounce its right as a political party to select its own candidates who would fight on its own symbol and, after election would be answerable to the Party. The Party appeared to be "isolated" in the ranks of the Opposition in this regard.

Unfortunately for J.P. and his colleagues of the National Co-ordination Committee, this whole idea has, within less than half a year since it was mooted, proved to be unrealistic. The efforts that have been made during the last few days in this direction have completely failed.

The question became of immediate practical importance in the context of the Gujarat election that is to take place in June. Despite the fact that the National Co-ordination Committee headed by J.P. consists of the Jana Sangh, BLD, Congress (O)

and the Socialist Party (apart from some smaller parties), these parties have found it impossible to evolve a common strategy for the Gujarat election. The result is that instead of one "people's candidate" envisaged by J.P., there will be two or even more candidates in several constituencies—each of them set up by one or other of the parties which are co-operating in the National Co-ordination Committee.

Furious controversies have, for some time, been going on among the BLD, Jana Sangh, Socialist Party and Congress (O). The BLD would not be satisfied with anything less than the complete merger of all the Opposition parties. The Jana Sangh and Congress (O) are not prepared for a complete merger to begin with; they suggest the formation of a joint party, even while the separate identity of each of the Opposition parties would continue—what is called a "federal party". The Congress (O) is not prepared to put even this into practice in Gujarat where it would not have anything more than electoral adjustments with other Opposition parties on its own terms.

The Socialist Party, which in the beginning appeared to endorse the idea of the "federal party" is having second thoughts and suggests that before either the merger or the "federal party" is considered, all the Opposition parties should launch an all India struggle.

This is far from what J.P. had expected when he took up the Prime Minister's challenge of an electoral battle and called for a "people's candidate" in every constituency to fight the Congress candidate. He is reported to have "blamed the leaders of all political parties supporting his agitation for not carrying the message of 'total revolution' to the masses. He asked the parties to set up common candidates for the next elections failing which he would appeal to the people to abstain from casting votes. He made it clear that in the selection of people's candidates, Jana Sangharsh Samitis would have the final say." (UNI message, Katihar, April 23.)

It is doubtful if even in Bihar—a State where J.P.'s words should carry much greater weight than anywhere else—the

Sangharsh Samitis have acquired that position among the people which J.P. thinks it has. Even in this State, no political party is likely to subject itself to the decisions of the Sangharsh Samiti in all electoral matters, including the selection of candidates.

Even supposing that this will be done in Bihar for the next election, it would be clear to anybody who has eyes to see that this will not happen anywhere else; even in Bihar, parties like the CPI(M) would certainly set up its own candidates where it considers proper.

J.P. himself seems to be aware of these possibilities in a way. Hence his warning that he may have to call on the people not to participate in the elections.

These developments have proved, if proof were needed, that the very idea of fighting an electoral battle through single candidates contesting on behalf of the people regardless of political parties, is totally unrealistic. The merger of all Opposition parties or the formation of a "federal party", Sangharsh Samiti candidates—all these are intended to obliterate the fundamental difference between the Rightist and Leftist camps within the Opposition.

The interests of the common people, on the other hand, demand that all the Left and democratic parties should come together in a united front on the basis of an agreed programme and plan of action even while every constituent of the united front will be free to carry on its own independent activities on questions not covered by the agreed programme.

As for those Opposition parties which oppose the Congress from the Right, they, too, may form their own united front if they find it possible to do so.

These two fronts of Opposition parties can, of course, co-operate in limited fields like that of the struggle for the restoration of civil liberties, for electoral reforms and so on.

This is the only line of advance as has been repeatedly pointed out by the CPI(M). Let J.P. think along these lines and not call for abstention from elections, as he indicated in his Katihar speech.

14

Polit Bureau Hails Vietnam's Victory*

Statement issued in Calcutta on May 2, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) sends its heartiest fraternal greetings to the heroic Vietnamese people, to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, Vietnam Workers' Party and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam on their world historic victory over U.S. imperialism.

The Vietnam people's liberation struggle, for the past 30 years against Japanese, French and especially against the cruel U.S. imperialists, has been not only for defence of Vietnam's independence and unity, but also has become one of the greatest revolutionary battles of all humanity and especially of Asia, against world imperialism and for Socialism.

The Vietnam people, led by their Workers' Party and Comrade Ho Chi Minh, have gone through such sufferings, saturated bombings, chemical and biological war, devastation, etc., unparalleled in human history, but they rose to pinnacles of sacrifice and determination, to win the battle for themselves and for the world people.

This victory of the Vietnamese people will inspire our Party and people to redouble our efforts to achieve a new social order. We will continue to work to strengthen friendly relations between our peoples and closer fraternal relations between our two Parties.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, May 11, 1975.

15

Sikkim : CPI(M)'s Stand*

P. Sundarayya

The Government of India has rushed through the 36th Constitution Amendment Bill absorbing Sikkim as a constituent State of the Indian Union. It only awaits the formal approval of half of the State Assemblies and Presidential signature to become effective from April 26, 1975. It is only M.P.s of our Party in both the houses of Parliament who voted against this Bill. We welcome the abolition of the institution of Chogyal but we are opposed to making Sikkim one of the constituent states of the Indian Union because "it would destroy the democratic right of the people of Sikkim to shape their own political and economic institutions to manage their internal affairs".

Sri Y. B.Chavan, the External Affairs Minister, who piloted the Bill in the Lok Sabha, had argued that Sikkim had had never been an independent sovereign State. Before India became independent, Sikkim was treated as any other princely State and was a member of the Chamber of Princes. All this is true.

Treaty of 1950

But in 1947, when every other princely State adjacent to or in the midst of Indian Union territory was absorbed and integrated into the Indian Union, Sikkim, at the insistence of Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, was declared a protectorate by the so-called treaty of 1950 signed by the Chogyal and the Indian

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Government. It was not because Sri Jawaharlal Nehru considered Sikkim to be an independent and sovereign State that he objected to its absorption or merger into the Indian Union. The protectorate status that was imposed, perpetuated the Chogyal and the feudal system, enabled the Indian Government not only to take over defence and foreign affairs, but all internal affairs as well, affecting the economic, political and democratic rights of the people of Sikkim. Even the system of parliamentary democracy was not introduced and even the meagre democratic rights that are bestowed on other States of the Indian Union were denied to this protectorate. Sikkim had been kept as a special preserve of the British before India's Independence, and by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru after Independence.

There are special reasons for this. Sikkim is small in territory (2814 sq. miles) and in population (about 2.50 lakhs)—75 per cent Nepali-speaking and 25 per cent Bhutia and Lepcha-speaking. It occupies a strategic area on the southern spurs of the Himalayas, north of Darjeeling district and bordering Nepal, China and Bhutan. The British imperialists kept it as their close preserve, from which they actively pursued their imperialist designs against China. After the decline of British power, it is being sought to be used by the U.S. imperialists. It has become a nest of U.S. imperialist intrigues, with the Chogyal and his American wife as their instruments.

It was under the pressure of the British that Sri Jawaharlal Nehru opposed the merger of Sikkim in India and wanted to keep it as a 'protectorate' wherein the Indian Government inherited the whole anti-people autocratic feudal set-up, and used it to serve its own class interests and allowed first the British and later the U.S. imperialists to carry on their intrigues.

Our Party's Demand

That is why our Party has been demanding that the institution of Chogyal and the feudal set-up be done away with

and the unequal treaty of 1950 be revised in favour of the people of Sikkim with unrestricted right to shape their political and economic institutions *to manage their internal affairs.* That is the only way to eliminate U.S. and other foreign imperialist nests in Sikkim, to defend the interests of the people of India and Sikkim and develop lasting friendly relations between them.

Our Party is not demanding that Sikkim be recognised as an independent and sovereign State managing its defence and foreign affairs as well. But at the same time, our Party does not consider Sikkim as part of India, as any other constituent of the Indian Union. Certain special relations have come to exist between India and Sikkim. What are the changes to be made in these relations, to better serve the interests of the people both in India and Sikkim, and primarily the latter? We have already stated that the changes required are the abolition of the institution of Chogyal and restoration of the right of the people of Sikkim to shape their political and economic institutions *to manage their internal affairs.*

Here it is not a question of a big country swallowing a neighbouring smaller State or the right of an ethnically smaller State to independent existence or right of a nation to self-determination and secession. Neither is it a question of how other foreign countries like Pakistan and China react to this issue. As a matter of fact, the Chinese People's Republic had earlier written to the Government of India that it recognised the "special relations that exist between India, Sikkim and Bhutan", though later when relations became bad, it refused to have talks regarding the border of these States with India. While we take note of the reactions of the neighbouring States as well as other foreign countries, our Party is guided wholly by the interests of the people of Sikkim and of India.

Relations will be Embittered

Today, the Sikkim leaders and even large sections of the Sikkim people may feel that to become a constituent unit of India like any other State is advantageous to them, and that

is the only way to get rid of the Chogyal. But in course of time they will realise that they cannot frame their own Constitution, even in regard to their internal affairs. They have got an autocratic Governor imposed on them by the President of India, in place of the Chogyal. The Governor as the agent of the President is not responsible to the people of Sikkim or subject to their elected representatives. The people of Sikkim will not enjoy any special powers, as none are reserved for them against the encroachment by monopolists and landlords from India even to the extent that Kashmir enjoys them, though Kashmir has acceded to India only on three subjects—defence, foreign affairs and communications. The Governor has been given special powers which no other Governor in any Indian State has got. Thus the relations with the people of Sikkim will become embittered.

We know that because the Indian Government has tried to integrate Kashmir into India as any other constituent, going beyond the three subjects on which accession took place, the relations with the Kashmir people and their leaders continued to worsen till recently. Even now, the special status accorded to Kashmir at the time of accession has not been restored. We know the inability and blind refusal of the Indian Government to understand the desires and aspirations of the people of Nagaland and Mizoram, and its resort to military and police measures to solve the problem has created a festering sore. We know the refusal of the Indian Government to concede greater powers and financial resources to the States, leave alone granting them widest autonomy and that has made Centre-State relations a major political issue in our country.

In such conditions, our Party considers that to make Sikkim a part of India, like any other constituent of India, even on the plea that the Sikkim Assembly and people there by a referendum voted for this, will be harmful to the people of Sikkim as well as of India. That is why our representatives while welcoming the abolition of the institution of Chogyal, voted against the Constitution Amendment Bill to make Sikkim one of the constituents of the Indian Union.

16

Gujarat Elections and the CPI(M)*

Statement dated April 30, 1975 issued by B. T. Ranadive, Polit Bureau Member, on behalf of CPI(M)

The following is the text of the statement issued by Comrade B. T. Ranadive in Ahmedabad on April 30, 1975:

We, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), consider that the forthcoming election in Gujarat give an opportunity to the people of Gujarat to give their democratic verdict on the developments not only in the State but in the entire country. Recent struggles and mass outbursts of anger over the entire country especially in Gujarat, Bihar and Kerala have emphasised the isolation of the ruling party from the people and have also exposed the unscrupulous anti-democratic and terroristic manner of the ruling Congress party, rigging coupled with resorting to repression to meet the challenge to its rule. Recently the people of India have come to know how the same party falsified the 1972 elections in West Bengal and launched a reign of semi-fascist terror in the State. The repression against the movements in Gujarat and Bihar and the resort to terror in Kerala have again shown that the Congress party will resort to every means to keep itself in power. The promulgation of the National Emergency, the use of DIR and MISA against trade union and democratic movements, against the activities of all Opposition parties, make it clear that the Congress party is determined to establish one-party dictatorship in India, completely undermining the basic assumptions of the Indian Constitution. Democracy in India, the rights of the workers, the

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peasants, the employees and the common citizen all alike are in danger if the Congress party continues to receive the mandate of the people in the coming elections.

Our Party, therefore, stands for the defeat of the Congress party in the elections and the withdrawal of the popular mandate from it.

At the same time our Party realises that the authoritarian trend of the ruling Congress party is due to the fact that it represents the interest of the Indian monopolists and big capitalists like the Ahmedabad millowners and landlords and represents the interests of collaboration with foreign capital. Unless these policies are changed and defeated there can be no real relief to the people and there can be no real basis for safeguarding and further expanding democracy. Today especially with the people in Gujarat in distress under famine conditions, and with millions all over the country threatened with mass unemployment, with large number of factories on the point of outright closure and high prices and inflation causing havoc with the budget of every family, a mere electoral defeat of the Congress will not bring the required relief to our people in distress, unless the battle against the vested interests is carried on with determination and decisiveness. That is why our Party thinks that the best way to achieve these results is to ensure the electoral defeat of the ruling party by strengthening the Left and democratic forces in the country who alone can take on the challenge of the vested interests and lay the basis for saving and expanding democracy. In all spheres of life and in the election our Party is guided by these two considerations:

(1) The defeat of the Congress to stem the tide of the authoritarian onslaught.

(2) Unity of Left and democratic forces to achieve it.

Nonetheless, our Party feels that the opportunity of collaboration that we want is not achievable everywhere and yet there is the desire to unitedly defeat the Congress at the poll everywhere including Gujarat. Our Party has shown its willingness to co-operate with all parties on the question of

defending civil liberties and democratic rights. Beyond that certain difficulties often arise as there are basic differences on the question of the economic programme which vitally affects the well-being of our people. Many parties which are opposed to the Congress often indulge in violent anti-Communism. We as Communists naturally cannot but oppose this. Many are openly opposed to nationalisation of the monopoly concerns or abolition of landlordism. Since, in the elections, these items of programme assume great importance and so in our purpose of defeating the Congress, our Party naturally develops certain reservations in regard to many parties. Also our Party is opposed to U.S. penetration in our economy and considers U.S. imperialism a foe of our freedom. That is why our Party, while not wanting to disturb the unity of the forces arraigned against the Congress, can neither merge itself completely, or identify itself with all the other parties.

In the present elections of Gujarat, therefore, we will put up our own candidates on our own programme. We will see that in doing this we do not disturb the growing unity of the people against the Congress and will actively support all Left-minded and progressive candidates who deserve our support. We are confident that this particular stand of our Party, which takes into account the need for unity to defeat the authoritarian Indira Congress, but at the same time not sacrificing basic principles and cheat the masses, will be appreciated by the people of Gujarat who are called upon to give a crushing defeat to the ruling party at the polls. It is the same ruling party which perpetrated unheard of brutalities on the people during the last Gujarat movement, promulgated curfew in almost every town of Gujarat and used the military and CRP against the unarmed men and women of Gujarat with humiliating repression and spilling of blood. This demands a complete rejection of the Indira Congress by the people of Gujarat.

17

The Common Interest*

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', May 25, 1975

The three-day visit of Jaya Prakash Narayan to Kerala which is over; his forthcoming visit to West Bengal; the All-India Convention on Civil Liberties and Free and Fair elections being held in New Delhi in the first week of August—all these fall into a definite pattern. They indicate the emergence of unity of action among different sections of the forces of Opposition to the Congress Government—forces which are opposed to one another on several fundamental issues of economic and political policy but which have a common interest in halting the march of the ruling Congress party and its Government towards authoritarianism and terror rule.

The CPI(M), as is well known, is the leading force of the Opposition in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. It is trying to unify all the forces of Left and democratic Opposition to the Congress regime, as distinct from the forces of Right Opposition.

This, in class terms, means the unity of all the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly and democratic classes and strata under the leadership of the working class and on the basis of the firm alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

The J.P. movement, on the other hand, is strong in those States, regions and localities where the CPI(M) and other Left parties are weak. J.P. is trying to bring about the unity

*Here J.P. means Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan.

of all those who are dissatisfied with the corrupt Congress regime. He does not make any distinction between the Left and the Right in the Opposition to the Congress regime.

Beginning with the proposal to set up Janta candidates with no party affiliations and contesting on no party symbol, J.P. has now come round to the idea that all Opposition parties should merge into one; this, according to him, is the next best alternative since, if at least this is not implemented, the Congress is sure to win.

In class terms, J.P.'s original proposal of setting up Janta candidates, as well as his next best alternative of merging all Opposition parties into one, means that the working class and its class allies should merge into a bourgeois Opposition, rather than develop themselves into an independent political force. This, therefore, has been rejected by the CPI(M).

In Kerala and West Bengal where the CPI(M) is the major force of the Opposition, it is trying to build the unity of Left and democratic forces and not the all-in unity of the Opposition as envisaged by J.P. In other States where the Party is weak, it will be prepared to hold talks with J.P. on how best to strengthen the Opposition but not to give up its right, as a political party, to set up a few candidates who will contest on Party symbol and, if elected, will be working under the discipline of the Party. Nor will it have any alliance or understanding with a party which, in its opinion, is pursuing policies which harm the democratic popular movement—for example, the Jana Sangh whose programme and policies are based on Hindu revivalism and are therefore detrimental to the unity of the democratic movement.

These differences between the CPI(M) and J.P. are well known to both. That is why it has been agreed that while the CPI(M) would not join the National Co-ordination Committee set up by J.P. to give leadership to the anti-corruption and other struggles all over the

country, the Party will have joint action—and, if that is not possible for any reason in a particular place, synchronised action—on specific issues on which there is agreement and on terms acceptable to both.

The most important burning issue on which joint action is possible has been identified as the naked attack on civil liberties which has become the normal practice of the Congress Governments at the Centre and in the States. West Bengal and Kerala are the two States where such attacks on civil liberties have become the most widespread. It is, therefore, in the common interest of the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties, as well as those parties which have joined J.P.'s National Co-ordination Committee, to resist these attacks in these two States.

The attack began in West Bengal over three years ago as one directed against the CPI(M) and other Left parties in that State. It was extended soon to attacks on all Opposition parties. That was why the Left parties and the Nava Nirman Samiti co-operated, in February this year, in organising a West Bengal State Civil Liberties Convention. The need for following up this convention was reinforced when J.P. himself was prevented by Youth Congress and Chhatra Parishad goondas from addressing a meeting in Calcutta on April 2. The Left parties and the Nava Nirman Samiti have now decided to utilize J.P.'s visit in the first week of June for organising a joint demonstration.

In Kerala, too, the Achutha Menon Government, and under its protective wing, the ruling parties have been launching vicious attacks on the Left and democratic parties and mass organizations though they have not yet assumed the proportions they have in West Bengal. J.P.'s three-day visit to Kerala was sought to be utilised by the ruling parties for intensifying these attacks: both the Youth Congress and the Right Communist Party declared that they would organise anti-J.P. demonstrations, as was done in Calcutta and other places; the chief gang leader,

Priyaranjan Das Munshi was himself visiting Kerala. The challenge, however, was taken up by the CPI(M) and other parties of the Opposition. The original plan of inciting clashes and marring J.P.'s public engagements was foiled by the unity of democratic forces.

J.P. visited Kerala, and is visiting West Bengal, for organizing his own movement. He had in Kerala, and will be having in West Bengal, a series of meetings and consultations for the purpose of organising this movement. The CPI(M) naturally has nothing to do with these meetings and consultations. It is, however, interested in protecting the right of J.P. himself and the participants in his movement to carry on their activities and to foil the plans of those who are out to attack this right. It is equally anxious to secure the support of the J.P. movement in protecting its own right to carry on its work. That is why the Party extended its co-operation in making J.P.'s visit to Kerala and West Bengal a success.

It is, however, a question not merely of West Bengal and Kerala. The question is of all-India importance. This is clearly seen in the All-India Convention of Civil Liberties and Free and Fair elections being held in Delhi in the first week of August for which preparations are being jointly made. We appeal to all democratic parties, organisations and individuals to make the convention a success.

18

On Economic Situation and Unemployment*

Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in its meeting held in Calcutta on June 10-12, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta on June 10-12, 1975, has adopted the following resolution :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces official complacence and tinkering with the grave economic situation which borders on the breakdown the economy. The situation is accentuated by the world capitalist crisis. While the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister are assuring the people of no recession, industries and concerns are throwing out thousands of workers and employees on the streets, intensifying unemployment which has already reached abnormal proportions.

Mass lay-offs, retrenchment and wholesale dismissals of temporary and *badli* workers have become a countrywide phenomenon. Tens of thousands of coal miners were retrenched under some pretext or other, when the coal mines were nationalised.

India's major industries are in disarray with the workers being made the main scapegoats. The jute, cotton textile, engineering, automobile, wagon industries all are affected by recession in demand and have thrown out thousands of workers on the street or are threatening to do so. A large number of factories and plantations are outright closed, involving tremendous waste of capital resources and depriving tens of thousands of their jobs.

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The loss of jobs extends to huge mass of workers in small and unorganised industries also.

Thousands of small concerns, ancillary industries, workshops and repair shops have closed or are working shorttime. Now middle class recruitment has virtually ceased and educated unemployment has increased by leaps and bounds during the last two years. And now the Central Government threatens to launch a new offensive of a 25 per cent reduction in staff, which means throwing out of lakhs of employees.

The situation is no better in the villages. The small grower of commercial crops—jute, coconut and other oilseeds, cotton—is ruined by fall in prices. The small grower of foodgrains is being subjected to unjust levy. They are all turned into destitutes by the manipulation of the market. The situation is going to be accentuated further because of our dependence on Western capitalist markets for exports which threaten to go down under the impact of world recession.

Pretending to tackle the evil of inflation and rising prices, the Congress Government has taken measures to throw the burdens of the crisis on the common man. Every measure of the Congress Government—wage-freeze, credit-squeeze and new taxation—was intended to restrict the incomes and purchasing power of the common man. This has inevitably resulted in drastically curtailing the internal market, even for such necessities like cloth and other articles. Unleashing and intensifying recession is the natural consequence. The arrest of a few smugglers was just an advertisement. The smuggling business has once again been revived on a large-scale.

Workers, employees, lawyers, doctors, engineers, peasants and agricultural workers, shop-keepers, small producers and small industry owners all alike are forced to accept new burdens to enable the monopolists, capitalists and landlords to ensure their loot.

Official claims to have tackled price rise are revealed to be just propaganda. There is no relief for the common man through lower prices of food, sugar, cloth; the only change is that he has lost his job. It is possible to tackle the ques-

tion of prices and jobs simultaneously if the class policies of the Congress Government to defend the landlords and the monopolists are defeated.

The key to lowering of prices is the price of food which is inflated by the landlords and the traders. The immediate commandeering of the entire stocks of the landlords and traders and their distribution through a public distribution system supervised by people's committees will ensure lower prices for foodgrains all over the country.

The Government on the contrary is pursuing a policy of fleecing the mass of peasantry by the levy system while the landlords are left scot-free. Many State Governments are announcing plans to restrict the scope of rationing to certain sections only, forcing a large number of people to purchase in the open or black market at exhorbitant prices.

The demand for consumer goods produced in factories can be easily raised by lowering prices of these goods. To ensure this the profits of the capitalists must be drastically cut and controlled. Exports of goods can be increased by cutting down the fantastic profits earned by a score of middlemen. With this policy there will be no need to close factories; no need for lay-offs and retrenchment.

The high indirect taxation of the Government, especially the taxation on necessaries of life, constitutes an important cause of the price-rise, adds to inflationary developments, restricts the purchasing power of the people and accentuates the crisis. The abolition or drastic reduction in the excise or other imposts on articles of consumption is essential to meet the challenge of recession. Along with this all attacks on wages like the wage-freeze Act or the freezing of the DA of Central and State employees must stop. The burdens of the crisis must be borne by the vested interests—by the monopolists, foreign and Indian, by the big capitalists and landlords. Instead of this the Government goes on giving more and more concessions to the monopolists. While the jute barons have been given largesse amounting to Rs. 20 crores, the workers are denied DA and the jute growers are fleeced by lowering prices.

To place the economy on a firm footing, nationalisation of foreign monopoly concerns, of Indian monopolies and abolition of landlordism are absolutely necessary. It is also necessary to nationalise big industries like jute and cotton textile.

It is the Government and these classes that must bear the full responsibility for the electricity shortage which has resulted from bureaucratic mismanagement and pilfering. The workers are unnecessarily made to suffer for the crimes of this gentry.

In this situation, which affects millions of people, the Polit Bureau calls upon all democratic parties and mass organisations to come together to defend the jobs of workers and employees, and resist the onslaught on rural and urban toilers and secure relief from high prices. The massive struggle for a change of policies assumes supreme importance. The Polit Bureau, therefore, calls upon them to fight for the following :

1. Lay-off should not be permitted by the Government. Where there is lay-off full compensation should be procured for those affected including those in smaller concerns.
2. Closure or retrenchment should not be permitted.
3. Full employment benefit at the cost of the employers and Government for those thrown out of jobs.
4. Right to unemployment relief for all unemployed including the unemployed in the rural areas.
5. Implementation on a massive scheme for rural employment under the supervision of trade unions, kisan sabhas and agricultural labourers' organisations.
6. Immediate re-opening of closed industries and factories and plantations and full utilisation of installed capacity.
7. Commandeering of the foodgrain stocks of landlords and wholesalers and distribution under the supervision of popular committees.
8. Lowering of prices of necessaries of life to bring down the price level.
9. Programme of nationalisation of monopoly concerns and of abolition of landlordism.

19

P. B. Demands Resignation of Indira Gandhi From Prime Ministership*

Press Handout issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in Calcutta on June 12, 1975

The following is the text of the Press handout issued by the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Calcutta on June 12, 1975 :

The judgement of the Allahabad High Court declaring the election of Smt. Indira Gandhi null and void on the ground of indulging in corrupt practices completely exposes the extent to which the Congress Government under the leadership of Indira Gandhi is utilising the administration, the resources of the State and black money most unashamedly and unscrupulously for winning elections.

The Air Force helicopters belonging to the State had been pressed into the service of the Congress party. The services of Government servants are also being utilised illegally for the victory of the Congress party.

In order to avoid her election being invalidated, she had no scruples in getting an Act passed, amending the People's Representation Act, which sought to nullify the Supreme Court judgement which declared that the expenses incurred by the political parties sponsoring a candidate must be included in his election expenses.

Even when those issues had been argued before the Allahabad High Court and the judgement was pending, Smt. Indira Gandhi had no compunction to resort to the very same abuse of Governmental machinery and in spending crores of

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rupees of black money collected from Big Business in the Gujarat elections.

The rigging of elections in West Bengal in 1972 by taking recourse to the foulest means including the denial of the right to vote to the citizens by armed goondas with the connivance and assistance of the police and CRP is now well-known.

Thus Smt. Indira Gandhi had reduced elections to a farce.

With this clear verdict, it will be a disgrace for Indira Gandhi to continue as Prime Minister. The Polit Bureau demands her resignation forthwith.

20

Two Verdicts

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', June 22, 1975

June 12, 1975, will go down in the annals of our country as the day on which Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her colleagues received a double punishment— at the hands of the judiciary which denounced the highest executive of the country as corrupt, and the people of Gujarat who rejected them at the polls.

The judgement delivered by Justice Sinha of the Allahabad High Court cannot be treated as a purely technical verdict on the specific issues raised before the court and liable to be reversed by the Supreme Court. It raises the political question of the integrity, honesty and reliability of those who have been entrusted with the responsibility of running the affairs of the country.

The judgement is important not only because it has given its findings against the Prime Minister on two counts but also because of the grounds on which it has given its finding in her favour at least on two other issues. Let us, therefore, go a little more in detail into the four issues we would like to refer to.

The Prime Minister has been found to have resorted to "corrupt practice" in that (a) she used the services of a gazetted officer under the Central Government for her electioneering work at a time when he was still in Government service; (b) when she got the services of certain district officers like the Superintendent of Police and Executive Engineer in order to make arrangements for her election meetings.

Both come under the category of using the Prime Minister's official position to put the Official machinery of the State (which should be non-party) into an adjunct of her own electoral organisation. The findings on these two counts are based on a strict definition of the term "corrupt practice" under the letter of the law.

On the same basis of interpretation of the letter of the law, the judgement has gone in favour of the Prime Minister on two other counts.

First, no "corrupt practice" was involved in the use of the IAF aricraft for her electioneering. The reason given is that the IAF plane was used not only for her own constituency, but as part of her "general election tour of the country". If she had used it only for her own constituency, it would, according to the learned judge, have amounted to "corrupt practices".

The political question naturally arises: is it proper for the leader of the ruling party to take advantage of her position as Prime Minister to commandeer the services of the IAF aircraft for her countrywide election tours which means using the privileges of the Prime Minister as head of the Government for furthering her party's cause? That, however, is a political question with which the Judge as Judge is not concerned. That is why the Allahabad verdict has gone in her favour on this issue.

Secondly, the finding has gone in her favour regarding her election expenditure, whether it has gone above the ceiling fixed under the Act. The relevant question to be considered in this context is whether the amendment to the Representation of People's Act (which excluded expenditure incurred by the candidates' political party from the purview of the law) was legally valid. The finding on this point is that "the petitioner (Raj Narain) has not been able to lay any foundation on facts to compel an enquiry into the constitutionality of the aforesaid Ordinance and Act". The Act having thus been deemed legal, the expenditure incurred by the Prime Minister on her election has been found to be below the ceiling fixed.

It is, however, obvious that if the enormous amounts expended by the party (for which notoriously big sums have been raised by the Prime Minister herself in return for favours shown to Big Business) are taken into account, the total expenses incurred for the election of the Prime Minister would have amounted to corrupt practice. Here, again, the political question is whether it is morally and politically permissible for the ruling party to raise such enormous amounts through such methods in order to incur election expenses of its candidates including the Prime Minister; is it not, on the other hand, such use of big money raised through dishonourable means that is denounced by everybody as having been the source of political corruption?

The technical aspects of the issues on which the findings have gone against, or in favour of, the Prime Minister may be re-examined in the appeal that would be preferred by the Prime Minister to the Supreme Court. Without entering into a discussion of these technical aspects (though it is difficult to imagine how any conscientious Judge can give a favourable verdict on the two issues on which the Allahabad verdict has gone against the Prime Minister), it can be said without fear of contradiction that the findings given by the Allahabad Judge on the four counts examined above add up to a formidably adverse political verdict.

The verdict is that the Prime Minister has used the personnel of Government services, the aircraft belonging to the Government and the enormous amounts raised by her in the name of the party and expended by the party in the cause of ensuring the electoral victory of her party, including her own victory.

All these are privileges which were denied not only to her opponent in that particular constituency, but to all other Opposition candidates. The question is, can this state of affairs be permitted to continue, or whether the electoral rules should be so amended as to prevent the leaders of the ruling party to use these privileges denied to their opponents?

Nor is this a question of election in a particular constituency,

that of Rae Bareli. It is equally applicable to elections in all other constituencies—Parliamentary or State Assembly. The parties of the Opposition have accused the ruling party of using these and other dishonourable methods in all elections, going up to seizure of booths by gangs of the ruling party's armed goondas.

The verdict given in the Rae Bareli election case by the Allahabad Judge just opens the window enabling the people to get a glimpse of the ways in which the ruling party has been using its official position to falsify the will of the electorate. That judgement therefore would, regardless of the final outcome of the legal battle yet to be fought in the Supreme Court, call upon all genuine champions of democracy to put up effective resistance to the unscrupulous methods adopted by the ruling party to win artificial electoral victories.

The Allahabad judgement disqualifying Indira Gandhi from contesting any election for a period of six years is therefore the first punishment meted out on June 12 to the Prime Minister and her party by the country's judiciary. To this was added the electoral verdict in Gujarat which too was given on the same day.

This electoral verdict is all the more important in that the Prime Minister herself was in charge of her party's election campaign in Gujarat. Spending several days in going round all parts of the State and calling on the people of Gujarat to re-elect her party as they had done over three years ago, she was credited by her admirers to have done "a magnificent job" which none else in her party is capable of doing. It goes without saying that she adopted every means at her disposal, including the use of official machinery and the expenditure of enormous amounts raised through dishonourable means, for ensuring her party's victory at the elections.

The people of Gujarat, however, refused to be blackmailed and meted out severe punishment to her. Not only did the Congress fail to get an absolute majority of seats but it could not even become the largest single party in the new

legislature. Its main rival, the Janata Front led by the Congress (O), has come out as the biggest single party and is short of less than half a dozen seats for being in the absolute majority.

Being given either of these two such punishments would have made any self-respecting party give up the right of heading the country's Government. Here, however, is a ruling party and its leader who, in spite of having met with two such defeats on a single day, insists on continuing their rule. The parties of the Opposition are, therefore, perfectly correct if they carry on a countrywide agitation for the removal of Indira Gandhi from the Prime Minister's post.

21

National Emergency and Our Tasks

Decision taken by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) on 3.9.1975 following imposition of National Emergency with effect from June 26, 1975

With the declaration of the new Emergency, the complete abrogation of all democratic rights and the institution of press censorship of the worst type, the ruling party has virtually instituted a one-party dictatorship against which our Party has been warning the people. It has to be admitted however, that we were completely taken by surprise by this sudden development which shows that we were underestimating the depth of the crisis endangered by the struggle between the bourgeois parties. For instance, the last CC document circulated for discussion in the lower committees discussed election understandings and alliances and was based on the estimate that elections were ahead in the next few months.

This lagging behind has naturally led to a lot of confusion in the ranks and dissatisfaction and also to unpreparedness to meet the demands of the situation. Already in a number of States large number of our comrades have been arrested, leading members have also been arrested and the total number of arrests may reach a figure of more than 2,000. Besides, there are warrants of arres against a large number of comrades and if the top leaders are spared for some time, it is only because the Government is in need of showing to the world that it is attacking only the right reactionary forces. Immediately, because of our unpreparedness, there was no effective guidance to our units, on what to do politically as well as organizationally though the various State Committees have given guidance and tried

to fill up the vacuum. A meeting of the P.B. could not be held for some time and the Central guidance was not available.

We are faced with this difficult situation when because of our previous failures, we are both politically and organizationally unprepared to meet the conditions of illegality. In 1972, the CC asked the W.B. State Committee to pay attention to build a U.G. apparatus in view of the semi-fascist terror; but it did not pursue the matter. Nor did it pursue it in relation to the other States. All these facts should be borne in mind when we consider the fight against Emergency and the concrete steps to carry it forward.

Pretended Fight against Right

The Government of India is telling the world that the Emergency has been ushered in because of a serious challenge from the Right reactionary forces to its progressive policies. It also mentions the Naxalites—"the extreme left" as its object of attack. To bolster its claim, it has illegalised the RSS, the Anand Marg and the Jamait-e-Islame and a number of Naxalite organizations while it claims to have arrested only the leaders of the Right Opposition parties. Of late, it has been advertising that the majority of those arrested are not politicians, but smugglers and other anti-socials. It also seeks to make capital out of J.P.'s appeal to the army and the police forces, raising the bogey of immediate mutiny or dissatisfaction in the armed forces. It has suppressed the news of the large-scale arrests of our Party members and attempted to gloss over the fact that the right to organization and strike, to public meetings and freedom of association of the mass of people has been suppressed. It covers the fact that freedom of press has been completely crushed—the press cannot report even the speeches of Opposition leaders in Parliament.

This facade of fighting right reaction is essential to maintain the Government's prestige in other democratic countries and to mislead the world working class and public opinion. It is

beacuse of this that the Govt. very cleverly refrains from arresting some of our prominent leaders while trying to undermine our base and picking up our effective cadres.

Revisionist Surrender

The Right Communist Party has completely aligned itself with the Govt. and is supporting this mass repression of the people and helping in building a one-party authoritarian regime. It is in the forefront of the campaign to advertise Govt.'s repressive measures as intended for curbing only the forces of Right reaction and fascism. It will be an act of crime and treachery if any one believes that there is an iota of progressive content in what the Govt. is doing or that because it is supported from abroad its actions have anything to do with protecting Indian democracy or Indian progress. Any such wavering and any such thought will amount to completely embracing the revisionist outlook and point of view.

Support of CPSU

The situation is complicated because the CPSU and a number of other Communist parties have openly supported this conspiracy to install a one-party authoritarian Government in the country. The open support given by Pravda and Izvestia, reveals the mischief and anti-revolutionary role of the Soviet Party in connection with Indian developments. Our people and our ranks will be justifiably angry with this unscrupulous support of Indira Gandhi's attack against Indian democracy. It means, however, that our struggle against the Emergency will be very hard and difficult because initially we will be separated from the main mass of Socialist Camp under the influence of the Soviet Union. In pursuing our struggle we will have to take this fact into consideration and evolve steps to see that the people and working class of the Socialist world and the world democratic forces cease to be misguided by this CPSU propaganda.

Culmination of Previous Developments

The struggle is going to be a protracted one and a return to pre-Emergency parliamentary democracy seems to be inconceivable. India is now set on the path of a one-party authoritarian government. The historical truth that the bourgeoisie of an ex-colonial country cannot continue with parliamentary democracy for long, that it must abrogate it to ensure the continuity of its class rule is being demonstrated again. Therefore, though the immediate cause of Emergency was the threat of ouster of Indira by the bourgeois Opposition parties, with a section of the ruling Congress Party joining hands with them, its actual meaning and content is far wider. It is the culminating process that started with the rigging of West Bengal elections and the starting of semi-fascist terror and as such, it is going to be of a prolonged character. It is meant to deny the Indian people all their democratic rights and make them the subjects of an authoritarian totalitarian regime.

Whatever relaxation may be offered after a few months, following a temporary overcoming of the inner-party crisis of the ruling party or a compromise with the bourgeois opposition parties, the return to previous rights and freedoms will not be possible. Manipulated elections, truncated parliament, a truncated democracy functioning within the limits of permanent Emergency with the real burden of suppression of rights shouldered by the masses and the democratic struggle—such is the picture that looms before us. There will be no relaxation for us. It is therefore a very hard fight which we have to carry on. It means that the Party has to function in conditions of illegality, though it should continue to take advantage of all legal possibilities and opportunities.

Threat From Inside the Congress

There is no doubt that the immediate cause of instituting the Emergency was the serious threat of ouster held against Indira Gandhi by the Opposition parties in combination with

dissident leaders and sections in the Congress. It was known that more than 100 MPs had already decided to demand her resignation and it was feared that the majority of the MPs might swing over to this view and support Jagjivan Ram's name for the post of Prime Ministership. There was no other method of preventing this development except terrorising the Congress MPs and jailing the Opposition MPs and completely suppressing the gathering mass discontent against Congress rule.

In this context to parade the Anand Marg, the RSS or the Naxalites as a big source of danger is to screen the real source of danger. The Anand Marg, an organization of murderers, sometimes helped by the Government with liberal funds, an anti-Communist organization whose members made an attempt on the life of Com. Jyoti Basu—is no political challenge meriting an Emergency. The scattered groups of Naxalites who have to be fought politically are again given exaggerated importance, when they are seriously mentioned as one of the causes of the Emergency. Even the RSS, a reactionary organization, is in no position to challenge the political rulers nor bring about a coup. The fact is that the real danger was presented by a combination of J.P. alliance and Congress dissidents.

It should be remembered that every one of these organizations was at one time or other extolled by the Government itself. The Anand Marg was helped financially; the RSS leaders were praised by Indira Gandhi and the Naxalites were used against our Party and extolled as revolutionaries by the bourgeois papers. By banning these organizations now the Government seeks to justify its total war on democracy as a progressive step. It has been our stand that reactionary organizations like the RSS or organizations like the Naxalites have to be fought politically.

Opposition Parties

The Opposition bourgeois parties with their parliamentary beliefs hoped to oust Indira Gandhi with the aid of the High

Court judgement. The combine under J.P.'s leadership was using pressure tactics by rousing masses to some extent by means of non-violent satyagraha and by working for the help of Congress MPs and hoping that in the end the election would go in their favour. The victory in the Gujarat elections, the reduction of Congress to minority party gave them tremendous confidence and with the Allahabad judgement in their hand, they thought that they were almost on the point of winning their battle, namely, the ousting of Indira Gandhi, even before fresh elections. They also failed to understand that the big response that they were getting in many places arose out of the deep economic discontent of the masses, that because of the depth of the crisis, the Government would take drastic steps to thwart their challenge. The bourgeois Opposition parties as we have repeatedly stated, had neither the desire nor the capacity to go to the basic masses and rouse them in a big way. The lessons from the subversion of parliamentary democracy in West Bengal and imposition of semi-fascist rule were not grasped by them. They thought that parliamentary forms and democratic norms will be observed by the Government in dealing with them.

Social and Economic Causes

However, the Party had come to the conclusion that the ruling party was fast moving towards authoritarianism and one-party dictatorship. In its last resolution, the CC considered that the main danger to democracy came from Indira Gandhi Government the onslaught against parliamentary democracy comes in the background of deeper social, economic and political factors. This draconian step was taken because in the first place, the ruling party was unable to deal with the growing economic crisis and recession. Notwithstanding the denial of the existence of recession, it has been spreading far and wide with total failure of Government measures to control prices and mass closure of factories and concerns. Only draconian measures which would smash the resistance of the masses would enable the Government to transfer the

burdens of the crisis to the common man. All the statements of Indira Gandhi about the economic situation and her exhortations against strikes, against wage rise, for more production and more work, her promise to the capitalists that there would be no further nationalisation—all these placed in the centre the task of fighting the crisis and solving it at the expense of the people.

The crisis has further narrowed down the Government's ability to prevent the masses from intensifying the struggle with some concessions and therefore, had led to growing disillusionment of the people with regard to Congress promises of 'Garibi Hatao' and socialism. The Government had also seen that despite suppression, strikes and mass actions were on the increase and could not be put down without a total ban on them. In this background, the advance of bourgeois opposition movement on some democratic slogans, their exploitation of the Allahabad judgement and finally, the Congress defeat in Gujarat—all created a situation which threatened the Prime Ministership of Indira Gandhi. So the blow was apparently directed against the Indian people, a blow against their democratic rights, a blow to make them bear the burdens of the economic crisis. The real fight is not between the ruling party and the bourgeois Opposition parties, but between the ruling party and the classes supporting it and masses of the Indian people and Indian democracy itself.

Big Bourgeoisie Rally Behind Indira

Two features stand out in connection with this Emergency. Firstly, though Indira Gandhi claims that she is fighting Right reactionary forces, all the monopolists and big bourgeoisie of the country have rallied round her banner. The Tatas, the Birlas, the Chambers of Commerce, the trading associations, the associations of various industries—all have with one voice endorsed this attack against the common people and declared in a most blatant manner that Indira Gandhi represents their interests. All the State Congress

ministries some of which are headed by the most notorious landlord interests have also with one voice supported this Emergency thereby exposing the Congress claim, of fighting the Right forces. And why should they not? The Emergency bans strikes, meetings, agitations, militant organizations and abrogates all rights and freedoms for the mass of workers, peasants and agricultural workers. It freezes wages; it bans the papers from publishing news about strikes; it strengthens their hands to increase workload, retrench people and to do havoc with people's livelihood. The industrial and class peace that they always dreamt of is now being assured. More and more these facts have to be brought to the notice of the people who may be temporarily impressed by this cry of fight against right reaction.

The second feature of this country-wide attack is that it is not in response to an immediate political threat from the working class and its party or from the Left forces. In advanced capitalist countries, parliamentary democracy is scuttled when the bourgeois state power is threatened with an immediate political challenge from the proletariat. In India, this threat has come when our Party is strong only in three States, when Left forces stand divided, and when the vacuum in many places was being filled by the right Opposition parties. To identify this attack as a direct consequence of the rise in the revolutionary consciousness of the masses and try to adopt tactics on that basis means running ahead of mass consciousness.

For a Broad Front of the Fighting People

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

to replace the present Government by a democratic government. Today, the ranks of all political parties, parties from the Right and parties from the Left, are under attack. They include not only the followers of Right parties, of Left parties, but also wide sections of the Congress who are thoroughly dissatisfied and shocked by this suppression of democratic rights. They also include followers of the Right C.P. Besides, they include vast non-committed sections, who normally do not give much thought to politics, who have perhaps been busy with their professions, but who are now made to feel the oppressive atmosphere of the Emergency. There is thus a very wide base for developing an extensive united democratic movement to fight the Emergency and the Congress rule, for approaching the widest possible sections of the people on direct political issues like restoration of the normal parliamentary democracy, by lifting the Emergency and scrapping MISA, DIR and other extra-ordinary legislations. Here is the biggest chance to develop the united front from below, i.e., the united front of the masses following all Opposition parties and even the Congress followers to growingly fight the Emergency and secure back the normal democratic rights. Now even under conditions of illegality there are factors which enable us to build the widest possible mass front from below to fight the Emergency. Attempts to achieve this is one of the key tasks of the present period and our Party must strive its best to develop this broad-based people's movement.

Besides, the economic factor which is drawing large masses into action, gives another big scope to draw all sections of the masses together in the common fight against Emergency. Workers, agricultural workers, peasants, students, middle class employees, professionals, traders, small owners, small factory owners—all are today coming under the axe in the anti-inflationary and anti-crisis measures. All these classes and sections are protesting against the Government on economic issues. Reinforced by the fight against Emergency, their unity will be strengthened all the more and the economic and

political factor together can and must lead to a big democratic front.

What about the various parties that are also involved in this struggle? Firstly, in this situation, we should pursue with greater vigour our slogan of Left and democratic unity. While trying to rally the widest sections of the masses, of the following of different parties, the main orientation has to be for building a powerful Left and democratic unity. In this process, we may have to cooperate with a number of other parties on issue to issue basis.

The Party must have a clear understanding about the likely behaviour of the leaders of the J.P. combine parties, in the near future. With all their hopes of immediate success frustrated, with their electoral prospects threatened with their incarceration, the leadership of these parties are likely to seek a compromise with the ruling party in the near future.

Indira Gandhi is again demanding that the Opposition leaders should observe parliamentary norms, behave as responsible parliamentary leaders. Probably, some of these leaders may think of accepting the Supreme Court verdict to end the deadlock. The possibility of compromise should always be borne in mind.

The Party

Naturally, in this situation, the first priority must be conceded to the building of underground apparatus. Our Party must have a well-spread underground apparatus if we have to fight the Emergency and one-party authoritarian rule over a prolonged period. After all, in spite of all weaknesses, and the scattered state of our organization, we are the only force that is capable of putting up a consistent fight against this onslaught.

In the present situation there is no party except ours that can put up sustained and consistent work among the masses. The moods of initial enthusiasm and anger are likely to be replaced by despondency in the cadres and leading members of other parties. The fighting elements among the people are

bound to look to us more and more for delivering the goods. No other party is capable of discharging this responsibility.

It is not surprising that sections of the following of other parties look to our Party for providing the guidance and direction of fight under the present conditions. Approaches have been made in some places to our comrades and their guidance has been sought for underground activities. It is a serious historical responsibility placed on our shoulders which we can discharge only if there is guarantee of the continuity of our organization and its suspension under conditions of illegality. Measures of re-organization to be taken at the Centre will have to be decided by the CC.

Forms of Immediate Action

The Party will have to start at grassroot levels, and in the entire period, the independent activity and initiative of our Party has to be developed to the utmost because it is this that will growingly attract the ranks of other parties towards the common fight. How do we proceed with this task? It is quite clear that unless the underground activity develops in depth and reaches wide sections of our own masses, mass actions on a local or wider scale are not possible. The minimum problem before us is how to reach the masses, how to reach the masses of other parties and make them acquainted with the exact meaning of the present situation. The minimum task is one of propaganda, agitation and enlightenment. It has to be done through secret posters, bulletins, pamphlets, leaflets, baithak meetings, whisper campaigns. The oral propaganda campaign and meetings have to be organized especially in the factory areas where we have got large following. All this preliminary work may appear to be non-spectacular but unless through it, we are able to rouse the consciousness of the people to a higher level and determination, further action will not be possible. Here our main slogan will be direct political slogan of restoration of fundamental rights, withdrawal of Emergency and replacing the one-party authoritarian rule by a democratic regime. In this

propaganda and agitation, the economic programme of Indira Gandhi has to be completely exposed, talking points have to be prepared for our oral propagandists and the hypocritical character of all the measures should be brought before the people.

Indira Gandhi through the press, through the radio and by announcing her economic programme is trying to play the same old trick of 1972 of posing as a radical in contrast to the Right Opposition forces. These forces will be completely on the defensive because they did not evolve a proper programme for the masses, though they did include formally some basic demands in their platforms. Concentrating fire on the economic programme, concentrating fire on the loss of freedom and democratic rights, we should enlighten the masses to take up the fight against Emergency. This struggle will be strongly helped and aided by the developing economic discontent that is already on the increase. Here both in the cities and villages, in factories and colleges, we have to take gradual steps to see that the masses are able to pick up the gauntlet thrown by the ruling party.

With the aid of the INTUC and the AITUC, the trade union and the employees' movement is being disrupted and common action is rendered more difficult. These elements are going to act as the espionage corps of the Govt. for some time. Here therefore the utmost skill will be required to build a common front on the fight for immediate demands. With all open activity barred, every legal weapon of access to the masses has to be used by us, especially in the T.U. field. The elections to the Works Committees, elections to the co-operative societies, deputations to managements and so many other committees or the elections to the Directors' Board, every weapon that is there for approaching the masses and coming before the workers, will have to be used to keep our contacts and forge the common front. The issues of DA, unemployment, revision of wages and several others are already looming before the workers and sooner or later outburst is going to take place one after

another on some of these issues. Unless there is a network of groups and committees which are to take advantage of the bursting situation, such outbursts may bypass us and may lead to nothing. Therefore, by continuing to propagate underground, all these legal openings should continue so that we are in a position to develop our contacts with the masses.

Similar efforts for utilizing legal opportunities and the fight for immediate demands have to be pursued on the agrarian, students and women's fronts and cultural front. The wage of the agricultural labour, indebtedness of the small peasant and the agricultural workers, the question of prices, the return of adivasi's lands and many other issues are immediately coming up and the Congress for its propaganda purposes is giving prominence to them. It is also talking of land ceiling and distribution. The scope for legal activity on many of these demands has to be assessed. Above all, our own underground activity for some time must continue so that through these partial demands the rural masses take their position against the Emergency.

Above all, the Party must continually popularise its whole basic programme—nationalization of monopoly concerns, abolition of landlordism and land distribution, need-based wage, confiscation of foreign monopoly capital and people's democracy among the people.

It is in this process of building the mass opinion for their immediate demands and against Emergency that we make conscious efforts to draw the ranks of other parties in this common fight and try to secure their participation. Naturally, this participation and common action in the beginning will be on a small scale—group meetings or sectional meetings and sectional postering, but that is how the masses will have to start.

Finally, the Party has to realize that this is the biggest crisis of bourgeois democracy in our country. It is the culminating development of parliamentary democracy functioning in the interests of bourgeois-landlord classes in

an under-developed country. West Bengal had a foretaste of it when our electoral strength challenged that of the Congress.

Such a crisis was not there since independence. In the background of the economic crisis, the growing mass discontent and actions, the bourgeois parties are not only divided; their intensified fight has led to an unprecedented crisis involving the mass of the people.

In spite of this tremendous show of force and arrests the ruling party and the Govt. stand much more isolated than before, but the effective force to challenge it, to defeat its attempts to condemn the Indian people to servitude, is not organized. It is our task and duty to start this process, seizing initiative in the struggle, exposing official claims, and the claims of the treacherous revisionists, taking the struggle beyond the narrow framework to which the Rightist parties would like to confine it, mobilizing the wide masses, attracting the followers of all parties and building a powerful front of Left and democratic forces. It is a task of highest revolutionary magnitude, a task which will enable us to transform the present situation and to embark upon more effective forms of movement and resistance.

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A. K. Gopalan Stoutly Opposed National Emergency in Indian Parliament on July 21, 1975*

Full Speech of A. K. Gopalan in the Lok Sabha, representing the stand of CPI(M), reproduced below from the Official Printed Records of the Proceedings of the Lok Sabha Debates :

12.50 hrs. **July 21, 1975**

Statutory Resolution Re: Approval of Proclamation of Emergency.

Page (87)

Mr. Chairman : Resolution moved :

"This House approves the Proclamation of Emergency made by the President on the 25th June, 1975, under clause (1) of Article 352 of the Constitution as also the order of the President dated 29th June, 1975 made in exercise of powers conferred by sub-clause (b) of clause (4) of Article 352 of the Constitution, as applied to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, applying the said Proclamation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir".

Shri A. K. Gopalan (Palghat) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have heard Shri Jagjivan Ram's speaking. I am afraid that these are not the words of the Minister as I have seen him also sometimes looking at the Prime Minister. I know the reason why he was looking and I sympathise with him.

I rise to speak in an extraordinary and most distressing situation in which 34 members of Parliament are not here, not on their own volition, but because they have been detained

*This speech of Comrade A. K. Gopalan, M.P., representing CPI(M), could not be published during National Emergency due to restrictive orders and rigid censor imposed by Sreemati Indira Gandhi's Government.

without trial, and Parliament itself has been reduced to a farce and an object of contempt by Shrimati Gandhi and her party. I have to say that I myself had been arrested and kept in jail for one week and Jyotirmoy Bosu, you know him very well, that Noorul Huda, another member of our Party. I am an old man who cannot speak loudly now. I was released and both of them were kept inside the jail. The reasons are very clear. I am not afraid of jails because during the period of the last 45 years, for 17 years I have been in jail. But I am only sorry for the inhuman treatment meted out to me for (Page 88 starts) two days inside the jail. I went on hunger strike. I sent a telegram to the Speaker and then only the condition was changed.

Sir, I am sorry to say that as a Congressman once who fought for the freedom of this country and who courted arrest and suffered so much I had been treated in this way. Sir, I am released only two days back. I know the reason. What about 2,000 or 3,000 of my comrades who are inside the jail to-day? Why myself and Shri Namboodiripad alone are released? It is to show to the world that no Marxist or Leftist Parties or Opposition party Members are arrested, but it is only the reactionaries who are arrested and who are responsible for all these things. I do not want to go into the details of it. I only say this because, as a political leader both in the Congress and afterwards in the Communist Party, I have my own feelings. That is why I expressed my feelings about the treatment given to me when I was arrested. Had not my comrades prevented the policemen my head would have been broken. But I got only injuries because my comrades saved me. I wanted that my comrades should not have prevented that and that I should have died. It would be a glory for me that by fighting the cause of working class in this country, and for saving the democracy in this country, I died. Unfortunately I did not die and I am here to-day to express my feelings.

Sir, this is an emergent session of Parliament to transact the government business, mainly, to ratify the fresh declaration

of Emergency by the President on the 26th June under the plea of internal security to the country, and the Opposition is being prevented from playing its role : Why ?

The Hon. Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram has given that side of the picture. I am giving the other side of the picture. What the Opposition thinks about this Emergency and why (page 89 starts) this Emergency was introduced and what is happening in this country. I request you, Mr. Chairman, to give me some more time till I finish my speech. You said that only six hours are allotted. On behalf of my Party I want to express our attitude and what we have to say as far as the Emergency is concerned and what happened after the Emergency was declared.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I shall allow fifteen minutes for your Party.

SHRI JAGANNATHRAO JOSHI : This is an important proclamation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is what I am saying. I shall give you half an hour. Will that be all right ?

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : I shall try to finish it within this time. If I take some more time, I hope you will give me the extension.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : As I said this sudden declaration is not because of a real threat to internal security but because of the judgment of the Allahabad High Court, the verdict against the Congress in the Gujarat elections, and the refusal by Mrs. Gandhi to step down from the office of Prime Ministership till the final verdict of the Supreme Court, in the context of rising disillusionment and discontent of the people with the ruling party under Smt. Gandhi's leadership for turning the economy of the country into shambles, making the rich richer and the poor poorer in pursuit of the bankrupt path of capitalist development.

We are already in the midst of Emergency since 1971—why another Proclamation of Emergency? Under that Emergency, there are more powers and under that power even the

censorship of press could have been there. But, there was a new Proclamation of Emergency. I do not know why. I do not want to go into details of it. (page 90 starts). It has been maintained and used to curb and suppress the trade union and other democratic movements and the Opposition parties including CPI(M). DIR and MISA have been freely used against the Opposition parties and forces. The use of DIR and MISA to suppress the last railway strike and arrests of the leader of the Opposition MLAs of Tripura Assembly along with the State Government employees' leaders are the glaring examples.

The warning given by our Party about the rise of the tendency to totalitarian and one-party dictatorship since last three years has proved true with the sudden declaration of new Emergency. By this parliamentary democracy has been replaced by the dictatorship of one party with full power concentrated in the hands of one leader, Mrs. Gandhi. This is not an expression of the strength of the ruling party but the expression of an extreme weakness and crisis of the party and the ruling classes. This abrupt turn in the situation and the sudden change from democracy to dictatorship is to find the way out of the crisis to keep the ruling party and the classes in power. Because the democratic rights enjoyed by the working class and people under parliamentary democracy have turned to be a threat to their power. That is why we find growing attacks on trade union and democratic rights and suppression of the Opposition forces. Semi-fascist terror and rigging of elections as in West Bengal, maintenance of Emergency and special powers like MISA became essential for the ruling party to keep them in power. This growth of authoritarianism is directly linked up with the growth of monopoly capital and intensification of the exploitation of the people by the exploiting classes and peoples growing resistance against this.

The slogan of one leader, one party and one country raised by a section of Congressmen sometimes before, is nothing but a political reflection of the tendency towards authoritarianism. This slogan has been recoined by the (page

91 starts) Congress President after the adverse judgment of Allahabad High Court and Supreme Court and adverse verdict of the Gujarat elections, into the slogan "Indira is India and India is Indira". This means that she will remain the sole dictator throughout her life, so no need of any democracy, any parliament, any opposition and any election. In this connection I remember the story of Casabianca who said from mid-ocean : I am lord of what I surveyed and my right there is none to dispute.

On behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), I totally oppose the new declaration of Emergency and its ratification in this House. We know full well that in the present situation no one is immune from arrest and detention. As I have already told you there are hundreds of persons inside the jail including Congressmen. (Interruptions.)

There was a rumour—when I was inside the jail—that Shri Jagjivan Ram and Shri Chavan were under house-arrest. I do not know how far it is correct or not. Many leaders of Opposition as well as 39 Members of Parliament, including some Congress leaders—are inside the jail. We cannot betray the interests of the people and give our assent to the obliteration of all vestiges of democracy in India—freedom of the person, freedom of speech, freedom to form associations, freedom to approach the Courts, freedom of the press, freedom to criticise the Government and work for its replacement by a Government of the people's choice. A word about 'freedom'. What is freedom? There are differences on that. It was said from the Government side that freedom is to say that we support everything what the Government is doing and not to criticise it. Therefore, there is difference. Our freedom is freedom of expression. Whatever the Opposition of the people in the country including Congressmen think about the policies of the Government they must also have the freedom to express what (page 92 starts) they feel; that is freedom and that freedom is curtailed.

Sir, how is this butchery of democracy being sought to be justified? What case is Shrimati Indira Gandhi making in her

defence? She has claimed that it is to defeat the Right reaction and also the so-called Left extremists. All this Left manoeuvring is meant only to deceive the public opinion in the country and also abroad. This is the only purpose of the high powered propaganda campaign about the so-called conspiracy and coup and much is being made of a call to the Police and Army not to obey illegal orders. Against this high-powered hoax of a campaign, what is the reality? Take the Government's attitude to the RSS and the Anand Marg which it has now banned. It seems that the Government's attitude to these organisations changes from time to time to suit its convenience. In 1965, during the Indo-Pak War, the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri handed over Delhi to the RSS for civil guard duties. The present Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi paid glowing tributes to the RSS Chief, Golwalkar, some time ago in the Parliament. (Interruptions.) It is on record. If you go through the proceedings..... (Interruptions). If they put questions to me, say looking into the records, the answer is available..... (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is probably making a reference to some obituary reference, to some good work that might have been done. That is uncharitable to say. That is what you mean? Is there any other record? I must get it clear. If there is any other record, it is for him to show (Interruptions).

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : You can cut out everything. Nothing goes outside. Nothing is printed. It is only in the record. It is there in the obituary reference.

(Page 93 starts)

As for the Anand Margis, the Government did nothing when it tried to assassinate Comrade Jyoti Basu at Patna Railway Station and the person standing next to him was killed. The Chief of the Anand Marg along with three thugs are facing charges of killing their own men. Twelve lakhs of rupees were given to this same Anand Marg by the Government for relief of Bangladesh refugees in 1971 of which Rs. 2,80,000 are not accounted for. I am only saying what was the attitude taken then by the Government towards these

organizations. Take the case of the so-called extremists. At one time, the ruling party encouraged the Naxalites and gave them all assistance in West Bengal to liquidate the cadres of our Party. Today, they stand disreputed and in total disarray.

It is too naive to expect the people to believe that these organisations with, no mass base have suddenly become a threat to internal security which can be met only by the imposition of a state of Emergency. The politics and ideology of these parties have to be fought and defeated politically and ideologically. If they are involved in criminal activities, they should be proceeded against under normal laws.

Against whom then, are the government measures taken mainly directed? The measures taken by the government in the wake of the declaration of Emergency unmistakably show that the thrust is against the people. Whatever democratic rights were available to the people have been completely obliterated. Chapter III of the Constitution enshrining the fundamental rights has become a dead letter. Articles 14 and 22 have been suspended. Today's papers say that a Bill is coming under which some other articles of the Constitution also may be suspended. Why not change the whole Constitution to throw away the Constitution and take power in the hands of the Prime Minister? So every day Constitution changes are (page 94 starts) coming—every day, every hour. So this means that there is not even equality before the law. Any discrimination can be practised by the executive. Any person arrested need not be produced before a court. The news of his arrest, whereabouts and condition can be kept completely secret. He may be physically liquidated by the police and nobody need know anything about it. That is the position today.

Meetings and demonstrations have been banned throughout the country. In Kerala, in every district, in every village, there is 144. So not more than 5 persons can meet. As regards cinemas, second shows are also stopped, because in some places after 8 o'clock, nobody can walk in the streets. That is the position.

No criticism of the Government or the Congress Party, however mild, is allowed to be published. No news of exploitation of the people by the vested interests, of workers by the capitalists, of peasants and agricultural workers, etc. which may contain even a remote criticism of the Government is allowed. No movements of the workers, peasants, agricultural labourers etc. can take place under the plea of obstruction to production.

No strikes can take place under the same plea. But I have to say that there are lock-outs and lay-offs in many factories, even in the Government undertakings. Will the Government take any steps to lift them ? Even two days ago I sent a telegram to the Labour Minister saying that for the last one month, there is lay-off in some of the factories. I know in many factories in Bengal also there is lock-out and lay-off. So lock-out and lay-off are still continuing.

In whose interest is this dictatorship imposed? Whose interest does it safeguard and protect? It is not the interest of the working people; it is not the interest of the middle class employees; it is not the interest (page 95 starts) of agricultural labourers. It is only the interest of the members of the chambers of commerce who went to the Prime Minister and supported her. It has been declared openly that there would be no nationalisation of any industry. 'So don't fear that there will be any nationalisation'.

The camouflage of the Emergency being used only against right reactionary parties has been fully exposed by the indiscriminate arrests of thousands of CPI(M) and other Left and democratic party leaders and workers. The police have been let loose on the people. In Kerala, for example, thousands of political workers belonging to the Opposition parties including the CPI(M), the Kerala Congress, the Socialist Party and so on were arrested and large numbers brutally beaten up by the police. I ask the Prime Minister to make an enquiry whether when an MLA went to jail, his cloth was stripped off and he had only a *lungotee.* That was how they behaved towards him. People who were arrested with me

were taken to the police station by the SI at noon, at 1 o'clock. He said : 'You have not taken your meals; you come in batches of three or four. I will take you'. They were taken away, they were beaten and they were stripped and left on the roadside—beaten. Twenty-three of them who were arrested with me were taken away and beaten; and they were told, Oh, you have not taken your food; we will give you food. This was the food. It was stated in the Assembly six months back that an MLA who was arrested was made naked; even his *lungotee* was taken away and he was beaten and he was made to stand on the roadside. This is what is happening because the Home Minister there is a very kind man; he wants to see people as they are born; he wants such an exhibition to the people and so he made them naked. This is what is happening in Kerala and other States of India to-(page 96 starts)day. The Emergency is there. Certain articles had been suspended. All these things are there. But are there humanitarian considerations ? Even the Opposition consists of human beings. A large number of the arrested people had been brutally beaten up by the police. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, Shri K. M. Geroge, Shri R. Balakrishna Pillai M.P. and several other Opposition leaders were arrested under MISA and given not only 'C' class status, but given such ill-treatment reminiscent of the British colonial days. During the British days also we were inside the jail. We could understand how the Britishers were behaving. But we cannot understand why the present government is doing this. Many political leaders and workers were beaten up both inside and outside the jail. Never before did Kerala witness such indiscriminate and brutal show of police high-handedness. Similarly in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, U.P., Himachal Pradesh and so on, the Government had arrested workers of the CPI(M) and other Opposition parties. Reports have come to me which are shocking. For example, in Kerala in certain places as I said earlier, police stripped political prisoners naked and committed atrocities against them. In Indore the office of the

CPI(M) and the CITU were raided and sealed. Similar reports have come from Kanpur. In many places, people are terrorised and life after sunset has become insecure. In the name of Emergency the police and CRP and other coercive instruments have been given such brutal power over the people, that semi-fascist and autocratic rule has replaced the norms of civilised behaviour. I strongly condemn this attempt to create terror among the people and to let loose the police against the people.

The industrialists in the name of productivity can impose any work-load and retrench workers and any (page 97 starts) protests will be crushed. Wage cuts and DA cuts can be resorted to; any resistance will be crushed. Working conditions can be worsened and the least protest will be met by summary dismissal. No movements against this exploitation will be allowed. In the rural areas too agricultural workers fighting for better wages, tenants fighting against evictions, all will meet the same fate. No movements against this terrible exploitation will be allowed. That is why these measures virtually amount to a dictatorship of the bourgeois and landlords against all other sections of the people. No wonder these measures have received full throated support of the vested interests—the various Chambers of Commerce and Industries and associations of big traders. No wonder that for the first time in independent India big industrialists like Birla go in demonstration and express their support to Shrimati Indira Gandhi. No wonder, because while the Government talks about its measures being against the Right reaction, over 3000—that is the figure till the 15th of this month—leaders and cadres of our Party, are arrested beaten and let off or kept in jail. Among them Com. M. Basavapunniah, a Member of the Political Bureau, Com. Mohan Punamia, a member of the Central Committee and two Members of the Lok Sabha Com. Jyotirmoy Bosu and Noorul Huda—have been arrested and the thread of arrest hangs over everyone who dares to struggle against the vested interests and in defence of democracy. The arrests of the leaders

of Central and State Government employees and various trade unions are going on. These arrests are meant only to crush trade union and democratic movement.

This is the inevitable culmination of the last 27 years of the anti-people policies of the Government which has helped the monopolists and landlords to thrive and fatten themselves at the expense of the people. Despite its (page 98 starts) mouthing slogans of Socialism, Garibi Hatao, etc. who has grown in this period? The monopoly houses have been fattened. The landlords have grown enormously rich and powerful in the rural areas. Evictions have taken place on a colossal scale which is admitted by official reports and other enquiries such as those of Ladajensky. The ranks of the landless labour have swelled enormously as the successive census figures reveal. The handicraftsmen, the handloom and powerloom workers, coir workers, etc. as also small-scale industrialists are facing ruination. Prices have risen to dizzy heights.

13.58 hrs.

[Shri H. K. L. Bhagat in the Chair]

The Prime Minister may say that conditions of the rural masses have improved. But her own Government's official statistics show that those living below the poverty line have increased from 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the population. When Smt. Gandhi took over in 1966 the number of registered educated unemployed in the country was 26.3 lakhs. In just under a decade, the number has swelled to 81.5 lakhs.

Sir, our Party has been in the forefront of the struggle of the masses against the daily deteriorating conditions, in defence of their lives and democratic rights. And for this we have been for years subjected to continuous repression.

Semi-fascist terror let loose in West Bengal since 1971 putting thousands in jails, organising political murders, gangster attacks on office of political parties, trade unions, mass organisations and individual houses of political elements, beatings and killings in lock-ups and jails, forceful evictions of thousands of people from areas dominated by Left

influences even murder, torture and raping of women etc. all have been perpetrated by the (page 99 starts) Congress Government at the State with the full knowledge and direction of the Congress Government at the Centre. Again it was under the direct leadership of the Prime Minister that faced with sure electoral defeat, her party rigged the elections in West Bengal in 1972 with the use of official machinery combined with terror. Sir, it was said here by Shri Jagjivan Ram that an elected Government cannot be removed because it is elected. I want to ask the Prime Minister what had happened in Kerala in 1959 when it was an elected Government. She herself as the President of the Congress, organised liberation struggle. She led the struggle and she liberated. Now she is saying, Kerala Government should not be touched. I do not understand the meaning why in 1959 there could be a liberation struggle and now no liberation.

14 hrs.

The people and the forces against which this semi-fascist terror and rigging were directed are not the Right reactionary forces but the Left democratic forces representing the workers, peasants, employees, teachers, students, refugees, women and poorer sections. Though now it has been admitted by the Chief Minister that in West Bengal the Right reactionary forces are very insignificant, the condition of semi-fascist terror and attacks on the Left and democratic forces are in full sway. The ruling party and the Government have tried to hide this ugly reality by a barrage of systematic false propaganda throughout the country and outside.

The same is now being sought to be extended to Kerala. I have already said what happened in 1959.

Facing this repression, not only has the movement developed in these two States but it has extended to other areas. The people cannot be deceived for long by the rulers and people are (page 100 starts) on the move and calling the bluff of *garibi hatao* and *bekari hatao*.

It is in this background that the movement led by Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan gathered momentum. Our Party has clearly stated our differences with Shri Narayan, but at the same time given our support to the democratic demands which he has championed. Whatever our differences with the movement, we have defended and will defend their right to organise satyagraha, strikes, bandhs, etc. which are all legitimate weapons in the hands of the people.

The movement led by Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan had accepted the challenge of Shrimati Gandhi to face elections and was preparing for them. It is Shrimati Gandhi who developed cold feet after the verdict in Gujarat. Sections of the ruling Congress were themselves involved in the Gujarat and Bihar movements. The factional struggle rampant in all the States had spearheaded to the Centre too and it is no secret that after the Allahabad judgment and the Supreme Court order there was a massive challenge to Shrimati Gandhi's leadership in the Congress Parliamentary Party itself. The threat to the Congress monopoly of power combined with the threat to Shrimati Gandhi's position in the party and in the Government was the immediate cause for the rape of democracy, its long-term aim being the ruthless suppression of common people.

I have read in today's newspapers that the elections in Kerala due in September are being postponed and the term of the existing Assembly is being extended by six months. I do not know why this is being done.

Now, to hoodwink the people, Shrimati Gandhi has come forward with a 20-point programme, but what is new in it? Who prevented the implementation of the ceiling laws all these years? (page 101 starts) The Planning Commission Task Force report bears eloquent testimony to the fact that it was the Congress Government and the Congress party that effectively sabotaged the implementation of the Ceiling Acts, because there was lack of political will and because of the innumerable links of the landlords with the administration. In West Bengal, during the rule of the United Front

Government, 6 lakh acres of benami land were unearthed and distributed to the agricultural workers—a fact testified again by the Planning Commission and after the Government was removed more than half of that land had been forcibly taken away by the landlords with the assistance of the Congress Government's police—a fact which is vouchsafed by the Congress party's ally the C.P.I. But why? Because the party is dominated by landlords. Who again sabotaged the State monopoly of wholesale trading in foodgrains which was tommed from the roof tops as a revolutionary measures? Was it not the Congress State Governments and Congress ? In Kerala in 1969 Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad Ministry passed a land reforms legislation. But the Government that came in power later have not implemented it. The Left and democratic parties fought for the implementation and as a result of this struggle the landlords were forced to give an account of 1½ lakhs acre surplus land to the Government. But till now the Government has taken only 2843 acres of land from them.

The nationalisation of banks in 1969 was termed as a great revolutionary measure. But whom have the nationalised banks helped? Have they not helped as ever the big monopoly houses and speculators all these years to grow more rapidly and play havoc with the people's livelihood ? And what are these wonderful measures which are so radical that these so-called Right reactionary parties would have opposed? Is an Emergency necessary to distribute house sites to the landless in villages?

(Page 102 starts)

Despite all the tall talk what the Emergency amounts to is suppression of the democratic forces. Who will believe that by suppressing the popular forces who are fighting against the monopolists and landlords, by suppressing their agitations and by denying them all democratic rights Smt. Gandhi is fighting Right reaction?

It is unfortunate that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and some other Communist Parties have allowed

themselves to be misled by the facade of attack against Right reaction and do not see that the real thrust of these measures is against the people fighting for a better existence. They do not see that because of the basic policies of the Government the contradictions between the Government and the people are intensifying. The CPI, the wretched traitors to the working class and the toiling people, continues to function as Her Majesty's loyal opposition. Our Party considers it its foremost task to awaken and organise the people against the grave peril they are facing and throw them into the struggle for the withdrawal of the Emergency and restoration of whatever democratic rights they wrenched after innumerable struggles and untold sacrifices for the resignation of Smt. Indira Gandhi from Prime Ministership and for release of all political prisoners. We appeal to all democratic forces and men of goodwill, all who cherish the right of the people to struggle for a better life to join with us in this struggle. Whatever be the price we may have to pay our Party will be with the people in their struggles, for the CPI(M) has no other interest apart from the interests of the people. The interests of the people demand that the Emergency, the all pervasive measures taken under it, the total denial of democracy be fought and the broadbased united struggle against the exploiters be carried on with the strength of the people.

We will never surrender ourselves to the ruling classes, we will never (page 103 starts) betray the toiling people and democratic forces of our country. History will vindicate us. Thank you.

23

Bangladesh Developments*

Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) on September 3, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) discussed the recent developments in Bangladesh, specially the Military coup d'etat which overthrew the Mujib regime and installed a new regime under the Presidentship of Khandkar Moshtaque Ahmed. These developments in Bangladesh, according to the Polit Bureau, have very serious lessons for the democratic forces all over the world.

Seven months ago, Mujibur Rahaman imposed a one-party system in Bangladesh and banned the functioning of all political parties except the official Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League. Preceding this innumerable political assassinations had taken place — assassinations of opposition elements by the regime's agents and of each other by opponent factions within the ruling party. The economic conditions of the people had become precarious and living had become difficult for them.

The military coup, the assassination of Mujib, the killings of his family and close associates, all these should not come as a surprise to democratic forces.

The first announcement of the coup and the tragic events came from the Voice of America leaving no doubt about the hand of U.S. imperialism and the hated Central Intelligence Agency behind the conspiracy.

The P.B. has no doubt that this coup is directed against

*A censored version of this resolution was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of September 14, 1975.

the struggle of the people of Bangladesh for democracy and progress.

When the one-party system was imposed on Bangladesh the Parliament of the country was made completely subservient to the President, dictatorial powers were conferred on the President it was sought to be justified not only by Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman himself, not only by the Communist Party and the National Awami Party of Bangladesh, but also by the Right Communist Party in India and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the ground that reactionary forces inside the country, aided by imperialist forces from outside, were active in Bangladesh.

The CPI(M) had then warned that the only guarantee of defeating imperialist conspiracies and internal reactionary forces was the mobilisation of the working people and democratic forces behind a well-defined programme of democratic advance and this required not the abrogation of the democratic rights of the people but their further extension.

The warning that the CPI(M) then gave has come true. It is the process of suppression of democracy begun by Mujib himself that has culminated in the present coup. There is a lesson in this for the democratic forces in all newly independent countries.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) extends its sympathy and solidarity to the people of Bangladesh who have to continue their struggle for democracy under a very difficult situation.

24

Greetings To Democratic Republic Of Vietnam*

Sent by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) on September 1, 1975 from its meeting held in Calcutta

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in Calcutta, has adopted a resolution greeting the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which we print below:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its warmest revolutionary greetings to the people of Vietnam and the Workers' Party of Vietnam, on the occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2. The P.B. pays its homage and tributes to Ho Chi Minh, the architect of the Vietnamese Revolution.

This year it is with special happiness that the P. B. hails the occasion.

This is the first time since the Declaration of the setting up of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that the whole of Vietnam, North and South, celebrates the event without a single foreign soldier or base on their entire territory, without the puppet regime serving the interests of U.S. imperialism in the southern part of the country.

More, from neighbouring Laos and Cambodia, too, the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their puppets have been thrown out with their people free again to decide their own destinies.

Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia—free again—what a tremendous change it has brought in the entire world situation, specially, the situation in Asia!

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 7, 1975.

The valiant Vietnamese people, with the glorious victory they have won, have further changed the balance of forces in the world in favour of freedom, democracy, peace and Socialism. Imperialism, already on the run, has been given another shattering blow.

The great people of a small country have demonstrated to the world that a people fired with the desire for freedom, when they are led by a party adhering to Marxism-Leninism, aided by the world Socialist Camp and anti-imperialist forces can face any hardships, make the utmost sacrifices, to face, fight, and defeat the biggest, mightiest imperialist power. Billions of dollars, tens of thousands of American lives, the entire military might of U.S. imperialism did not save it from the ignominious defeat it suffered in Vietnam. On the other side, what a saga of heroism, sacrifice to inflict this defeat, to win their freedom.

Freedom-loving world will ever be grateful to the people of Vietnam—their heroic struggle for their freedom, the glorious victory they have won, have immeasurably advanced the struggle against imperialism in the whole world. Even the most reactionary regimes in South-East Asia are reeling under the impact of the developments in Indo-China and trying to adjust to the new situation that has arisen.

We pay our homage to the millions of Vietnamese people who laid down their lives to make this possible.

We salute the entire Vietnamese people who with their valiant struggle have accelerated the course of the anti-imperialist struggle.

We salute the Workers' Party of Vietnam who led the Vietnamese people to this glorious victory.

We salute the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam which even while facing the most monstrous aggression from U.S. imperialism, built Socialism in the North of Vietnam and made it a base for the success of the liberation struggle in the South.

We salute the National Front of Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam for

the death-blow they have dealt to U.S. imperialism and for paving the way for the speedy re-unification of Vietnam—the cherished desire of the people.

The Polit Bureau once again extends its greetings to the people of Vietnam and their Workers' Party.

Long Live the People of Vietnam!

Long Live the Workers' Party!

Long Live the Memory of Ho Chi Minh!

25

Polit Bureau's Greetings To China*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its warm and fraternal greetings to the working class and the people of China and to the Communist Party of China on the occasion of the Twentysixth Anniversary of the setting up of the People's Republic of China on October 1.

The People's Democratic Revolution in China led by the working class, the most outstanding victory of the world working class after the Great October Revolution of 1917 and the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, struck a devastating blow to the world imperialist-capitalist system, and gave tremendous inspiration to national liberation struggles throughout the world.

Since then, the working class and people of China have been making herculean efforts to transform the backward and medieval economy they inherited and put it on the high road to Socialism. That these efforts had to be made in the midst of U.S. imperialist conspiracies against the people's rule and systematic attempts to blockade China speaks all the more gloriously of their achievements today. The success they have scored in many directions is an assertion of the superiority of the Socialist system and its principles over the capitalist system.

Today when the entire capitalist world is rocked with inflationary crises, stagflation and mounting unemployment, when newly independent countries are suffering from food

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 28, 1975.

scarcity, huge unemployment and economic backwardness, People's China has a record of ever-rising production of foodgrains, raw materials and industrial goods, higher living standards for its people, employment and work for all its able bodied citizens, stable prices of essential commodities during the last two decades, education and medical services for all the people.

Belying gloomy forecasts from various quarters, China is reported to be having a bumper harvest this year obviating the need for any grain imports, and in all sectors of industry, rapid advance is being maintained. The most spectacular is the growth in oil production which from 6.4 million tons in 1963 has reached 70 million tons in 1974 and is expected to reach 400 million tons in another decade or so, the same as the present output of the biggest oil-producing country, Saudi Arabia.

The amazing progress in agriculture and industry is accompanied by an equally breath-taking advance in all spheres including nuclear science.

But for the division and conflicts in the Socialist world and the international Communist movement, these achievements of People's China, as of all other Socialist countries and the world revolutionary forces as a whole, would have been far greater.

The CPI(M) stands for closest friendship and solidarity between the peoples of China and India and is confident that the two peoples will be able to very soon resume the earlier warmth in their relations.

The CPI(M) continues to make its humble contribution to restoring the unity of the international Communist movement and the Socialist world on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism as the restoration of this unity alone will be the guarantee of the success against the machinations of imperialism and of what the people of the world aspire for—the world Socialist Revolution.

26

P.B.'s Appeal to Left and Democratic Forces And to the people, sent on October 25, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) has issued the following appeal to the Left and democratic forces and to the people :

The four months that have elapsed since the declaration of internal Emergency have shown that, far from being directed against the "chaos and anarchy" to which, it was alleged, "certain reactionary groups" were leading the country, the measure was calculated to solve the acute crisis into which the class policies of the Congress Government had led the country at the expense of the people. This in fact, is admitted by no less a person than Prime Minister Indira Gandhi herself who in her interview to the Western Press revealed that long before the J.P.-led combine of Right opposition parties had given the call for direct action to throw the Prime Minister out, several Chief Ministers had demanded timely action to meet the growing crisis.

The day after the declaration of the Emergency and before the announcement of the much-advertised 20-point programme, the Prime Minister, through a special radio broadcast, assured the monopolists in the country as well as abroad that there would be no further nationalisation of industries. All the tall talk of attacking and restricting the monopolists indulged in during the 1971 elections with the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' was thus given a decent burial. On the contrary, this short period of four months since the Emergency has seen sweeping concessions to these monopolists as never before.

Contrast these assurances and concessions to the monopolists with the threats held out against the working people. The "chaos and indiscipline" which allegedly existed till the declaration of Emergency would not be tolerated and "firm" measures would be taken for the restoration of "order and discipline". The enormous powers with which every arm of the Govt. was invested, under the provisions of the DIR, MISA and such other draconian enactments and orders, would be effectively utilized against the slightest resistance by the working people to the attacks launched by the exploiting classes as well as bureaucratic officials from top to bottom. This was the green signal to the monopolists and landlords to mount further attacks on the living conditions of the people.

Such wholesale suppression of the democratic rights of the people made a mockery of the meagre concessions to popular sentiment that have been made in the individual items included in the 20-point programme. Furthermore, the denial of the right to organise and agitate prevents the people from getting implemented whatever concessions they are able to wrest.

The 20-point programme promises some relief to the peasants and agricultural labourers such as house-sites, revision of minimum wages, debt relief, etc. It in no way touches the relations of production. The earlier promise of restricting monopolists has been repudiated. The solemnly declared policy of State take-over of wholesale trade of foodgrains has been given up. It in no way solves the basic problems of the people.

More and more, it is being realised by the people that even this 20-point programme is sharing the fate of the earlier programmes of the Congress Govt. including its immediate predecessor, Garibi Hatao. Even those sections of the people who were in the beginning taken in by the demagogic propaganda of the ruling party and its loyal ally, the Right C.P., are today learning from actual practice that just as its earlier policies, so the present policies of the Congress Govt.

have been enabling the rich to get still richer while the poor are being still more impoverished. Problems of people's life such as the rise in prices of essential commodities, growing unemployment which is further aggravated by the recession and the consequent closures, lay-offs, and retrenchment; growing burdens of taxation and other levies are getting more and more intense.

Realization of this is quicker and sharper among the working class and working people, including the middle class employees. They had won significant gains through protracted struggles, such as the right to bonus as deferred wage, dearness allowance, higher rates of wages, and so on. The struggles through which they secured these and other demands had helped them to consolidate their organized strength as reflected in industry and sector-wise unions, their central organizations and all-India federations. The growth of these organizations and the growing unity of the workers and employees despite determined efforts at disruption, and sabotage of struggles through the leadership of the INTUC and AITUC, posed a serious threat to the designs of the ruling classes and their Govt. to solve the economic crisis at the expense of the people.

It became necessary to suppress all trade union and democratic rights, freedom of organization, freedom of speech and press, freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration, and subvert the functioning of parliamentary institutions precisely to carry out these designs against the people. That is why the spokesmen of Big Business welcomed the declaration of Emergency. All this is now becoming clear even to those workers and middle class employees who have been traditionally under the influence of the ruling Congress Party and its Right Communist Party ally.

The Bonus Ordinance has forced the INTUC and AITUC leaders, despite their despicable role in supporting the Govt. in its attacks on all the trade union and democratic rights, to verbally protest against the ordinance, although they do everything to prevent the united struggles against it. The

AITUC has also been obliged to oppose the proposal for a seven-day work.

Although not so clearly and sharply as in the case of the working class, the other sections of the common people are also learning from their own bitter experience that despite the much-advertised anti-inflationary, anti-smuggler measures, the Govt. is helping the monopolists to reap unheard of profits while increasing burdens are heaped on the common people.

The much-talked-of fall in the wholesale prices has admittedly not percolated to the retail market. The high levels of prices reached during the last year, which had put the necessaries of life beyond the reach of the common people, are maintained. At best, in certain cases there has been a marginal fall. This is more than offset by increases in prices of other commodities. During these very four months of Emergency the Govt. itself has sanctioned increased prices on such essential commodities as standard cloth, coal, aluminium, drugs, cement, etc. Bus and railway fares and electricity charges for domestic consumption have also been recently enhanced.

As for peasants, there had been a precipitious fall in the prices of all commercial crops such as jute, cotton, oilseeds, sugarcane, cocoanut etc. In surplus areas even the price of foodgrains has fallen, although there is no corresponding relief for the consumer. Similarly, the steep fall in the prices of commercial crops finds no reflection in the price of articles manufactured out of them.

On top of this precipitous fall, not only has there been no fall in the prices of inputs like fertilizer, but irrigation charges, electricity charges and other levies have been steeply enhanced. The daily advertised measures of cancellation or moratorium on debts of peasants and agricultural labourers do not touch the debts owed to co-operative societies and Govt. And in the absence of provision for alternate cheap credit, the intended beneficiaries of these measures will get no relief and have to be at the mercy of the same

money-lenders. The small and medium peasants are facing pauperisation. Evictions of tenants are on the increase. The ranks of landless labourers are swelling.

The concessions to the Indian and foreign monopolists are becoming a danger not only to the common people but even to the small and medium-scale industrialists. The Govt.'s policy of credit squeeze combined with the drastic fall in the purchasing power of the people has landed several industries in serious crisis. Thousands of looms in the handloom and powerloom sector are lying idle. Hundreds of such units in the engineering and ancillary industries have been closed down. Accumulation of stocks, inability to continue production, lack of purchasers even at the time of traditional festivals— these are affecting tens of thousands of traders and other retailers. The workers and employees thrown out of jobs because of the crisis arising out of this situation are of course numerous.

It is of course important to note that it is in this period that the biggest concessions have been given to foreign capital. The visits of the Finance and External Affairs Ministers to the U.S and their attempts at establishing 'mature relations' with the U.S make a mockery of the thundering against U.S imperialism and its agents by the Prime Minister and others. The setting up of a Joint Commission of private monopolists of India and the U.S. monopoly dominated by the efforts of External Affairs Minister Chavan is a significant development. The Joint Commission is a mechanism to facilitate the further penetration in a massive way of U.S. multi-national corporations, in collaboration with Indian monopolists, into the Indian economy. The role of these multi-national corporations is well-known. Thus not only is the slogan of 'self-reliance', pompously proclaimed by India, totally abandoned, but the doors of India have been thrown open for exploitation of its wealth, material and manpower resources by foreign monopolists.

The P.B. declares that the leaders of the ruling party and their Right Communists allies are telling a lie when they

declare that the Emergency is being used not against the Left and democratic parties, but against the Right reactionaries, that the CPI(M) in particular is even now free to carry on its activities. The Right Communist Chief Minister, Achutha Menon, has detained under the MISA over a hundred of our leading Party members and issued warrants against a hundred more. The fact of the matter is that almost the entire State leadership of our Party in Andhra Pradesh, Tripura, Assam, U.P., Rajasthan, and M.P. are either in jail or have warrants issued against them. Among these are the State Secretaries of Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Tripura and Rajasthan. According to incomplete figures available to us, as many as 367 in W.Bengal, over 100 in Kerala, 160 in Rajasthan, 87 in Assam, 57 in Tripura, 43 in Orissa, 57 in U.P., 43 in Punjab, 32 in Bihar, 15 in Andhra, 11 in Haryana, many in M.P. are detained today under the MISA or DIR. Notices have been issued against some of the leading members of our Party including CC member and State Secretary of Andhra Pradesh, threatening the confiscation of their properties, while in no less than a dozen cases in U.P., properties including the woman's and children's clothing and household utensils have already been confiscated.

The manner in which, and the purpose for which the MISA is being used, will be clear from the arrests that took place in Kerala on the night of Sept. 28-29. This was the time when according to the Union Home Minister over 30 percent of those who had originally been detained under the MISA have already been released. In Kerala, however, nearly 200 warrants are understood to have been issued of which nearly 100 were actually executed. These include a large number of the members of the State Committee and Dist. Committees of the Party and the leading functionaries of the T.U., Kisan Sabha, agricultural labour organization, etc. This too at a time when the Govt. and the ruling party are said to be preparing themselves for the election to the State Assembly which is long overdue. That these arrests are also intended to strike terror in Opposition parties in the State is

clear from the serious attempts being made and pressures brought on some of these Opposition parties on the eve of these arrests of the leaders of the CPI(M), the major Opposition party in the State.

The entire Opposition is under attack. Never before were so many leaders of Opposition parties and members of Parliament and State Legislatures put behind prison bars, under the MISA. Parliament's functioning has been made a mockery. Members cannot raise issues affecting the people by means of questions, adjournment motions and other such methods. Their speeches have been prohibited from being published in the newspapers and those who elected them are not to know what their representatives do in Parliament. Newspapers have been forbidden from even publishing news of arrests and the names of arrested persons. No criticism of the Govt.'s policies is allowed in the Press.

In these four months of Emergency attacks have been further intensified. Ordinances were passed at first denying the right of the detenus to know the grounds of detention and later preventing even the courts from knowing the grounds. Prisoners have been put in the worst conditions. Torture of prisoners in police lock-ups has become a scandal. Police harassments of doctors, lawyers, college and school teachers and traders have increased tremendously. The power of summary dismissal on police reports is freely utilized. While the Opposition is thus totally put out of action, Congress leaders are announcing elections.

It is under such a blanket ban on the Press, on the right to criticism of the Govt. and its policies, and conditions of terror that the Govt. is seeking to make fundamental changes in the constitutional-political set-up of the country. It is thus seen that all norms of democracy are being sought to be destroyed in the drive towards one-Party authoritarian rule.

It is therefore the duty and responsibility of every democratic party, organization and individual to join the struggle against such attacks on parliamentary democracy. The attack on democracy, arising as it did out of the rapidly growing

crisis of the economy and polity, the struggle for the restoration of democracy should be integrated with the struggle against the class policies pursued by the Congress Govt.—the policies of developing capitalism in alliance with landlordism and in collaboration with foreign monopolies, and against the attacks on the living standards of the common people.

It must be made clear that the further pursuit of these anti-national policies will only further intensify the crisis, heap still more miseries on the people, increase poverty and unemployment, increase dependence on foreign monopolists and imperialists and pose a threat to national freedom itself.

It is against these class policies that the CPI(M) together with other Left and democratic parties, organizations and individuals have been consistently fighting. The intensification of the crisis which culminated in the declaration of Emergency and the very experience of these 4 months of Emergency have proved the need for further carrying forward this struggle. The P.B. therefore appeals to the people at large, to their class and mass organizations and to the Left and democratic parties, groups and individuals to unite and fight for the realisation of the following demands :

I. Democratic Rights and Civil Liberties

a) Lift the Emergency, release all political prisoners and workers and cadres of the trade union, kisan and other democratic movements who are detained in jail; and those who are kept in jail for long periods without trial; cancellation of all warrants pending against such workers; reinstatement of all workers and employees whose services have been terminated.

b) Scrap the MISA and DIR

c) End the Press censorship and restore freedom of the Press

d) Remove all bans on public meetings and demonstrations

e) Guarantee free and fair elections

f) End the semi-fascist terror in W. Bengal

II. Trade Union Rights

a) Unconditional recognition of trade unions on the basis of secret ballot.

b) Scrap all acts and steps taken since the Emergency to discriminate and exclude against trade unions that do not accept the policies of the Govt. both in the matter of collective bargaining and in consultative bodies.

c) Remove all ban on strikes

d) Scrap the bonus ordinance

e) Need-based minimum wage

f) Full neutralisation for the rise in the cost of living

III. Agricultural Labourers and Peasants

a) Abolish landlordism and land to the tiller and distribution gratis to the landless labourers and poor peasants; priority to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Committees of poor peasants and land-less labourers to supervise these measures.

b) Statutory minimum wage of Rs. 8 per day to agricultural workers and social security for them; provision for dearness allowance; effective machinery for implementing these measures.

c) Free allotment of house-sites near the place of their work and liberal assistance for houses for the landless labourers.

d) Cancellation of debts of agricultural labourers, artisans and poor peasants including debts owed to the co-operative societies and financial institutions and Govt.; simultaneous provision of cheap credit to them.

e) Cancellation of the recent enhancement of irrigation and other charges on the peasants.

f) Supply of cheap inputs for the peasants.

g) Remunerative prices for peasants for their products must be fixed and ensured through Govt. purchases.

IV. Students' Rights

a) Democratic rights of students should be restored and enlarged.

b) The measures taken after the Emergency to close down the students' unions in colleges and universities must be abrogated and these unions should be allowed through holding of democratic elections.

c) Implementation of free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 and eradication of illiteracy.

V. Against Unemployment

a) Right to work to be incorporated as a Fundamental Constitutional Right.

b) Reopening of all closed factories and lifting of lay-offs and cancellation of all retrenchment measures.

c) Utilisation of full capacity of factories.

d) Speedy extension of employment opportunities in rural areas by a massive programme of rural development.

e) Provision for employment or unemployment relief.

VI. For Rapid Economic Development

a) Bar the entry of multi-national corporations, and investments of private foreign capital and take-over of foreign capital.

b) Remove all concessions given to monopoly houses; nationalise all monopoly concerns.

c) Nationalisation of sugar, textile, drugs, jute and cement industries.

d) Ending of bureaucratism and corruption in the running of public sector and nationalised industries.

e) Adequate financial and other assistance to small-scale and medium industries.

VII. For Reduction in Prices

a) Drastic reduction of taxes and levies on all essential commodities of mass consumption, upward revision of the same on luxury goods and on affluent sections.

b) Clubbing of agricultural and non-agricultural income for the purpose of income tax.

c) Immediate state take-over of the wholesale trade, free

from bureaucratism and corruption in foodgrains, pulses, sugar, edible oils, kerosene, cloth, matches and essential drugs.

d) Demonetisation of currency notes of Rs. 100 and higher denominations and other measures to unearth black money.

e) Compulsory procurement of all the marketable surplus of foodgrains from the landlords, exempting the small and medium producers, as well as taking over stocks of the other essential commodities.

f) Distribution of all these essential commodities through fair price shops, co-operative and retail shops, all under the supervision of people's committees, at fixed prices within the reach of the common people.

g) Dehoarding and confiscation of hidden stocks of wholesalers and landlords, and exemplary punishment for hoarders, blackmarketeers and adulterators.

27

P.B. on Fall in Prices of Commercial Crops

Resolution published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of November 2, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) expresses its deep concern at the fall in the prices of commercial crops all over the country. Raw jute prices have fallen to Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 per maund, i.e., 50 per cent of the Government's own floor price. Similar falls have been registered in the prices of cotton, oilseeds, coconut, sugarcane etc. The floor prices fixed by the Agricultural Prices Commission do not allow a reasonable return to the peasants producing these crops. When the prices have fallen to levels much below these floor prices, one can imagine the plight of the peasants growing these valuable commercial crops. There has been a steep fall in the wholesale price of foodgrains also in surplus areas.

On the other hand, this fall has not been reflected in the prices of industrial goods manufactured out of these agricultural products and the consumers get no benefit. It is noteworthy that the Government itself had sanctioned an increase of 50 per cent, i.e, 80 paise per metre of coarse cloth, during the last two months. Price of sugar has continued as before and during the last month has been rising week by week.

The price policy of the Government thus continues to be one of helping the monopolists and wholesalers, loot the peasants and the common people and make enormous profits.

The high-powered propaganda of having arrested inflation means that the prices are at best stabilised at the peak levels reached last year, which made the essential

commodities go beyond the reach of the common people. As in certain cases, there is an increase even over these. For example, the Government itself has sanctioned during the last 4 months of Emergency increased prices for some essential commodities such as standard cloth, coal, aluminium, drugs and cement.

The Polit Bureau condemns this price policy of the Government and demands :

1) Remunerative prices for peasants through Government purchase.

2) Take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains through complusory procurement of foodgrains from landlords.

3) Bringing down the retail prices of essential articles and their distribution through a network of fair price shops.

28

Developments in Portugal*

Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) sends its warm fraternal greetings to the working class and the democratic people of Portugal who, after their historic victory against the Salazar dictatorship, are now engaged in a bitter conflict with the forces of reaction who are making a determined bid to undermine the gains of the revolution.

The new regime that came into existence on April 25,1974, immediately set out on the process of democratisation and certain urgently needed political and socio-economic changes. It began breaking the repressive machine of the fascist dictatorship, nationalised banks and either nationalised or brought under State control important industries and transport facilities and embarked on a programme of agrarian reform. At the same time, it ended the colonial wars in Africa and began negotiations for transferring power into the hands of the national liberation movements in the countries which Portugal had kept as its colonies for centuries.

All these alarmed both imperialism and internal reaction—the big industrialists and financiers, the latifundists, the Catholic hierarchy and their political representatives.

These forces, helped by the underground organization of Salazar supporters, are concentrating their fire on breaking the democratic unity of the people, creating dissensions among them to paralyse their resistance to a reactionary coup. For this purpose they are first concentrating their fire on the

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, November 2,1975.

Communist Party of Portugal, the leading organization of the working class of Portugal which has played a glorious role in the anti-Salazar struggle. They are attacking the working class which has played a strategic role in the struggle and whose links with the people constitute a sure guarantee of the advance of the Portuguese revolution.

The reactionary forces in Portugal, those in the army, the political parties and the underground are directly abetted and helped by Western imperialist Powers, especially the USA. Millions of dollars are pouring in to finance their nefarious activities, and the usual weapon of anti-Communism is being exploited to bring about dissension in the people's camp. In the NATO alliance Portugal occupies a strategic position and the Atlantic Powers are determined to install a reactionary Government favourable to their aggressive anti-Soviet alliance.

For this purpose the Western Powers and the bourgeois Press are boosting certain Socialist leaders who have taken a near anti-Communist stand in the name of democracy and who are undermining the basic forces of revolution—the unity of the people and their alliance with the armed forces. The situation would not have been critical but for this change of front on the part of the Socialist Party. It is because of this that the Salazar agents were able to attack and burn the offices of the Communist Party with impunity.

Counter-revolutionaries working to restore the fascist dictatorship are taking advantage of the anti-Communist activities of the Socialists and Popular Democrats and the differences in the Armed Forces Movement. As history has proved on many occasions, it will be a grave mistake to think that the Communists who are the target today, will be the only target. If the counter-revolution is not halted, the attack will not spare the Socialists, all progressives and the democratic-minded in the armed forces, in fact all those who want to work for the good of the Portuguese people, for social progress, democracy and freedom. Anti-Communism has always been the banner of

the darkest reactionary forces and it is no differernt in Portugal today.

All these have already led to a weakening of the forces of revolution. Rightist elements in the army are getting the upper hand. The new Government of Vice-Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo exhibits the retreat forced on the popular and democratic forces. An effort is being made to curb and crush the democratic people and disarm the Left and progressive forces in the army.

There is yet time for all the democratic forces, the working class, the peasantry, the Socialist and Communist Parties, the progressives in the Armed Forces Movement to join together and save the revolution.

The Polit Bureau appreciates the heroic and consistent fight put up by the working class of Portugal and the Communist Party to uphold the unity of the people and the gains of the democratic revolution and is confident that their efforts will soon be crowned with success. It is the duty of all anti-imperialist forces to see that the imperialist conspiracy in Portugal is defeated.

29

Release Luis Corvalan

Resolution of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of November 2, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) joins its voice with the rest of the democratic forces in the world in demanding the immediate release of Comrade Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile, and all other political prisoners who have been in prison since the CIA-inspired coup in that country over two years ago. Comrade Corvalan's life is in danger today, the military junta is bent upon taking his life with a lynch trial.

Torture within jails defies all description and Comrade Corvalan is a special target of this torture when his health has already become precarious after his imprisonment. He has been transferred from jail to jail and is now in solitary confinement in the Tres Alamos concentration camp facing a charge of "high treason"—a charge which carries the death sentence. In the camp he is forced to perform hard physical tasks like carrying logs, hauling carts of sand and rock, etc., at a fast pace. He has lately been deprived of all possibility of maintaining any contact with the outer world. Visits by his relatives are forbidden, and even his lawyer has been arrested.

The period since the reactionary military coup in Chile over two years ago has seen monstrous repression and terror against the people of that country. Elementary democratic freedoms and human rights do not exist any more. Thousands of Chileans are languishing in prisons and concentration camps.

It is not for nothing that the junta refused to allow representatives of the U.N. Human Rights Commission into Chile—the only reason was that it would have led to another indictment of the junta because the monstrosities being perpetrated on the people cannot be concealed.

Facing this ferocious junta, various sections of the people are beginning to fight for their rights. May Day 1975 was marked by numerous mass meetings throughout the country. The peasants are fighting for land and to keep the gains they won during the Allende regime. Town dwellers, women, students and professionals are reviving their organizations, marshalling their forces to solve their problems and resisting the implementation of fascist policies. Significant are the actions taken by the Christian Churches, notably Catholic, in defence of human rights and for better living conditions for the common people.

Faced with such opposition the junta is using every measure of terror, to perpetuate itself and its first target is the Communist Party and its General Secretary, Luis Corvalan.

The P.B.demands the immediate release of Comrade Luis Corvalan and all other political prisoners belonging to the Communist Party and all other parties.

The P.B. is confident that the people of Chile will smash the Pinochet junta and establish a democratic people's government which will wipe out the nightmare of the last two years.

30

Denounce The Spanish Executions

Resolution of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', November 2, 1975

The holy wrath of the people all over the world has been roused by the execution of five patriots and revolutionaries by the fascist Franco regime in Spain on the morning of September 27. The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces this butchery and pays its homage to the five martyrs of the worldwide struggle against imperialism and fascism : Ramon Garcia Sanz, Jose Luis Sanchez, Jose Humberto Baena Alonso, Juan Paredes Manet and Angel Otaegui Echeveria.

Eleven patriots—two of them women, one of them pregnant—had been santenced to death by the fascist junta. The working class and democratic forces the whole world over, and even others had raised their voice against this barbarous sentence and called on the Franco regime to spare the lives of the patriots. Ignoring this universal appeal, the fascist regime went ahead with the butchery.

On August 22, the fascist regime passed a new "anti-terrorist law" which abolished the "habeas corpus" and the inviolability of home and is in effect the proclamation of an Emergency throughout the country. The law came into effect on August 27, the trial of the patriots took place the next day and the executions took place on September 27.

For the last few years, breaking the fetters fascism has shackled on them, the working class and working people of Spain had begun the fight against the fascist junta and for democratic rights. Workers had gone on strike on many

occasions, the illegal Workers' Commissions had become powerful and the struggle of the people of Basque Province for their legitimate rights had assumed on all-pervasive character. Even the Church, once a stalwart pillar of Franco's dictatorship, has been calling for a change while it is no secret that a part of the army has also been seeking for a change. The overthrow of the Salazarite Caetano dictatorship in Portugal on Aptil 25, 1974, had its own impact on the developing struggle in Spain.

In this background, the executions of the patriots were meant to strike terror in the Spanish people.

Contrary to the regime's expectations, the executions have sparked off one of the mightiest actions—inside Spain and internationally huge protest strikes have taken place inside Spain and all over Europe, in Italy, France, Denmark, Portugal, etc., where the working class unitedly protested against fascism.

Excepting the U.S. with whose support mainly the Franco regime survives, the Western Governments have condemned the executions. Many of them have withdrawn their ambassadors from Madrid. The entire socialist world has denounced the exucutions. The German Democratic Republic has broken off diplomatic relations with Spain.

The Polit Bureau greets the working class in all these countries who have demonstrated their protest against the brutal executions in Spain.

.....The Polit Bureau demands that the Government of India withdraw its ambassador from Madrid and break off all relations with Francoist Spain.

The Polit Bureau calls on the working class and democratic forces in India to rally along with the international working class to give all support to the working class and people of Spain to put an end to the criminal fascist regime of Franco.

31

P.B. On Situation in Kerala*

Resolution adopted on November 25, 1975

The P.B. of the CPI(M) denounces the Right Communist-led Government of Kerala for so using the provisions of the MISA and other repressive legislations that not only are the people deprived of their civil liberties and democratic rights, but the provisions of the MISA are used in the narrow interests of the partisan political manoeuvring of the ruling coalition.

Contrary to the claims made by the ruling coalition tn the State and the central leaders of the Congress Party, the targets of attack by the Kerala Govt. are the democratic organizations of the working people and Leftist political parties including the CPI(M). As against the solitary detenu belonging to the Jana Sangh and less than half a dozen alleged members of the RSS, no less than 125 members of the Left and democratic parties (of whom 100 belong to the CPI(M)) are in detention under the MISA. Although the other leaders and cadres of Opposition parties and democratic organizations like trade unions, kisan sabhas, etc. have been left free and not arrested, they are not permitted to hold public meetings. The right of holding public meetings is restricted to the ruling party and such groups and individual politicians who defect from the Opposition to the ruling coalition, who naturally use this privilege to spread

*This Polit Bureau Resolution was also published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of December 7, 1975 but it was heavily censored and most of the relevant portions were deleted.

slanders and lies against the Opposition parties who are denied the right to reply to them.

The P.B. denounces the scandalous treatment meted out to the MISA detenus and other political prisoners by this Right Communist-led Govt. Those who are being proceeded against under the Defence of India Rules are given the same treatment as ordinary criminals. The Right Communist-led Govt. of the State has thus refused to implement the principle accepted by all previous governments of giving such facilities to political prisoners as are in keeping with their physical and intellectual requirements. As for those who are detained under the MISA, this very Government amended the Security Prisoners' Order in June 1975 in such a way that the detenus have been denied all the facilities that were given to them by previous governments and confirmed by the Achutha Menon Govt. itself in the Security Prisoners' Order re-issued by it in 1971. The position under the newly amended Security Prisoners' Order relating to accommodation, food, exercise, letters and interviews, etc. is no better than that of ordinary 'C' class prisoners.

The P.B. therefore supports the two demands made by the political prisoners in the State that (i) the Security Prisoners' Order of 1971 should be restored in the case of those who are detained under the MISA without trial, and (ii) that those leaders and members of political parties and democratic mass organizations who are being proceeded against under the DIR should be given the status of political prisoners.

The P.B. condemns the practice of the authorities to resort to inhuman assaults not only in public places but even in police lock-ups. Innumerable cases have been reported of such lock-up tortures. Even a member of the State Legislature, Com. P. Vijayan, was brutally assaulted by the local police officers, whose misdeeds had been publicly exposed by Com. Vijayan, both inside the Legislature and outside. He had to be hospitalised. The demand made by the leaders of the Opposition political parties that the officers responsible

for these atrocities should be kept under suspension and a proper inquiry ordered into the cases has been rejected. The Home Minister of the State and other leaders of the ruling coalition on the other hand, are rewarding the personnel of the police force, who resort to such assaults. Never before in the history of the State have the police become such an inhuman engine of repression against the Opposition political parties and the democratic mass organizations.

While all this is true to a greater or lesser extent for the entire country, the Right Communist-led Govt. of Kerala has the particular "distinction" of using this whole repressive machinery in order to carry out their political manoeuvrings which have now reached the stage of "winning over" the leaders of the Kerala Congress from the Opposition to the ruling coalition. The sordid nature of these manoeuvres can be seen in the fact that the arrests and detention of nearly 100 leaders and activists of the CPI(M) coincided with the confabulations between the leaders of the Kerala Congress and representatives of the Central Congress leadership.

It may be stated in this context that when the Emergency was proclaimed and countrywide arrests of Opposition leaders took place on June 26th, no leader of the CPI(M) in Kerala was arrested. Though after a few days, on July 9th, half a dozen leaders of the Party including the P.B. members, A. K. Gopalan and E.M.S. Namboodiripad were detained under the MISA, they were all released after a week. Excepting for this brief period of a week in July, therefore, the CPI(M) was exempted from the operation of the MISA for full three months, but suddenly, on the night of Sept. 28-29, State-wide arrests were made and nearly a hundred activists of the Party, including 11 members of its State Committee and 53 members of the Dist. Committees, were arrested and detained. The obvious intention was to give a stern warning to the leadership of the Kerala Congress (most of whom were hesitating to accept the offers made by the Congress High Command) that they too would share the fate of

the Marxists unless they fell in line. A section of the leadership did fall in line and the final round of talks are now going on for a settlement.

This, however, was not the end of the story. Stout resistance was offered to Chairman George and other advocates of an understanding with the ruling coalition not only by the ranks and masses of the Kerala Congress but a section of the leadership as well. It was at this stage that on 17th November half a dozen leaders of the Opposition Muslim League were also similarly detained. This was intended on the one hand to frighten those leaders of the Kerala Congress who are still resisting the proposed defection from the Opposition to the ruling coalition but also to start the same process of "winning over" that section of the Muslim League which is still in the Opposition.

The manner in which the power to detain persons under the MISA has been used by the Right Communist-led Govt. of Kerala is thus the most convincing evidence that the Emergency is used in this State not to stem the advance of right reactionary forces as claimed by the ruling coalition but to save the coalition from the Left and democratic Opposition led by the CPI(M). It is also significant that those who are sought to be "won over" from the Opposition to the ruling coalition are those very parties which were denounced by the leaders of the coalition as reactionaries so long as they were in the Opposition.

The P.B. hopes that all political parties, organizations and individuals will fight such an unscrupulous use of the powers assumed by the Govt. in the name of Emergency.

32

Present Political Situation*

Statement dated November 25, 1975, issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M)

More than five months have elapsed since the Internal Emergency was clamped on the country. During this period all fundamental rights—the right to speech, to organize, freedom of the Press, protection from arbitrary arrests and detention—have been completely abrogated.

Not only was the MISA amended to deny the detenus from knowing the grounds of detention, but following the judgement of Justices Rangarajan and Agarwal of the Delhi High Court, releasing Kuldip Nayyar, the Act was further amended denying access to even courts to the grounds of detention.

Not only have all meetings been banned, but the Government sends the police even to the executive committee meetings of trade unions.

Even a meeting of lawyers, organized by an ex-Judge and 11 leading advocates of the Maharashtra High Court to discuss the subject of "civil liberties and the Rule of law", in a hall, which was not open to the public except the lawyer invitees, and which was to be addressed among others by an ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and an ex-Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, was banned.

The Press is completely muzzled. No criticism of the economic measures and other policies of the Government is allowed to be published.

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*A censored version of this statement was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of December 7, 1975 but all relevant portions of the statement were deleted in it.

The complete gagging of the Press with regard to any criticism of the Government can be realised from the fact that even judgements of the High Courts adverse to the Government have been prohibited from being published.

Although the Government claims that it has lifted pre-censorship, in practice it continues to be in operation and is particularly directed against newspapers and journals with a Left and democratic orientation. Even news items or other comments that have appeared in other papers are prohibited by the censor from publication in our Press.

While the speeches of members of the Congress and its allies against the non-Congress Government in Tamil Nadu during the debate on a no-confidence motion were freely published, the Chief Minister's speech in reply was prohibited from being published.

The conditions of the detenus in jails are atrocious. The Security Prisoners' Code has been amended in several States in such a way that it is no more preventive but punitive detention. All those facilities that were available to the detenus even in the days of British rule are not available.

Torture and beating up of prisoners in police lock-ups and in prisons have been resorted to. The thinking of the Government in regard to treatment of the detenus can be realised from the blatant declaration made by the Advocate General of the Maharashtra Government in the High Court of the State in a case relating to treatment of a detenu that even if a detenu is shot dead no one has the right to approach the court because of suspension of the Rights under Articles 14, 19 and 22 of the Constitution.

The P.B. declares that all these draconian measures reveal the real intentions of the Government, viz., complete stifling of any dissent, and total suppression of the democratic movement of the workers, peasants, agricultural labourers and other exploited sections of the people in order to prevent them from struggling against intensification of exploitation. It is significant to note in this connection that while the working class and other employees are facing the

threat of repressive action, no such threat exists for the employers. While the Government grandiloquently proclaims from the so-called APEX bodies that it has asked the managements to refrain from resorting to retrenchments and lay-offs, these go on merrily increasing day after day and the Government has taken no action against any employer. Despite the propaganda barrage about the 20-point programme, evictions of peasants have tremendously increased in this very period.

During these months the crisis of the economy has further deepened. Recession has gripped almost all industries, leading to massive lay-offs and retrenchments. Stocks of manufactured articles have piled up even though a large percentage of capacity remains unutilized and the Government is searching for export markets and is giving more and more incentives to the capitalists in the name of export promotion. Concessions after concessions have been made in this very period to monopolists. Foreign capital, particularly U. S. capital, is being wooed for investment in the country and restrictions that were there are being removed. Despite a good crop, import of U.S. foodgrains continues on a massive scale.

Prices rose by nearly 100% during 1973 and 1974. The Government claims that from this peak level wholesale prices have fallen by 7%. And yet it has not percolated to the retail level. Prices of commercial crops have fallen steeply and yet these find no reflection in the prices of manufactured goods. In fact, there has been worsening of conditions for the common people and small and medium producers.

The MISA is being used to threaten the leaders of Opposition parties to line up with the Congress as is demonstrated in Kerala.

Not only was the July Session of Parliament made a a farce by completely removing the rights of members to put questions and raise issues of public importance or Government's activities and preventing publication of their speeches, but the usual Winter Session has been done away with.

And now the Congress President talks of postponing the elections to Parliament. It is also freely talked about that the Constitutional amendments will be made curtailing the rights of members and the democratic functioning of Parliament and also curtailing the democratic rights of the people.

The Emergency was imposed on the baseless allegation that there was a grave threat to the Internal Security of the country because of the agitation planned by some Opposition parties from June 29 to July 5 following the Supreme Court's refusal to give absolute stay of the Allahabad High Court's judgement invalidating the Prime Minister's election. Finding that this pretext can no longer be trotted out, the Government now seeks to find new justification such as "disciplining the nation", which have no bearing on Internal Security for continuing the Emergency. And now the Prime Minister wants the Opposition parties to give up their right to resort to any agitation and agree to be subservient to the Government as a condition for lifting the Emergency.

The P.B. of the CPI(M) declares that no ground exists whatever for the Emergency and the only purpose for its continuance is the perpetuation of one-party authoritarian rule of the Congress in the interests of the monopolists and other vested interests.

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

33

Resolution on Bangladesh*

Adopted by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in its Calcutta meeting on November 22-26, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its serious concern over the recent developments in Bangladesh, resulting in the setting up of a new Martial Law Administration of military generals backed by U.S. imperialism and the continuous fight between different groups of the army.

The Polit Bureau expresses its deep shock at the killings in prison of front-rank leaders of Bangladesh, Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Mansur Ali, Kamaruzzaman and others. Following the ghastly murder of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family including the children, the present act of the military officers is aimed at the establishment of a military rule in Bangladesh in collusion with U.S. imperialism. It is not for nothing that Gerald Ford has assured full support to the present regime. Now the military rulers are working up anti-India and anti-Soviet hysteria in order to cover up their nefarious game while all the time claiming that they adhere to the foreign policy of non-alignment and anti-colonialism.

The P.B. deplores the attitude of the Libyan Government which claims to be a non-aligned country and wedded to fight against imperialism, in providing protection to the butchers from Bangladesh who acted at the behest of the U.S. imperialists.

In its earlier resolution the Polit Bureau had stated that the game of reactionary forces and imperialism cannot be

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defeated by enforcing one-party rule and by suppressing the democratic rights and liberties of the people; on the other hand, the only guarantee of defeating imperialist conspiracies and internal reactionary forces is the mobilisation of the working people and democratic forces behind a well-defined programme of democratic advance and this requires not the abrogation of democratic rights of the people but their further extension. It called upon the democratic forces in all the newly independent countries to draw a lesson from this. It is unfortunate that the Soviet Union and the Right Communist Party had supported the suppression of democratic opposition and parliamentary democracy.

The P.B. notes that it is the weakness and disunity of the Left and democratic forces which allowed the various sections of the ruling classes to manoeuvre in Bangladesh in order to perpetuate their class rule.

The P.B. appeals to the Indian people to condemn the barbarous acts of reactionary military officers and their regime, demand the trial of criminal officers and extend full support to the democratic forces in Bangladesh to fight against imperialist conspiracies and local reaction in a difficult situation.

34

Resolution on Angola*

Adopted by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in its Calcutta meeting on November 22-26, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) warmly greets the people of Angola on the declaration of Independence on November 11 and the announcement of the People's Republic of Angola with the leader of MPLA, Agostinho Neto, as its President.

Taking arms in their hands the Angolan people heroically fought the Portuguese fascist regime and with the people of other Portuguese colonies dealt a crushing blow to the Salazar regime. They put an end to 500 years of Portuguese rule in Angola. In this struggle for freedom, they had to make tremendous sacrifices, thousands had to lay down their lives fighting the colonisers.

But the imperialists, specially the U.S., are making all efforts to divide the people of Angola. They are using the racist regimes of South Africa and some other African States for their game of dividing Angola and are trying to plunge Angola into a civil war.

The P.B. warns the people of Angola to beware of the imperialist machinations aimed against their hard-won freedom, and hopes they will forge maximum unity of all the democratic and patriotic forces. It demands of the Government of India to immediately recognise the People's Republic of Angola.

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*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, November 30, 1975.

35

Appeal to All Democrats in India

Statement dated January 10, 1976 issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) following its meeting in Calcutta on January 5-10, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) appeals to all democrats in the country to note the recent political developments which have further accelerated the drive towards one-party dictatorship, with all power being virtually concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister.

This drive is seen in the continuation of the Emergency, in the refusal to retrace the anti-democratic steps taken after the declaration of the Emergency, in the demand that the Opposition should abjectly surrender before the ruling party and in the refusal to hold free and fair elections which are long overdue.

Again, it is seen in the continuous eroding of States' autonomy in the name of a strong Centre. Far from strengthening the unity of the country, this erosion of States' autonomy will lead to fissiparous tendencies. It is the Centre that makes and unmakes Chief Ministers. Even the formality of election by State Legislature Parties is often dispensed with.

It is seen also in the concerted attack launched by the Prime Minister, Sanjay Gandhi, the Youth Congress and Congress MPs, MLAs and other leaders of the Right Communist Party which has been for years supporting the ruling party; but has found it necessary of late to raise its mild voice of protest against the attacks on the living and working conditions of the working class and against concessions being given by the Government to the monopolists, both Indian and foreign.

In this context, the building up of the Youth Congress with Sanjay Gandhi as its supreme leader by utilising the entire State machinery is significant. He is being accorded the status of a high dignitary of State who announces official policies. This development, unheard of in any country, must cause serious concern to all democrats in the country.

We are living in a situation in which every citizen's life is choked. All the fundamental rights for which the Indian people fought for decades and whatever rights were enshrined in the Constitution have been thrown overboard. The measures adopted after the Emergency was proclaimed, have done nothing less than institutionalising the Emergency. That is why parties belonging to various political and ideological trends and people from all walks of life came forward against the amendments to the Constitution which, in the teeth of this opposition, have been passed and ratified by the President. They have been coming forward also for the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights which had been seriously eroded even before the proclamation of the Emergency. Since then they have been completely abrogated.

Such a broad mobilisation of democratic public opinion was serious enough for the ruling party to resort to new maneouvres. They thought it useful to put up an appearance of relaxing the Emergency by releasing a number of leaders of Opposition parties who had been detained under the MISA and giving an appearance of removing the censorship on the monopolist Press. Repeated statements are being made that most of the detenus have been released, that there is no censorship any more, etc. It is also asserted that the Government and the ruling party are anxious for a normalisation of conditions in the country if only the Opposition co-operates.

The PB wants to inform the people that these repeated assertions of relaxation of the Emergency are devoid of truth. As far as the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties are concerned, most of those who had been detained under the MISA continue to be detained. They include two of its members of Parliament, Comrades Jyotirmoy Basu

and Nurul Huda, and several members of State Legislatures. Two of the members of the Central Committee of the Party continue to be detained and one-third of the members of the Central Committee are on the wanted list. Besides, several members of the State and District Committees and other activists are in jail or in the wanted list. Besides, prosecutions launched against hundreds continue. Many more have been detained under the MISA and prosecutions launched under the DIR in recent months.

In Tripura, most of the CPI(M) MLAs including the leader of the Opposition in the Legislature, who constitute the bulk of the Opposition in the Legislature, were detained under the MISA on the eve of the budget session of the Assembly fearing the rejection of the budget because of the division inside the Congress Legislature Party, long before the proclamation of the Emergency and they continue to be detained.

In Assam, those who were detained during the teachers' movement before the Emergency including the leaders of our Party continue to be detained.

Further, hundreds of leaders and activists of mass organisations such as the trade unions and kisan sabhas who have been detained continue in detention, have been dismissed from service, on the pretext that they have been absent from duty. The slightest protest against attacks on the workers and the toiling people is sought to be stifled by detention under the MISA or prosecution under the DIR. Prosecutions on fake charges under the DIR are on the increase.

It is true that a number of prominent leaders of the CPI(M) and other Opposition parties are free. They, however, are deprived of their inherent right to act as spokesmen of their parties, explaining their party's position on the various national and international developments, replying to criticisms levelled against their party by its opponents, criticising the policies of the Government and the ruling party and its topmost leaders, etc. They are not allowed to hold public meetings which is part of the normal functioning of political parties.

In some States only hall meetings are allowed. Even where they are allowed, it is only on condition that no criticism will be made of the Emergency, the Prime Minister and some policy or other of the Government. In some States use of mikes is prohibited even for such hall meetings. Speeches made in the meetings, wherever permitted, are not allowed to be published.

The assertions that there is no censorship on the Press are false. For, even where there is no pre-censorship, every paper in the country is asked to follow what are called the "guidelines". These are so wide in their scope that nothing can be printed if it implies the slightest criticism of the powers that be. Over and above such all-embracing "guidelines", oral directions are given by the censors to every paper not to publish news items which are not in strict conformity with the requirements of the leadership of the ruling party. While the Press in general is thus under the rigorous control of the censoring establishment from top to bottom, the organs of the CPI(M) are subjected to pre-censorship. Neither our central organs, "People's Democracy" and "Swadhinata", nor the State organs (dailies and weeklies) are allowed to come out unless every line in every page is scrutinised by the censor and returned with his approval. These censors act most arbitrarily. There are instances where the words "imperialism", "capitalism", "exploitation", "unconscionable profits" and even quotations from writings of Nehru, Tagore, Marx, Engels, Lenin are prohibited from publication.

The repeated statements made by the Prime Minister of her abiding faith in parliamentary democracy are belied by the conditions she demands of the Opposition. Acceptance of these conditions would mean that the Opposition should give up its inherent right to mobilise public opinion to convert the minority into a majority.

It is, of course, true that the ruling party has of late changed its policy towards some of the Opposition parties. Some of the top leaders of the BLD, Jana Sangh, Congress (O)

and the Socialist Party have been released. But even in their case, a large number of rank and file members are still being kept in detention or are being prosecuted. Furthermore, these releases have been made along with the explicit demand made on their leaders that they should so reorientate their policies and activities that they would act as a loyal Opposition.

The repeated statements made by the Congress President that any "Opposition party is irrelevant" in Indian conditions are ominous. This is an open declaration of the intention to institute one-party rule and to end parliamentary democracy.

The pre-requisites for normalisation of conditions and for restoring parliamentary democracy were set out by the entire Opposition together with a large number of eminent non-party intellectuals and jurists as :

(1) The lifting of the Emergency.

(2) Release of all political prisoners, withdrawal of warrants and cases.

(3) Abrogation of MISA and DIR.

(4) Cancellation of all anti-democratic measures adopted during the Emergency, the most notorious of which are the amendment to the Representation of Peoples Act, the Press Objectionable Matters Act and all the Constitution amendments passed during the Emergency.

(5) Free and fair elections to the Lok Sabha and all the State Legislatures.

The PB notes that while on the one hand the ruling party is striving to mend its fences with some parties of the Right Opposition—that, too, under conditions in which they would no more be effective as Opposition parties— it is also mounting a political offensive against the Right Communist Party. The Right C.P played a disruptive role in breaking the Left and democratic front and allied with the ruling party in breaking the United Front Governments in West Bengal and Kerala. But that party is finding it necessary to raise its voice against some policies of the Government, a political attack is mounted

on it. This has led to strains between that party and the Congress.

While leaving it to the leaders and ranks of the Right Communist Party to make a reappraisal of the disastrous course they have taken since they started collaborating with the ruling party, it is clear that the recent attack launched by the Prime Minister and her colleagues on the Right C.P. is part of the attack on the Left and democratic movement and the Communist movement in particular.

In their attack against the Right C.P., they have dug up the shop-soiled slander that the Communist Party supported the British Government in its attack against the national movement in 1942. Our role as the staunchest fighters against imperialism, and against fascism when it reared its head, as the most doughty and steadfast champions of the exploited and oppressed masses from the very inception of our Party is well known. In this struggle our Party members were the victims of the severest repression by the British Government as well as by the Congress Government. That is why the best fighters against imperialism joined the ranks of the Communist Party. All these form the brightest pages in the history of the struggle for independence and for the emancipation of the toiling people from oppression and exploitation and we are proud of them.

In this connection, it may be recalled that a massive campaign of similar slander was built against us for some years since the India-China conflict in 1962 and the Indo-Pak war of 1965. The notorious "white paper" was brought out by the then Home Minister. But subsequent history and the recent steps taken by the Government of India itself have amply vindicated our stand.

It may be noted that while the slander of the Communist position in 1942 is dug up now, the Prime Minister had no qualms in utilising the services of the Right Communist Party for toppling the United Front Governments of West Bengal and Kerala headed by the CPI(M). For this purpose they went to the extent of forming a Coalition Government

with the Right C.P. in Kerala and made its leader the Chief Minister.

The charge of violence against our Party ill becomes the Prime Minister whose party has organised hooligan attacks on the cadres of the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties, murdering over a thousand in West Bengal, over 200 in Kerala and scores in other States, and whose State forces have systematically abetted the gangster attacks by landlords and other vested interests on the peasants, agricultural workers and other toiling people standing up for their just rights, and whose party indulges in murders of their own partymen in their group fights.

Equally does it not lie in the mouth of the leader of a party to hurl the charges of subversion against our Party, when actually it was that party that joined all reactionary forces and organised the "Vimochana Samaram" (liberation struggle) to subvert the Communist-led Government of Kerala in 1959. It is the party which from 1967 onwards organised subversion of duly elected United Front Governments of West Bengal and Kerala and non-Congress Governments in several States by various methods.

The charge that our Party is collaborating with Right reactionaries is again a slander and is devoid of truth. Our Party is proud that even in the days of 1962-66 and in 1971-72, the Party held its banner high and emerged before the people as the most principled Party. This enabled it to reforge ranks with other Left and democratic forces. During the year and a half since the declaration of the Emergency, the Party has made the most significant contribution in rallying democratic opinion and all anti-authoritarian forces in the country which are making the ruling party more and more isolated from the people.

It is regrettable that instead of perceiving the danger to the entire Communist movement and defending it against the attack launched by the ruling party, the Right Communist leaders should still think of continuing the policy of class collaboration under the most humiliating terms. It appeals

to the leaders and ranks of the Right C.P. to have a serious heart-searching, abandon the policy of class collaboration and return to the path of class struggle which alone will strengthen the cause of democracy.

It is significant that precisely at this time, new moves are being made to woo the multinationals and get massive economic aid from the imperialist countries. The desperate drive for exports, the hectic negotiations between the Government of India and the Indian monopolists on the one hand and the Governments and monopolists in capitalist countries on the other, the huge concessions made to the foreign and Indian monopolists—all these show that the ruling party and the Government are in practice doing the very opposite of their anti-imperialist professions and declarations that they will not be dictated to.

All these developments are taking place against the background of an ever-deepening crisis of the economy of India which, in its turn, is bound up with the crisis of the world capitalist economy. As opposed to the claim of having contained inflation, curbed price rise, raised production, etc., the reality as acknowledged officially by the Reserve Bank of India, the Finance Ministry, etc., is that money supply and prices have both increased in 1976. As for rise in production, it is admitted that internal demand is lagging very much behind production, so that several commodities produced in the country have to be exported at prices below costs of production and subsidised by imposing heavy tax burdens on the people. All this is to be seen along with large-scale lay-offs, closures, retrenchment, etc., as well as precipitous fall in the prices of several agricultural crops. Large-scale unemployment coupled with fall in the living standards of those who are in employment have already led to a severe contraction of the home market. The only way in which the profits of the industrialists can, under these circumstances, be maintained is to shift the burdens of the crisis on to the shoulders of the people on the one hand and to further strengthen the tie of the Indian economy with the

world capitalist economy on the other. The price that the Government is prepared to pay for this is far-reaching concessions to and accommodation with multinationals and foreign monopolists, leading to intensification of the loot of the country's wealth and resources by neo-colonialist methods of imperialism.

The PB appeals to all the Left and democratic parties, the fighting organisations of all sections of the working people, as well as non-party personalities who are interested in the defence of India's freedom and democracy, in its steady advance along the path of social progress, to realise that this poses a serious danger to the nation. It calls upon the people to fight the anti-people policies of the Government which strengthen the vested interests, both Indian and foreign. These, as the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has always warned, are leading to the vicious attacks on the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people which have now culminated in the institutionalisation of the Emergency.

The Polit Bureau calls upon all Party members and sympathisers of the Party to strive for united actions with all those who are interested in the defence of democracy against authoritarianism and in defence of civil liberties and democratic rights and against the attacks on the living standards of the working people.

36

CPI(M)'S Stand on the Opposition Bloc*

Statement dated January 4, 1976 issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued the following statement on January 4, 1976 :

Some of the Opposition parties in Parliament who have formed a bloc approached our Party Group and sought our co-operation in it. The Polit Bureau, therefore, desires to reiterate the position of the Party in this respect.

In view of the fundamental differences between our Party and some of the Opposition parties on important questions of policy, our Party does not consider it desirable to form a single Opposition bloc. Our effort, on the other hand, has always been to unite all the groups in Parliament which adopt a Left and democratic position on internal and international issues. This being our consistent policy, our Group will not associate itself in any manner with the bloc that is now being formed.

The formation of any such bloc by different political parties inevitably imposes common discipline on all the constituents of the bloc, and it undermines the political-ideological independence of the parties. As such, our Party cannot subscribe to the concept of such a bloc.

Our Party has at the same time been co-operating with other Opposition groups in Parliament on issues of common interest, in defence of the rights of the people. Fundamental differences on questions of programme and policy have never stood in the way of such co-operation inside Parliament.....

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37

CPI(M) and Constitution Amendment*

The programmatic understanding of the CPI(M), based on Marxism-Leninism, does not suggest that society or state structure can be radically altered by amending Constitutions.

The CPI(M), however, had proposed between 1971 and 1973 certain amendments to the Constitution of India which were designed to create, in the words of CPI(M) General Secretary P. Sundarayya, "better facilities for the democratic forces to champion the cause of the people of India within the existing bourgeois landlord state structure."

These amendments were introduced in Parliament on several occasions by CPI(M) MPs "to focus the attention of the democratic masses on what a real democratic constitution should be, that would go to a large extent to help the implementation of the people's needs".

The principal areas covered by these proposed amendments (which were never taken up for discussion in either House of Parliament) are : fundamental rights; the role of President, Governors and Judges; elections to the legislature, proportional representation and the right to recall; safeguarding the autonomy of the States, and Centre-State relations, and language.

1. In the present Constitution, Part III enumerates the

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Fundamental Rights and enables the citizens of India to claim enforcement and relief from courts. (Certain rights under Articles 14, 19, 21 and 22 have remained suspended under the present Emergency in the country.) In Part IV, certain Directive Principles of State Policy have been listed. Some important fundamental rights like the right to work and to a living wage, to free education, to assistance in the case of unemployment, etc., are included in the Directive Principles which cannot be enforced, and not in the Part enumerating Fundamental Rights.

The CPI(M) thinks that all citizens should have the right to work and to a living wage on attaining the age of 16 years, to free education up to the higher secondary standard, to state assistance in cases of unemployment, old age sickness and disablement, to free medical treatment, to equal pay for equal work, to franchise on attaining 18 years of age. (Constitution Amendment Bill No. 104 of 1971 by A. K. Gopalan.)

Our Party is opposed to the very principle of preventive detention, and as such, wants deletion of the relevant provisions.

In the Constitution, the right to work and living wage is not incorporated as a Fundamental Right, but the Right to Property is guaranteed by Article 19 (1) coupled with Article 31. On popular demands, Government has been forced to bring certain Constitutional amendments to restrict this Right to Property. They do not go far enough. The CPI(M) proposed-amendments, while seeking to protect the right to property of small owners, makes it clear that state should acquire without paying any compensation the big properties of the landlords and of Big Business.

The CPI(M) holds that not only laws intended to give effect to the principles specified in Article 39 (Directive Principle on Land Reforms), but every law that is made to protect the fundamental rights of the toiling masses should be outside the scope of courts.

2. Some of the amendments proposed relate to existing

provisions on Ordinance making powers, relation of the President/Governors with the Cabinets, Emergency provisions (including Article 359), the President's role in the governance of States, nomination of Governors, discretionary powers of Governors, the requirement of Presidential assent for Bills passed by Parliament and powers to dismiss Government employees.

These proposals cannot be discussed here in detail.

The amendments proposed by the Party also suggest that judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts should be appointed and removed only with the consent of the legislatures at the appropriate level.

3. On elections, CPI(M) proposes abolition of all upper Houses in the State Legislatures, but wants the Rajya Sabha at the Centre to continue as the representative of all States.

The Rajya Sabha should have the same number of members as the Lok Sabha. These members, too, should be directly elected, and the Rajya Sabha should have equal powers with the Lok Sabha, and both the Houses should have an equal term of five years.

It is proposed further that elections should be held on the basis of proportional representation and political parties submitting lists for the seats to be filled up. Each State can be considered as one constituency or can be divided into some large multiple member constituencies. Each party shall get its representatives elected in proportion to the votes it polls and the number of candidates in order of priority in their lists shall be declared elected according to their voting strength.

It is common knowledge that during the last 25 years of the Constitution of India, because of the present electoral system, different political parties do not get the number of seats in Legislatures proportionate to the votes they poll. To prevent this distortion, the only correct method is election be proportional vote and on the basis of party list.

The CPI(M) also proposes that every elected representative should be made subject to recall by his electors, and

that it be incorporated both in the Constitution and the corresponding election law.

Large-scale and frequent defections make a farce of elections defections and Legislatures. The Government has under strong popular demand, brought a Bill to stop defections. (Nobody knows when the Bill will be enacted into law.) The CPI(M) considers this Bill to be inadequate and ineffective and proposes further amendments. Any Legislator elected by the people on a particular party ticket, if he disobeys the mandate and acts against its instructions and is removed by the party, should cease to be a member of the Legislature and a fresh election should be held to his seat.

4. The Legislature of a State should have exclusive powers, according to CPI(M)-proposed amendments, to make any law with respect to any matter not enumerated in the Union List or the Concurrent List.

The States have to act in such a way that, while exercising their full rights in their own spheres, they do not transgress the spheres allotted to the Centre. On the other hand, the Centre should not interfere in the spheres of the States, both legislative and executive.

These amendments further suggest that from all the levies and taxes and cesses collected by the Central Government including taxes on companies, 75 per cent of the net realisation shall be assigned to the States, the remaining 25 per cent to be used for the purposes of the Central Government. In what proportion and on what principles this 75 per cent shall be divided between the States shall be determined by the Finance Commission.

Officers and employees in the services of the Central and State Governments shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the respective Governments concerned. The pay scales and conditions of service for employees of the State Governments and of the Central Government shall be the same on the principle of equal pay for equal work.

No employee in service shall be dismissed or demoted on any ground without proper enquiry and he being given a

reasonable opportunity to answer to the charges levelled against him, except when he is convicted on a criminal charge.

It is necessary to make the autonomy of the States more real. For the economic development and prosperity of the Indian people, it is equally necessary to strengthen the Indian Union. This could be achieved only on the basis of real autonomy of the States and full-fledged guarantee of democracy. It is only on this basis that the unity of the Indian Union can be safeguarded and further developed. To this end, a re-allocation of subjects in the Union, State, and Concurrent Lists has been suggested.

The part of the Constitution concerned with the problem of language should be entirely recast. The position of the CPI(M) in this regard is :

"Equality of all national languages in Parliament and Central administration shall be recognised....All Acts, Government orders and resolutions shall be made available in all national languages. The use of Hindi as the official language shall not be made obligatory. In the course of growing economic, social and intellectual intercourse, the people of different States of India will develop in practice the language of intercommunication most suitable to their needs. The use of English, in the field of administration, legislation, judiciary and as the medium of instruction in education shall be discarded, replacing it with the national languages. Right of people to receive instruction in their mother-tongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular linguistic State as the language of administration in all its public and State institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the State up to the highest standard; provision for the use of the language of a minority or minorities or of a region where necessary in addition to the language of the State shall be implemented. The Urdu language and its script shall be protected."

(Programme of the CPI(M), para 88, sub-para (6), as amended in 1972)

As we have noted in our earlier issue, an amendment of the Constitution is clearly on the agenda. The CPI(M) is opposed to concentration of powers in the executive, to any accretion of the constitutional powers and position of the President or supremacy of either of the three branches of Government to the exclusion of the others.

In a republican democratic Constitution, Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad noted recently, the people are and should be supreme since it is in their name that the Constitution has been created, and since it is the Constitution that has created the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. None of the three creatures of the Constitution (which itself, in theory at least, is the creature of the people) can therefore claim to be superior to the other two arms of state power and over the people at large. Constitution should be so amended that the power of the people over all the three arms of State power is enlarged.

38

The National Situation

Document adopted by the Central Committee of the CPI(M) in its session in Madras on January 22-28, 1976

The CC's resolution on Emergency said : "However, the Party had come to the conclusion that the ruling party was fast moving towards authoritarian and one-party dictatorship. The last meeting of the CC considered that the main danger to democracy came from Indira Gandhi Government. The onslaught against parliamentary democracy comes in the background of deeper social, economic and political factors ... Only draconian measures which would smash the resistance of the masses would enable the Government to transfer the burdens of the crisis to the common man. All the statements of Indira Gandhi, about the economic situation and her exhortations against strikes, against wage rise, for more production and more work, her promise to the capitalists that there should be no further nationalization—all these placed in the centre the task of fighting the crisis and solving it at the expense of the people".

The four months since the last CC session have not only borne out the truth of the statement but have witnessed rapid and successive attacks against the democratic rights of the people, the parliamentary system and their economic well-being. They have also shown that the 20-point programme is becoming more and more a propaganda affair and less and less a programme for implementation. They have further shown that anti-imperialist demagogy is accompanied by growing concessions to multinationals—the deadly foe of Indian freedom—and a growing desire to accommodate

and woo American capital. This is happening notwithstanding new trade agreements with widescope with a number of Socialist countries.

The dangerous feature is that assault on democracy is accompanied by further wooing of foreign capital and freedom for Indian monopolists. This is the normal course, the normal political sequence in the present day world—a sequence which makes imperialist plots and coups easy of accomplishment, and endangers national independence, if it is not checked and reversed.

And now the Chandigarh Session of the Congress Party has recommended not only the continuation of the Emergency, but also the postponement of the parliamentary elections due in February 1976 and the extension of the life of the present parliament by one year.

Permanent Scuttling of Parliamentary Democracy

One by one the pillars of bourgeois parliamentary system are being removed, and a totalitarian framework emphasizing the dictatorship of the Congress party is being prepared.

The independence of the courts, which acted to some extent as a check on the arbitrariness of the executive is being given up, the courts being openly attacked, and told to the horror of bourgeois jurists that they are just subordinate of the executive. The power of the courts to issue writs is being challenged under the most demagogic arguments.

A regular campaign for the curtailment of the powers of the judiciary has been launched, not to break the class limitations of the class judiciary and advance the right of the underdog, but to claim untrammelled power for the executive to wage war against people's rights to free from any limitations of the law.

The ruling party and its spokesmen demagogically use instances where propertied elements have exploited the courts' powers to delay and postpone implementation of land legislations. The remedy is not to claim all power for the executive, but to change the very content of the law, which

is now biased in favour of the vested interests. On the other hand, it is well known that the Government did nothing to implement its inadequate laws giving some relief to the lower strata, such as the Land Ceiling Act, Anti-eviction and Rent Reduction Acts, Minimum Wages Acts, etc. Under the guise of protecting its land legislations, it demands complete freedom to attack the fundamental rights of the people. The conflict between the judiciary and the ruling party—the Parliament—is an expression of the conflict between the rapidly emerging totalitarian framework, and the existing bourgeois democratic frame.

The freedom of Opposition parties inside and outside parliament has also been struck down. Parliament was more and more being used by Opposition parties as a forum for exposing the venal and corrupt character of the ruling party and its rule and by Left parties in particular to expose the class character of its measures and policies. Objectively, the entire class structure was being exposed. The speeches were privileged speeches; their reporting was privileged. The totalitarian framework could not tolerate this. Arrests of opposition leaders were followed by banning the publication of their speeches under the Press censorship rules. Now the privilege of the Press to report parliamentary proceedings has been scrapped by an Ordinance. Its aim is to see that the Opposition in Parliament gets no publicity. And the Opposition is asked to learn the lesson and behave in a "responsible manner".

Rules of Procedure are proposed to be changed. The number of days of its sittings are to be reduced from 180 to 100 days in a year. The right of members to move adjournment motions on matters of public importance is to be scrapped. The number of members who can ask questions on "call attention" motions is to be restricted to three. The zero hour after question time when members are free to raise issues of malpractices and corruption by the Executive and Ministers is to be abolished.

Steps were taken to make the Press owned and controlled by big business completely subservient to the ruling party

and the Government. Censorship operates to the detriment of all Opposition parties in regard to other newspapers and journals. As far as newspapers, journals and other publications of our Party and CITU and Kisan Sabha and other mass organizations are concerned, they are totally gagged.

In Tamil Nadu, where a non-Congress party is in office, the speeches of members criticizing the Government in a debate over a no-confidence were allowed to be given full publicity. But the speech of the Chief Minister replying to the criticisms and charges was not allowed to be published.

In the current session of Parliament, the censor served a notice to Pressmen that no speech of members should be published without its being pre-censored. When the issue was raised in Parliament, the Prime Minister unabashedly declared that the speeches of members were intended only for Parliament and not for the public!

The fake plea that censorship was needed for a temporary period of the Emergency has been given up. Three Ordinances have been passed, which will soon become acts of Parliament, destroying freedom of the Press and turning it into an instrument of totalitarian propaganda.

The new Press ordinance, 'Prevention of publication of objectionable matter ordinance', extinguishes all Press freedom. Such a measure had never before been enacted in India. It reminds one of the British High Court Judge in India who, while convicting a patriot, declared that want of affection for the Government means disaffection. It applies not only to newspapers but to all publications in any form.

Almost every criticism of the Government has been brought under objectionable matter. President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Council of Ministers, Governors of States, Speaker of the House of the People are above criticism. They cannot be criticized, lest the criticism might be considered defamatory and regarded as exciting disaffection or contempt towards the Government and therefore punishable. Therefore, no criticism can be made.

Under the previous law (1951 Act) one accused of

objectionable matter was entitled to a trial before a Sessions Judge but now the executive has assumed the power to judge. High Court comes in only after the Union Government has given its verdict.

The District authorities are given powers to arbitrarily decide whether any matter published is objectionable, to demand heavy security to close the Press, to prohibit publication of books, pamphlets and leaflets, to forfeit security. In addition, breach of law is to be met with heavy punishment of Rs. 1000 fine and one year's imprisonment.

And finally, democratic features of the Constitution itself are being attacked. The needs of the ruling party to perpetuate its rule, its dictatorship, requires overhauling of the Constitution and shifting it decidedly against the masses. Indira Gandhi blurted out the truth when in a message to the Punjab Haryana Democratic Lawyers' Conference, she said that "privilege without obligation and rights without duties tend to create imbalance".

This is the secret. The masses are enjoying only rights and privileges. They must be saddled with responsibilities.

In reality, what Indira Gandhi and her colleagues are contemplating is a Constitutional amendment which will reduce Parliament itself to a shadow and place all power in the hands of an executive irremovable and inaccessible to parliamentary vote. This is clear from the statements which emanate from time to time from them. This was sought to be done under the name of a presidential form of Government.

The scheme which was secretly prepared was exposed. It met with wide opposition from bar councils, intelligentsia and all parties other than the Congress, and had to be withdrawn. However, the Constitutional amendments that the Government is secretly hatching, may only keep formally the existing structure. But the essence of what had been earlier prepared, viz. giving absolute power to one individual, reducing Parliament to a shadow and vesting the Executive with full authority and making it unanswerable to Parliament, will be preserved.

The Government and the Congress which thundered about the supremacy and sovereignty of Parliament, now seeks to use it for permanently doing away with the Parliament's powers and place untrammelled power in the Executive. When our United Front Governments took steps to give relief to peasants and agricultural workers and ruling party and Government thundered about the sanctity of the courts, whose help was sought by the landlords. They now unceremoniously seek to remove its powers and concentrate judicial powers also in the hands of the Executive.

Another important feature of the situation must be noted. Under the present Constitution, although it is called a federal Constitution, the powers of the States are extremely limited. Our Party, as well as several others have been demanding greater autonomy for the States. More powers were demanded even by some Chief Ministers. Since the Emergency, whatever limited powers the States enjoyed have been seriously eroded. And now they seek to permanently curtail the powers and make the Constitution virtually a unitary Constitution.

Indira Gandhi talks of the need for a nation-wide debate on the Constitutional changes. But she neither places her proposals openly before the people, nor does she allow the Opposition parties to place their proposals and allow public debate on them. The Opposition is barred from holding meetings and even publishing their views in the Press.

She also talked of seeking the mandate of the people for making Constitutional changes. But she has not only postponed the elections to Parliament, but wants to get these Constitutional amendments made by a Parliament whose mandate is expiring.

Attempt to Cover up Real Intentions

The ruling party conceals the reactionary character of its intentions and actions behind the cover of agitational demagogy appealing to the radical, anti-imperialist, national sentiment and feelings of the people.

While scuttling parliamentary democracy in India, it thunders against fascism and poses to deliver the country from the threat posed by it; it speaks against American imperialism and the CIA, rouses national feelings, while it negotiates with the USA for influx of capital and offers new concessions to multinationals; its ministers admonish the big industrialists and monopolists, addresses them warnings while in reality big material concessions are made at the expenses of the people. It presents its outpourings against the judiciary as a crusade on behalf of the present, while in reality it is demanding untrammelled power for the executive. It presents its design to establish a Government controlled Press as a step to release the Press from the influence of the big bourgeoisie. It has been preparing for this by raising the slogan of "restructuring the Press", presenting itself as a fighter against the monopolist control of the Press. And finally, it presents its demand for change in the Constitution as directly needed to serve the underdog.

Unless this demagogy is continuously exposed by all possible means, large sections are bound to be confused—all the more so since all the means of propaganda are shamelessly monopolized by the ruling party.

The Role of Soviet Revisionist Leaders

This feeling of the people is facilitated by the help given to Indira Gandhi by the leaders of the CPSU and several other Communist Parties. The CC Resolution on Emergency said that the situation is complicated because CPSU and a number of other Communist Parties have openly supported this conspiracy to instal a one-party authoritarian Government in the country.

Since then the support has been tremendously enhanced. The international anti-fascist conference at Patna became an open demonstration of the support of the CPSU and several Communist Parties, Peace organizations, Afro-Asian movements, for Indira Gandhi for what she has done and is doing. Her claims to fight fascism were accepted and lauded.

Her excuse for Emergency and wanton attack on democracy—the right danger abetted by imperialism—was again accepted and she was congratulated on her firm stand against imperialism and fascism. The 20-point programme was lauded to the skies as an instrument of tearing down the basis of fascism.

This was the biggest boost to the Indira Gandhi Government and her machinations against the Indian people. The unstinted support to the reactionary ruling party and the fulsome praise showered on it by the Soviet leaders helps the emergence of authoritarian rule in India.

In this international conference which was supposed to have been called for mobilizing support for the fight against fascism, they did not stop with lauding Indira Gandhi's attacks on democratic rights of the people and all T.U. rights of the working class in India. They went further and utilized this forum for inciting India against Socialist China.

Infights in the Congress

Notwithstanding this boost, the Congress Government finds itself in growing difficulties. The group fight inside the Congress continues to corrode inner unity; while in some States, the fight may be muted for some time, in others it is flaring forth with new vigour. It did not abate all these months in Kerala where the ministerial and organizational wings continued to clash. It also continues with unabated vigour in Uttar Pradesh where Bahuguna was unceremoniously ousted from office. Although there was constitutional breakdown, and the Congress party commanded a majority in the Assembly, the State had to be placed under President's Rule for some time because of acute group fights in the party.

In West Bengal, rival groups of Congress youth organization, which though united in terrorising with the help of police the Left and Democratic forces, are engaged in armed clashes and factional fights amongst themselves. These groups are being sought to be united with the blessings

of Indira Gandhi and her son. Similarly, directives have been issued to the State Unit of the INTUC to accommodate the NLCC, or rival Congress TU organization. But behind the facade of unity, intense rivalries and factional fights continue.

Group fights in several other States like Bihar, Punjab Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Mysore and Andhra Pradesh continue.

A significant fact that should be noted is the fact that the Prime Minister's son Sanjay Gandhi, who had nothing to his credit in public life has been suddenly catapulted into the orbit of Indian politics. He has become a key figure in the Congress politics and is reported to be directly interfering in administrative and her decisions. This person, who just on the eve of his open entry into politics attacked the Public Sector, voiced the demands of the monopolists and stated that he had no belief in any 'isms', is being accorded the status of a high dignitary of the State.

The Chandigarh session of the Congress, held under the shadow of the Emergency and the steps taken since its declaration, with all its pomp and publicity, was a one-leader show. The delegates were muted, not daring to voice any doubts, let alone moving any resolutions or amendments to the official resolutions. It was not thought necessary even to review the effects of the 20-point programme and the conditions of the people. But with all the demonstrations of outward servility, there was an under-current of dissatisfaction and simmering discontent against the totalitarian policies, among the sections of the delegates and enthusiasm was visibly lacking.

The 20-point programme is fast losing its glamour. Repetitive statements making dubious claims have become more common. The tall talk of involving people in its implementation has remained a paper declaration.

Our Party and many other democratic parties have been demanding that the Scheduled Castes and Tribes should be given a greater share in Government jobs and criticizing the

tardy implementation of the scheme of reservation of seats for them by the Government. And now the Government has started a propaganda barrage advertising the steps it is now taking to implement the scheme as a great achievement.

It seeks, to by-pass their real problems, like land to the tiller, enforcement of minimum wage, illegal seizure of the lands of the tribal people by money lenders and others, the demand for regional autonomy and special rights for the tribal people in compact areas, whose solution alone will raise the economic and social status of this most-exploited sections of our people. Instead it seeks to create groups which could sow illusions among these people and win their support to the ruling party.

In these seven months there is a growing rift with the masses and all sections of the people including large sections of the intelligentsia.

The actions taken by the Government during the six months that have passed since the Emergency was imposed, have in the first place done much to alienate the sympathies of the working class and middle class employees. The attack on the trade union organizations of the working class and employees, the banning of all trade union activities and strikes, the lay-offs, the unemployment, the bonus ordinance, freezing of wages, the withdrawal of trade union facilities of employees, the victimization drive against State and Central Government employees—all have created a strong sense of injustice and resentment. Even the INTUC, AITUC and that section of the HMS who collaborate with the Government find it difficult to justify official actions.

During these months, the conditions of the peasantry have deteriorated, the prices of all commercial crops like cotton, jute, oilseeds, sugarcane, coconut, etc. have steeply fallen. Paddy prices also have fallen sharply in certain areas ; while there has been no corresponding reduction in the prices of the goods manufactured out of them. There has been practically no fall in the prices of the goods that the peasants have to purchase. On the other hand, prices of some of

them, such as kerosene, coal, etc. have been increased. The price of inputs remains more or less the same. Taxation, irrigation, electricity and other charges have been heavily increased. There is growing discontent among them as a result of all these.

The attacks against democratic rights, against freedom of expression, against the powers of the court, the censorship preventing publication of even judgements of courts—all these have led to growing discontent among the intelligentsia—lawyers, jurists, writers, etc. It is known that the bars are divided—a big majority of the members being against suppression of all the freedoms under Article 19 of the Constitution—which means no rule of law. The judiciary is divided. Many may not speak.

The Congress knows about all this, and that is why it has set about organizing lawyers' conferences, writers' conferences, etc. With sycophants and those hankerings after patronage, and given great publicity to them. Great publicity is organized to pass the opinions expressed in these conferences in favour of the Govt. as the opinion of the entire bar and jurists. On the other hand, other lawyers are prevented from expressing their views. Their meetings and conferences are banned.

All this opens the prospect of the widest possible mobilization of all interested in fighting the Emergency and the fast-growing trend towards totalitarianism. It includes not only the working masses, but also the big sections of middle class and intelligentsia who are interested in defending parliamentary democratic values and stopping the march to totalitarianism.

The ruling party is trying to come to an understanding with other bourgeois-landlord parties or to break them by using bribery, threat of repression, arrests of leaders and all means at its disposal.

In Kerala, knowing that it will not be easy for the Congress-Right C.P. coalition to win the elections, the Congress has been concentrating on splitting the Kerala Congress from the front of the Opposition parties, and has now succeeded

in winning it over. The sordid process involved in this winning over shows the lengths to which Congress opportunism and unscrupulousness can go. When negotiations were being on and a number of leaders of the Kerala Congress were hesitating to accept the offer the Congress-Right C.P. coalition Government suddenly arrested at the end of September a hundred members of our Party including 11 members of the State Committee and 55 members of the District Committee.

The same tactics were adopted to browbeat the Opposition League into alliance. When the attempt failed, the leaders of the Opposition League were summarily arrested and detained.

The Congress party has now decided to postpone the elections to Parliament that are due in February-March, 1976. With all the suppression of Opposition parties, attempts to decay some of their leaders, by jailing the leaders and workers of the Opposition parties and thereby preventing their efforts at organization and collection of resources, Indira Gandhi is not sure of the outcome of elections if they are held now. But she is trying to get amendments to the Constitution passed by this Parliament whose mandate is expiring.

Had she been sure of the outcome in her favour, she would have held the elections and proclaimed that the people have endorsed all her actions of suppressing democracy, draconian laws, attack on the working class and people, etc. and that she has the mandate of the people to make the proposed amendments to the Constitution.

In Tamil Nadu, where the elections to the State Assembly are due in February-March, the Chief Minister commands to big majority in the legislature. He has called upon the Central Government to hold elections. But the Central Government does not want to hold the elections, it also does not want to extend the life of the legislature as it is doing in regard to Parliament and as it did in the case of Kerala when its term expired a few months ago. It is seeking pretexts to impose President's Rule. The only reason is that the State

Government allows the freedom of speech and allows all parties and mass organizations to hold public meetings.

In Gujarat also, where non-Congress Front is in office, the ground is being prepared to dismiss the Government and impose Presidential Rule.

Since the Chandigarh session of the Congress, the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and other ministers are frequently holding out threats against the Governments of these two States. The Congress President has gone further and threatened that the DMK will be banned.

Reactionary Economic Policies

This attack on democratic rights is accompanied by reactionary economic policies which impose further greater misery and unemployment on the people and jeopardise the economic independence of the country. The needs of meeting the demands of economic recession imposed by the capitalist path and the link with the capitalist world market necessitate both.

The facts of the recession are well-known. However, they deserve mentioning in order to understand its all-pervading character and the measures taken by the Government. The people have to bear the cost through unemployment for millions, retrenchment, lay-offs, loss in wages, overwork and outright starvation and destitution. Only suppression of all their rights will give time to the ruling party to manoeuvre against the crisis.

To mention a few facts : "One hundred and five steel plants in the country are closed, but even so, the integrated steel plants are saddled with a milion tons of steel. This is more than two months' production. The stock-pile of aluminium is now in the neighbourhood of 24,000 tons, again almost two months' production. The automobile industry is working barely at half its capacity and partly, as a result of this, there is a glut of tyres in the market. The paper industry which was operating in a sellers' market until just the other day, is now saddled with unprecedented stocks. The wagon

builders, the machine tool plants, public enterprises like the Integral Coach Factory and the diesel locomotive works, are receiving few new orders and many units have been forced to halve their rates of production. There is an emerging glut of cement and the various coalmines authorities have been forced to cut down production to clear their mounting stocks". (*Times of India*, 12.12.1975).

The list of course is not full. The cotton textile industry, the jute industry, the fertilizers and the paper making industry all are complaining of over stocking. The Government has already permitted the cotton textile factories including those under the control of National Cotton Textile Corporation to stop the production of controlled cloth meant for the poor. Negotiations are afoot to discuss a hike in the price of controlled cloth. Many small-scale industries have closed down. The plight of the handloom weavers is pitiable.

According to a news item published in the *Hindu*, the Ministry for Industrial Development has reported that capital to the tune of Rs. 1,500 crores is locked up due to closures of innumerable industrial units in the medium and small-scale sector. Most of the other units in this sector which are not closed down are working much below their capacity.

The plain fact is that almost every industry is announcing huge accumulation of stocks which is but one step short of mass closures unless quick and proper steps are taken to reimburse the purchasing power of the people and expand demand. The fact is that the goods are remaining unsold at present high prices with the people's purchasing power drastically eroded by inflation, high prices, high taxation, cut in bonus, freezing of wages, compulsory deposit schemes, low agricultural wages and unremunerative prices for the primary producer—the peasant.

There is no doubt that in some cases capitalists are deliberately exaggerating the situation to stampede the government into making quick concessions. Making allowance for this factor, the fact remains that the recession is wide-

spread and deep. An unprecedented crisis of the capitalist path linked with the capitalist world market has broken out.

The recession is not confined to industries. It has interwoven with the agrarian crisis ruining millions of small producers and reducing agricultural workers to destitution. The small grower of commercial crop is hard hit. The good kharif crop has the small paddy grower and distress sales of paddy is taking place in many States with the Food Corporation of India leaving the peasant to the mercy of the rice-millers. To prevent prices from picking up, the Government and its agencies refrain from purchasing their full quota of procurement. In fact, in some cases, the quota itself has been lowered.

Both through its earlier policy of inflation and later on through its so-called anti-inflationary measures, apart from direct attacks on wages, employment and higher taxation, the Government has been placing new burdens on the common man to get out of the crisis.

But its policy does not end here. It further includes wider and wider concessions to the capitalists including the big hoarders, the monopolists, to foreign multinationals, invitation to private foreign capital and growing acceptance of the demands of the American World Bank of India's economic policies.

The Concessions

Earlier, the monopolists were accused of sabotaging production, deliberately under-producing, organizing strike of capital and stopping investment. All this thunder against monopolists has now been given up. The recession made it absolutely necessary that the pretence of fighting the monopolists be abandoned. As the economy got deep in the mire of stagnation, a series of new concessions were made to the monopolists. The fear of nationalization was removed by assuring that ideology will not be allowed to interfere with economic development. Their unlicensed capacity was legalized on more than one occasion. The anti-monopoly commission was

reduced to a farce. The cases against Birlas were just frozen. Then followed the open appeal to remove restrictions against the monopolists. Several concessions were given, permitting their entry into consumers' goods industry, relief in taxation, etc.

Since the imposition of Emergency on June 26, the process has continued and within a short time, a spate of concessions followed.

In September, 15 export-oriented engineering industries were allowed automatic expansion of capacity to the extent of 25% of licensed capacity—over a five-year period. This is in addition to the normal permissible limit of 25% excess production over the licensed capacity. Since all these industries are producing below capacity, the permission means that the big houses will be able to benefit at the expense of others.

On October 25, an official announcement was made granting unlimited expansion beyond the licensed capacity to foreign companies and large monopoly houses in 30 other important industries on condition that these companies will have to either export the additional production or sell it in accordance with the direction of the Government. In November, liberalization for the procedure for regularizing unauthorised capacity installed by these firms was announced. Rules for liberalization of finance capital from public sector financial institutions to these industries have also been announced.

It will be remembered that liberalization of investment procedure forms item No. 14 of the 20-point programme. Its meaning is now clear.

With all these steps the talk of planning, of direction of capital desired channels of fight against monopoly, control of foreign monopolists has become a farce.

Similarly the dependence of Indian economy on foreign aid has been growing apace. The proud cry of self-reliance and zero net aid has disappeared. Net inflow of external assistance fell to Rs. 254 crores in 1973 necessitating a virtual plan holiday. The estimated inflow of aid in 1974-75 made a jump to about Rs. 900 crores and for the current

year is likely to be well over Rs. 1000 crores—a fourfold increase over the level in the last year of the Fourth Plan (E. & P. Sept. 27).

World Bank Study Team has suggested that gross aid to India should rise from an estimated level of 2332 million dollars (Rs. 2,098 crores) in 1975-76 to 3,527 million dollars (Rs. 3,174 crores) in 1980 to 5425 million dollars (Rs. 4,720 crores) in 1985-86. The World Bank knows that the economy is getting growing dependent on its aid.

Worse still, is the open invitation of multinationals when their treacherous role in organizing counter-revolutionary coup is exposed all over the world.

In September last year, Subramaniam had paved the way for U.S. and World Bank assistance when he said that American equity participation would be allowed in selected areas of the core sector with an expert orientation.

This is followed by desperate non-official attempts to woo American private capital by promising them easy exploitation of the Indian people and higher profit rates than anywhere else. Mr. Raunaq Singh, leader of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, openly stated this to the audience of top American industrialists.

The rate of return on U.S. manufacturing industries in India has increased from 7.5% in 1967 to 15.8% in 1972. This was higher than the corresponding rates for Canada, Europe, Latin America, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. With an abundant supply of skilled and cheap labour India at present was well-equipped to supply products of high labour intensity low capital output and intermediate technology (formula of the imperialist countries and World Bank).

Surprisingly, in the Indian delegation was included an American, Mr. Timothy Irwin, Manager of the Bombay Branch of the Bank of America. He also told the American businessmen that the climate for investment of American capital in India was excellent, that since the Emergency there is absolute industrial peace, that the Prime Minister was determined to keep stability.

Foreign monopolists are shamelessly invited to exploit our people by offering cheap labour and to keep it under control so that American profits can rise and with it, the share of the Indian collaborators.

The Indira Govt. masquerades the process by putting up an appearance of fight. The demand that companies should indianize their staff, that there should be majority equity with Indians and that non-residents should not have more than 40% equity, make it appear as if, with acceptance of these, the control will pass into Indian hands. The multinationals themselves are prepared to accept these demands so that they can appear as indigenous companies. Acceptance does not affect their control of the policy decisions, because they are taken elsewhere, outside the country.

Commenting on a World Bank Survey Team, a correspondent who unearthed the report, says : "In effect, the World Bank asks that the talk of uplifting the poor, etc., should be wound up for the time being."

The Special Correspondent of *The Economic Times* who has unearthed this sensational report, writes in the issue of the paper dated October 20: "India should reshape its industrial programme, leave away from heavy and capital goods industry and go in for massive export production during the coming decade. In terms of this prescription by the World Bank Study Team, exports and massive foreign aid should form the major party of savings, investment and growth for boosting India's flagging industrial growth rate—which is currently 1.5% to 2.0% to 8 to 10% a year." He quotes the report, a strong revival could be expected to follow from a successful strategic emphasis on the development of India's considerable agricultural export and energy capabilities. This will make for an easier foreign exchange and international situation. (They are keen on recovering their debts and milching the cow.)"

A reliable and lasting programme, the report adds, would have to be based on widespread improvement of productivity among the poorer sections. There are large opportunities

for this, but they will take time. "The strategic problem, meanwhile, is to develop other large outlets for additional industrial production which can again facilitate a dynamic revival of industrial activity."

The correspondent comments, "In other words, Garibi Hatao should not lead to an uncontrolled improvement in the consumption of the poor. Production and savings are for exports.

"Indian economy must be in a very vulnerable position indeed if despite the developing trade and economic relations with the USSR and other socialist countries of Eastern Europe, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the World Bank can make these arrogant proposals. Subramaniam did know of this report when he hopefully locked for more Bank aid and certified the multinationals as harmless creatures. In fact many of the slogans of the Bank have a very strange similarity with the Government slogans and actions like export promotion, the efforts to bring the tax evaders to book, the call to foreign companies to start export-oriented industries by offering cheap labour and the emphasis on energy production, and emphasis on rural demands only in the 20-point programme, the attack on the people's purchasing power. It is obvious that some bargains will be struck."

The recession, the need to meet foreign exchange needs, the collapse of the internal market all are pressing the Govt. to seek accommodation with the foreign imperialists, multinationals and Indian monopolists. The show of fighting them on economic field cannot be carried on. Thus while the Indira Govt. thunders against American imperialism and the CIA in political harangues justifies the scuttling of democracy as necessary to fight imperialist conspiracies, in reality dangerous concessions are being given which will jeopardise the future of India. In this connection, the experience of Egypt's Sadat should not be forgotten. He did not lose much time to give up his vaunted friendship with the Soviet Union and turn to the USA. Driven by economic class necessity, the bourgeois-landlord Govt. does not find any other way than seeking the economic protection of the

capitalist world and help of the imperialists to save itself from recession.

The cry of exports expresses as nothing else the dependence without which Indian economy cannot stand on its legs. Exports to pay for imports necessary for the country's industrial development was the earlier slogan. But today the exports have become vital because industrial capacity is lying unutilized, the Indian people fleeced and robbed under the capitalist path are too poor a market for the established capacity. Hence the very survival of industry depends on exports, i.e. foreign markets which for the most part (with the exception of the Socialist world) are directly or indirectly controlled by the big powers. Foreign markets can be secured by accommodating the wishes of big powers. The dangerous process has started.

Another change that is coming over the Indian bourgeoisie is its desparate effort to put up industries in collaboration with native capitalists in foreign countries. In Middle East, South East Asia, the Persian Gulf and Africa attempts are also made to have collaborations with foreign monopolists, playing the role of junior partners and native capitalists of these undeveloped countries.

"In all 129 projects were approved and 61 of them have come into production. As against equity worth Rs. 10 crores in 61 projects the country has been able to export capital goods of the value of Rs. 25 crores. This is not to speak of other cash returns in the form of dividends, technical know-how fees, royalty management fees which presently add up to Rs. 3 crores.

"Another 68 projects are in various stages of implementation. The value of equity of all the 129 ventures is over Rs. 32.8 crores.

"The Govt. has permitted joint ventures by big industrial houses as well as small units after proper screening. Many precautions have been taken to prevent projection of a bad image of this country". (*Indian Express*, Nov. 13, 1975).

All this makes a big sum showing which way both Govt. policy and Indian big capital are progressing.

Britain and USA have come forward to provide India with loans and grants and the USA's World Bank has started praising India's economic efforts and showing its readiness to give large aid. Their concern is that India should not leave the orbit of the capitalist world market, should not go too near the Soviet and they are fully assured. They have learnt to accept with equanimity cries against imperialism, fascism and CIA as the compulsions of a third world country in recession.

It is not only that the economic pressures are working to soften the bourgeois-landlord Government, other pressures are already in the field. The coup in Bangladesh, in which Mujib was butchered, the camp which defeated the counter-attempt of President Mujib's followers has placed the power in the hands of pro-Western clique hostile to India. The fact that Pakistan has despatched its ambassador to the new Govt. shows when it expects from the new set-up in relation to India.

Our Party has already drawn to the attention of the people the lessons that should be drawn from those events in Bangladesh. It has pointed out that the suppression of democracy and the institution of one-party rule dictatorship and authoritarian rule creates the fertile soil for imperialist inspired plots. Thus the fight against the Emergency, against the scuttling of Emergency, is getting directly linked with the fight to save the country from the growing influence of American imperialism.

The Right Communist Party

The seven months since the Emergency have exposed the bankruptcy and viciousness of the policies of the Right Communist Party. The revisionist leaders completely support the Emergency and have gone into euphoria over Indira Gandhi's 20-point programme. They also let a helping hand in suppressing the people and in destroying all trade union rights.

In Kerala, under the Congress-Right Communist Govt. more than a 100 of our comrades including Kisan and Trade Union

leaders have been detained under the MISA along with a number of Left and democratic parties. They have been given scandalous treatment in jails. Arrested persons are systematically beaten up in police lock-ups. Comrade Vijayan, MLA had to be hospitalized after assault by the police.

While applauding the measures of Indira Gandhi, their Central Executive Committee, after six months, lists the failures of the Govt. and bemoans the concessions to the monopolists, the bonus ordinance, the failure to implement the 20-point programme, etc. How can the Right Communist leaders pretend that all this was unexpected? Massive assistance to the monopolists and multinationals, suppression of the working class and attacks against democratic rights to solve the crisis which has resulted from the capitalist path of development, are the policies of the Govt. The Right C.P. cannot establish its bona fides by complaining about the Govt.'s policies and performance from time to time, whilst basically supporting it. The revisionist leaders talk of fighting fascism with the help of the Congress Govt. which suppresses the working masses and strengthens monopolists and welcome multinationals, which breed fascism.

Because of the resentment among the workers against the attacks on their living standards and rights, increasing burdens and lay-offs, etc., the revisionist leaders sometimes have to lodge formal protests. But when it comes to struggles their role is to strive to prevent the workers from participating in them.

As the days go by, their attitude and policies are bound to be exposed more and more before their ranks and their supporters. All their attempts to conceal the bankruptcy of their policies by talking of the 'Positive and Negative' features of Govt.'s policies, of the prospect of 'positive feature overcoming negative features' will not succeed. Life and experience will prove the worthlessness of these arguments. The task is thus enjoined upon us to help them to see the bankruptcy of the policies of the leadership and to draw them into common struggle.

Experience of the last 28 years since Independence has proved that the path of capitalist development in collaboration with foreign monopolists and in compromise with landlordism cannot save the basic problems of poverty, unemployment, and under-development. This path has plunged the country into the mire of a very deep economic crisis and led to intensification of miseries of the common people and massive unemployment.

The measures that the Govt. has taken since the Emergency— suppression of all democratic rights, massive concessions to monopolists, open door to foreign monopolists, and particularly multinational corporations and begging for more and more massive aid from imperialist countries and their agencies—cannot solve the problems of the country. They will only increase dependence on imperialist countries and further intensify the miseries of the people and aggravate mass unemployment.

The basic problems of the country can only be solved by implementing the alternative programme that the Polit Bureau of our Party placed before the people in its meeting of October 1975.

It is therefore of utmost importance that while the Party mobilizes all sections of the people in the fight against the Emergency, for restoration of democratic rights, the holding of free and fair elections and for States' autonomy, it should continuously project the alternative programme. More particularly, it should propagate the following :—

1. Take-over of foreign capital, ban on entry of multinationals, and investment of private foreign capital;
2. Moratorium on foreign debt payments;
3. Nationalization of monopoly houses, nationalization of sugar, textile, jute, cement and drug industries; adequate financial and other assistance to small and medium industries;
4. Take-over of foreign trade;
5. Ending of corruption and bureaucratism in the public sector undertaking;
6. Restoration of democratic and trade union rights and collective bargaining through trade unions whose representative character must be decided by secret ballot of the workers; need-based minimum wage and full neutralization for the rise in the cost of living; scrapping of the bonus ordinance, measures against victimisation;

7. Abolition of landlordism by taking over the entire land of landlords and their distribution gratis to the landless labourers and poor peasants; minimum wage of Rs. 8/- per day to agricultural labourers; cancellation of debts of peasants; landless labourers and rural poor and provision of adequate and cheap credit to them; remunerative prices for their produce to be ensured through Govt. purchase; lowering of taxes and other levies on the peasants; firm measures against social oppression of harijans;
8. Bring down prices by drastically reducing taxes and levies on essential articles; State take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential articles and their distribution under supervision of People's Committees. Compulsory procurement of all marketable surplus of foodgrains of all landlords;
9. Right to work to be made a fundamental constitutional right; and provision for unemployment relief;
10. Compulsory free education up to the age of 14 and eradication of illiteracy.

For a Broad Mobilization and Movement of Fighting People

The September 1975 Resolution of the Central Committee had said that the Emergency had introduced a qualitatively new feature in the political situation; in contrast to what had happened in West Bengal in 1972, it is not the CPI(M) alone that is under attack but wider spectrum of Indian society and all political parties in opposition to the Government irrespective of their colour. This combined with the deteriorating economic situation opens up the possibility of the widest possible democratic movement to fight the Emergency and restore the rights of the Indian people, facilitating the advance of the Left and democratic forces.

The resolution further stated that under attack were not only the following of the Right parties and Left parties but also wide sections of the Congress who are thoroughly dissatisfied and shocked by the suppression of democratic rights and also followers of the Right Communist Party, besides vast non-committed masses who normally do not give much thought to politics. This, the resolution said, opens the biggest opportunity to develop the united front from below i.e., the united front of all the masses following all opposition parties and even the Congress followers to growingly fight the Emergency.

With the open attack against the Constitution, the threat to instal a totalitarian Constitution, large sections of jurists lawyers and intelligentsia are raising their voices against the Emergency and the new attacks.

Our Party has been working for bringing about a front of Left and democratic forces which includes Left and democratic parties. The struggle for unity of these forces is the main lever to bring about the broadest possible unity that we are visualizing in the struggle against the Emergency.

Our struggle for the unity of Left and democratic forces has gone through many ups and downs. We have secured many successes and again the unity was disrupted. The Congress game of disrupting it was facilitated by the Right Communist Party who betrayed the united front and went over to the Congress; the Socialist Party went with Jayaprakash Narayan and the Right Parties, and this gave a blow to the growing Left and democratic unity which had culminated in the gigantic railway strike of 1974. We had again and again to pick up the threats of Left and democratic unity and strive to defeat the game of the Congress to disrupt it and to overcome the vacillations of the Left and democratic parties which succumbed to the temptation of forming a united front with the Right parties.While carrying on this fight incessantly, while continuing our appeal to all the Left and democratic parties and their masses, our Party taking the realities of the situation into consideration tried to utilize

opoortunities for linking with movements which were not led only by Left and democratic forces, without of course forming a united front which the organizations leading such movements. In relation to the Bihar movement led by Shri J.P. the CC while rejecting united front with the Right parties involved called upon party units and the people to organize mass rallies and demonstrations throughout the country in support of popular demands raised in Bihar and against the counter-measures of the Congress and its Government to suppress it. The same was the stand on the 6th March Delhi Morcha that while not participating in the March, the Party would independently campaign for such democratic demands and synchronize its actions.

The opportunity for joining hands with broader sections of people was being created by the compelling factors of the situation and the Party was trying to seize it.

Even before the declaration of the Second Emergency, the growing attack on civil liberties, and democratic rights had already raised the question of concerted resistance.

In its circular on "Movement in defence of civil liberties" issued in March to all party units, the CC had noted the demands for the restoration of democratic rights and civil liberties, for lifting of the Emergency imposed at the time of the Indo-Pakistan War in 1972 and scrapping of repressive Acts like the MISA had become the demands of all Opposition parties, opening the possibilities for the widest mobilization of the people around these slogans and demands. And the CC had directed all its units to make serious efforts to form committees in defence of civil liberties and democratic rights comprising of prominent individuals of all parties and mass and class organizations and prominent non-party individuals from different walks of life.

The CC made it clear that such committees should not acquire the partisan political character of any one or the other political party; that these committees formed for the purpose of defending civil liberties and democratic rights and to fight against repressive laws should not be confused

with the concept of united action and united front of different parties formed and forged on some agreed minimum programme, consisting of definite economic, political and social demands, that they be treated strictly as broad platforms to campaign for civil liberties and democratic rights. If the unity of purpose and effectiveness of such committees are to be safeguarded and the committees be made to adhere to the limited objectives they are constituted for then every attempt to convert or substitute them for political fronts and alliances must be resisted.

The CC also called on its members and cadres that in forming and functioning these committees they always bear in mind the Party's basic concept of unity of Left and democratic forces, a concept that steers clear of the slogan of so-called all-in unity of Opposition parties against the Congress.

In view of the conditions created by the declaration of the second Emergency, this assumes greater importance. Every endeavour must therefore be made by the Party to set up such committees for defending civil liberties and democratic rights in order to bring about the broadest mobilization for this common fight, while keeping in mind the caution earlier given by the CC.

This is one basis for the widest possible unity of broad sections belonging to all parties. The CC is confident that the working class will play its due role in this struggle in defence of democracy.

Another big basis for broad mobilizations and united action of the masses under the influence of all political parties is taking up the issues of deteriorating economic conditions of the masses, the new legislation to enforce lower living standards and the attacks on mass organizations. Hence the utmost stress must be laid on united actions on specific issues with all mass organizations whichever political party leads them, for mobilizing the maximum strength.

It should be realized that the possibility of a broad mobilization arises from the growing isolation of the Congress Government and of a change in the position of the masses.

This has to be utilized. The Left and democratic front of parties, groups and individuals must act as a weapon to bring about this broad mobilization.

The call for a broad mobilization is not a call either for a political or an electoral front. It is a slogan of action, of effectively drawing wider and wider strata into action—a wider strata which is under the influence of a number of political parties some of which are even ideologically and politically hostile to us. It involves common action with prominent members of all parties and from all walks of life for civil liberties; common action with the mass of their following for all democratic and economic issues affecting the people; unity with all mass organizations for defending the economic demands of the people when such organizations are willing to fight and can contribute to strengthening of the struggle.

In pursuing this task we bar a political front with Right parties. That is why we stress on the slogan of unity of the masses from below. This, however, should not mean that formal appeals to these parties are prohibited. Sometimes they may be necessary to draw their masses in. But the main dominant form of our activity is directly among the masses, direct appeal to them through the force of our movement, the activization of our masses, their initiative at the base levels. It is this activity of the masses that should be consciously directed towards winning the followers of other parties for common action and resistance.

Occasions arise in struggles on class and mass issues when many political parties support our position. In such circumstances our Party should have no hesitation in having joint actions with any party that supports our position except the Jana Sangh unless unavoidable.

In this connection, we adhere to our Party's ideological political characterization of both the Jana Sangh and the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh.

In such a situation, on these specific issues, in those specific establishments or places where we have to adopt united front tactics to successfully conduct working class

actions, only in such cases, joint action committees even with the BMS become necessary and permissible. We should always bear in mind the need to fight the reactionary ideological-political positions of the leadership.

It also makes it incumbent on us that our Party should simultaneously carry on a political-ideological struggle against the outlook, programme and agitational tactics of other parties, especially the Right parties. The Right parties, exploiting Soviet support to the Congress Government's attack on democracy, are attempting to turn the anger of the people into anti-Soviet, anti-Communist channels. This has to be criticized and exposed in accordance with the needs of the situation while continually appealing to their followers for common struggle. Without this neither the broad front can be developed nor the anti-Communist demagogy be defeated. The concrete struggle against the Right parties consists in defeating their attempt to link anti-Communism with the anti-Emergency struggle.

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Build Broadest Fighting Unity of People : Call Given by the Central Committee of CPI(M)

Statement issued by P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M) on January 31, 1976, on the decisions of the Central Committee meeting held in Madras on January 22-28, 1976

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued a communique to the Press on January 31, 1976 :

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) met in Madras between January 22 and 28, 1976 and reviewed the national situation as it has developed since its last meeting.

The last meeting of the Central Committee had noted the real purpose of the state of Emergency imposed on June 26, 1975. The measures that the Government has taken since then have been discussed in the communique.

The Chandigarh session of the Congress has recommended the continuation of the Emergency and the extension of the Lok Sabha whose term is about to expire. Meanwhile the Government has promulgated one after another Ordinances which do away with democratic rights and civil liberties. Article 19 of the Constitution has been suspended.

Speeches of members of Parliament, the communique notes, are also not allowed to be published.

And now the Constitution is sought to be amended.

The communique records its protest against arrests, ban on meetings and demonstrations, and expresses concern at

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*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 8, 1976. Refer Document under Item No. 38 of this Volume—the main political document adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its Madras session on January 22-28, 1976.

the way in which the working people are being saddled with increased workload.

The communique further notes that conditions of the peasantry have deteriorated. The prices of all commercial crops like cotton, jute, sugarcane, oilseeds, coconut, etc., have steeply fallen while there has not been a corresponding reduction in the prices of goods manufactured out of them. On the other hand, there has been practically no fall in the prices of commodities which the peasants have to purchase. The prices of some of them like kerosene, coal, etc., have actually risen. Prices of inputs remain more or less the same. In addition, heavy burdens have been placed on them by steep increase in taxation, irrigation tax, electricity and other levies.

The agricultural labourer continues to languish in poverty and destitution, despite announcement of some increase in minimum wages. These announcements generally remain on paper.

The communique also expresses concern at the accumulation of stocks in almost all industries, like cotton and jute textiles, steel, engineering, rubber tyre, automobiles and ancilliaries, fertilisers, paper and paper making machinery, textile machinery, cement, etc., and at the large-scale lay-offs and tremendous cut-down of production. Many units have been closed down outright.

Medium and small-scale industries are the worst hit. The Ministry of Industrial Development itself reported that Rs. 1,500 crores of capital has been locked up because of closure of medium and small-scale industrial units. Cottage industries like handloom, coir, etc., are facing severe crisis.

The communique has criticised that the Government has been announcing concession after concession to the monopolists. They have been allowed to increase their capacity, enter into fields like consumer industries that had been barred to them before. In addition, liberalisation of credit facilities from the nationalised banks has been announced.

The communique also criticised the efforts to invite foreign monopolists, particularly of the USA, and the multinational corporations to invest in India.

Net inflow of foreign aid has increased four-fold—from Rs. 254 crores in 1973 to over Rs. 1000 crores this year and still more massive aid is being sought.

On the Right Communist Party the communique says that they play the role of dividing the working class and disrupting their struggles.

In order to conceal the bankruptcy of their policies from their ranks, they indulge in scandalous rumour-mongering about our Party, that thousands from our Party have joined them, that our Party's General Secretary has resigned and so on.

But as days go by, the bankruptcy of their policies gets more and more revealed.

The Central Committee, the communique adds, appeals to the people in all parties, to writers, the intelligentsia and people in all walks of life to come together and demand the restoration of democratic rights and civil liberties.

The Central Committee has appealed to all Left and democratic forces, to build the broadest unity of the fighting people.

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Homage to Comrade Chou En-lai*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), with deep grief, pays its homage to Comrade Chou En-lai, an outstanding leader of the Communist Party of China and of the world Communist movement, a guiding star of the Great Chinese Revolution and an architect of New China. As a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Chairman of the People's Council (Premier) and of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Comrade Chou En-lai played an inestimable role in lifting up China from its abysmal backwardness to a strong and powerful Socialist Power which could wrest its recognition from the imperialists and its rightful place in the United Nations and in the Security Council.

Comrade Chou En-lai's whole life was dedicated to the revolutionary cause of the emancipation of the Chinese people and of the working class movement.

As a student in Nankai University in Tienstin, Comrade Chou En-lai, at the age of 21, participated in a student rebellion in 1919, now known as the May 4th Movement, and was imprisoned for five months.

Soon after his release he left for France for his studies

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 8, 1976. Refer Document under Appendix (XI) of this Volume which contains the Government's order banning Condolence Meeting on Comrade Chou En-lai, called in Calcutta on January 16, 1976.

and there founded in 1922 the Communist Youth League which was given affiliation by the Communist Party of China formed in 1921.

While he was in Paris, Comrade Chou En-lai was elected to the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang and on coming back to China in 1924, he joined the Whampoa Military Academy in Canton and soon became the Deputy Director of its Political Department.

In 1927, at the time of the Northern Expedition to suppress the warlords, Comrade Chou En-lai undertook the task of organizing an insurrection in Shanghai to help the Nationalist Army seize the city. Within a month Chiang Kai-shek organised his counter revolution and massacred over five thousand people, mainly members of the workers' militia, in Shanghai. The Communist Party was outlawed and every leader of the Party he could lay his hands on was executed by Chiang Kai-shek. Comrade Chou En-lai was also captured and sentenced to death, but he managed to escape. The same year he was elected to the Polit Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Four years later, he broke Chiang's blockade and entered Kiangsi and Fukien where he became Political Commissar of the Red Army and later Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council.

During the historic 6000-mile Long March from Southern Kiangsi to North Shensi which lasted a year, Comrade Chou En-lai led the troops during some of the most critical phases of the March.

After the Japanese imperialist aggression on China, despite all the appeals of the Communist Party for a united front to resist the Japanese aggressors, Chiang continued his anti-Communist campaign. But soon Chiang Kai-shek was forced to negotiate and it was Comrade Chou En-lai who led the Communist delegation to the talks.

At the successful end of the war, Chiang Kai-shek revived his anti-Communist campaign and continued it till he was forced to flee China. The People's Republic of China

came into existence on October 1, 1949, with Comrade Chou En-lai as Premier. In the year after that he proved himself to be a great Communist statesman whether it was at Geneva during the talks on Indo-China in 1954 or in Bandung at the Afro-Asian Conference.

Comrade Chou En-lai visited many countries of Asia and Africa and the C.C. remembers that during his visit to our country in 1956 he, as the symbol of the Chinese Revolution, was given an acclamation by our people rarely given to foreign dignitaries. It was during this historic visit that Premier Chou En-lai together with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru enunciated the Panch Sheel, the five principles of co-existence.

The C.C. also remembers that his second visit to India in 1960 was under totally different circumstances. Tension had developed on the India-China border and Comrade Chou En-lai came with proposals to solve the disputes between India and China and restore normalcy in the relations between the two neighbouring countries. Anti-imperialists and progressives in India and all over the world looked forward to positive results from the talks, but unfortunately that did not happen.

In the death of Comrade Chou En-lai, the Chinese people, the Communist Party of China and the world Communist movement have lost a dedicated proletarian revolutionary.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) once again pays its homage to Comrade Chou En-lai and conveys its heartfelt condolences to the Communist Party of China and to Comrade Teng Ying-chao, Comrade Chou En-lai's life partner.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in another resolution, strongly protested against the West Bengal Government banning a hall meeting called in Calcutta on January 16, 1976, to mourn the death of Comrade Chou En-lai.

[Reproduced from "GANASHAKTI" of February 1, 1976]

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Homage to Comrade Kang Sheng*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), with deep grief, pays its homage to Comrade Kang Sheng, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, who passed away on December 16.

The life of Comrade Kang Sheng was one of fighting for the cause of Communism. During China's revolutionary struggle for democracy and Socialism and during the Socialist revolution and construction, Comrade Kang Sheng stood steadfast as a revolutionary fighter and leader of the Chinese people and the Communist Party of China for over half a century.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) once again pays its homage to Comrade Kang Sheng and conveys its heartfelt condolences to the Communist Party of China.

[Reproduced from "Ganashakti" of February 1, 1976]

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 8, 1976.

42

The CPI(M) Alternative*

Central Committee's Campaign Call

In the opinion of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), it is of utmost importance that while the Party should mobilize all sections of the people around the immediate and urgent economic and political demands, it should continuously project the programme that the Polit Bureau placed before the people in October 1975 with a view to solving the basic problems of the country. More particularly, it should propagate the following:

(1) Take-over of foreign capital, ban on entry of multinationals and investment of private foreign capital;

(2) Moratorium on foreign debt payments;

(3) Nationalisation of monopoly houses, nationalisation of sugar, textile, jute, cement and drug industries, adequate financial and other assistance to small and medium industries;

(4) Take-over of foreign trade;

(5) Ending of corruption and bureaucratism in the public sector undertakings;

(6) Restoration of demotcratic and trade union rights and collective bargaining through trade unions whose representative character must be decided by secret ballot of the workers; need-based minimum wage and full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living; withdrawal of the Bonus Act; measures against victimisation;

(7) Abolition of landlordism by taking over the entire land of landlords and their distribution gratis to the landless

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 15, 1976.

labourers and poor peasants; minimum wage of Rs. eight per day to agricultural labourers;

Cancellation of debts of peasants, landless labourers and rural poor and provision of adequate and cheap credit to them; supply of inputs and essential articles at cheap rates to them; remunerative prices for their produce to be ensured through Government purchase; lowering of taxes and other levies on the peasants; firm measures against social oppression of Harijans;

(8) Bringing down of prices by drastically reducing taxes and levies on essential articles;

State take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential articles and their distribution under supervision of People's Committees; compulsory procurement of all the marketable surplus of foodgrains of all landlords;

(9) Right to work to be made a fundamental Constitutional right, and provision to be made for unemployment relief;

(10) Compulsory free education up to the age of 14 and eradication of illiteracy.

43

CPI(M) Leaders Write to Smt. Indira Gandhi Demanding Withdrawal of National Emergency*

Memorandum dated April 9, 1976, jointly signed by P. Ramamurti, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Jyoti Basu, Harkishan Singh Surjeet and A.K. Gopalan

To
Smt. Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi

Dear Madam Prime Minister

In accordance with the decisions of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), this memorandum is being submitted to you on the developments in the country since the imposition of the Internal Emergency on 26th June, 1975.

Our Party's views on the imposition of Emergency last June are well-known, and have been elaborated in our Central Committee's Resolution and the speech of Comrade A.K. Gopalan in the Lok Sabha and we do not think it is necessary to dilate upon it here.

We wish, however, to point out that the grounds advanced by Government in June 1975, for the imposition of the Emergency are no more there.

But instead of revoking the Emergency, it is being continued. The continuation of the Emergency is being sought to be justified on the ground that the country is passing through an economic crisis, and suspension of Civil Liberties, Democratic and Trade Union Rights are necessary to fight the economic crisis.

*A censored version of this Memorandum dated April 9, 1976, was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta April 25, 1976.

Out Party has been warning since long that the pro-landlord, pro-monopolist policies being pursued by the Government would lead the country into a crisis and has been making concrete proposals for alternate policies which alone would solve the crisis.

Our Party's spokesman, when called for discussions on the 4th and 5th draft plans, had placed detailed written criticisms on the basic policies underlying the drafts and pleaded for alternate policies. In fact, Comrade E.M.S.Namboodiripad, who was a member of the National Development Council which discussed the draft 4th Five Year Plan in 1968, submitted our proposals in writing and explained them in his speech. When they were not accepted, he voted against the Planning Commission's draft 4th Five Year Plan.

Again, in May 1971, when a Conference of Central Trade Unions and All India Federations was held in New Delhi, the representatives of the CITU played a leading part in envolving a National Platform. The Platform did not confine itself to Trade Union questions but comprised the entire range of economic policies. It may be mentioned that the INTUC also sent its observers who also agreed with the Platform, except on the question of recognition of Trade Unions by secret ballot.

But the mobilisation of our people on the basis of the Platform was disrupted by the formation of the National Council of Trade Unions by the INTUC, AITUC and HMS, with the blessings of the Government of India. That body never functioned and has now become defunct.

Our repeated plea for a change in the basic policies all these years had gone unheeded and our warnings have proved true.

The economy is in very deep crisis. You yourself have been saying that the crisis in India is a part of the world crisis. It is true that the capitalist countries are in the throes of a deep crisis. But we would like to point out that the Socialist countries have been and are free from any crisis.

We would also like to point out that capitalist countries

like Great Britain, Italy, France, USA, etc., where the resistance to attempts to pass the burden on the working class and the common people has been growing, have not resorted to such methods. In none of them a state of Emergency has been imposed, Press censorship established, and Civil Liberties, Democratic and Trade Union Rights have been curtailed—let alone being abrogated—for solving the economic crisis through which they are passing.

How the Emergency Operates in Practice

After the Emergency, all Opposition parties have been paralysed. Their meetings are banned. The right of dissent has been extinguished.

The Press has been muzzled. The news agencies have been merged into the officially controlled news-agency, 'Samachar'. In the merged news-agency, many senior and experienced reporters, who had not toed the official line have been demoted. Accreditation of many reporters to Parliament has been withdrawn.

Parliamentary procedure has been amended, taking away the right of members to raise questions of public importance or official misdeeds for debate.

People's initiative for intervening in public affairs and popular issues has been completely stifled.

Only the ruling party and its allies are allowed to say whatever they like.

Repressions and Attacks on Our Party

Our Party's record is one of consistently carrying on a political ideological fight against Rightist policies, whether pursued by the ruling party or advocated by forces outside, and policies of the forces of extreme Left. Similarly we have consistently fought against the ideology and the policies of these forces who based themselves on communalism and regionalism and sought to raise hatred between our people on that basis.

Our Party has always fought against policies which

strengthen or compromise with feudal exploitation, against policies which help the growth of monopolies and strengthen their hold over the economic and political life of the country, against policies which help the increasing penetration of foreign private capital especially by the multinationals. Experience all over the world has shown that these are the forces that breed and strenghthen Right reaction.

Ours is a consistent record of fight against imperialism, and particulary against US imperialist machinations and we have never hesitated to support the Government whenever it took an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial stand.

The fact is that by negating all civil liberties and democratic rights, you are paralysing those very forces, which alone can mobilize the people ideologically and politically against the forces of the Right, wherever they may be, as well as of Left adventurism, and isolate them.

Our Party has been facing severe repression in Kerala, W. Bengal, Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Trupura, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar etc., Two members of our Central Committee, two of our MPs, and 20 MLAs have been detained.

In Tripura, even before the Emergency, all our MLAs including the Leader of the Opposition and a member of our Central Committee, Comrade Nripen Chakraborti, were detained on the eve of the Budget Session of the Assembly. The infighting inside the Congress party had reached a stage when it was feared that the group opposed to the Chief Minister might join hands which the Opposition and vote against the budget, with would lead to the overthrow of the Ministry. Thus, our Comrades have to suffer imprisonment because the ruling clique was facing the danger of becoming a minority in the Assembly. The most ridiculous thing about these detentions is that the Chief Minister had made a statement that he had to detain them because they were planning to obstruct harvesting of boro paddy. Actually the harvesting of boro paddy had already been completed a month before the detentions.

Since then, the Tripura State Assembly functions without the Opposition party! Besides those MLAs, many others, including leading Party members at all levels have been detained.

In West Bengal, apart from the large-scale arrests that had taken place since 1972, hundreds of our cadres have been detained under the MISA.

In Kerala, detention orders have been issued against majority of State Committee members, a large number of District and Taluk Committee members—110 of them have been detained.

In Assam, our entire State Committee members and many District Committee members have been either detained or have warrants of arrest pending. In Maharashtra leading party cadres including Comrade Ahalya Ranganekar have been detained.

In Andhra, most of the State Committee members and District Committee members have been detained or have warrants pending. Notification has been issued against Comrade M. Hanumantha Rao, the Secretary of the State Committee who is a member of our Central Committee and others.

In Tamil Nadu, a majority of the State and District Committee members have been arrested or have warrants pending against them. The arrests have extended to District Committee members and even Taluk Committee members in some districts.

In Uttar Pradesh, several State Committee members and District level comrades have been arrested. Even sympathisers of the Party, who had played host to Comrades Jyoti Basu, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, and P. Ramamurti, when they toured the state have been detained. Besides, a number of lawyers, who used to defend our comrades and kisans and agricultural labourers have also been detained.

In Rajasthan, the entire State Committee members and active cadres, at the lower levels including those that have been elected at Works Committees in factories have been detained.

In Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Bihar also several of our comrades have been detained.

Apart from these detentions, systematic raids and attacks by goondas, who call themselves 'Youth Congress' workers have been going on in West Bengal. This was started in 1972, but they are continuing even now with the connivance of the police.

To give an instance of the kind of attacks our comrades are facing, the quarter of Comrade Dilip Bose, Assistant Secretary of the CITU Union in Chittaranjan, was set on fire on the night of June 22, 1975. A case under sec. 436 IPC was registered in the Chittaranjan Police Station (GR No. 1238/75).

Finding that the police officer made no efforts at investigation of the crime, Comrade Dilip Bose had complained to the Judicial Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Asansol.

After repeated letters from the Magistrate, calling for reports of investigation, the police officer at last submitted a report stating that no clue was available and hence the case may be closed.

The Magistrate after perusing the case diary, rejected the report, and ordered a proper investigation. Here are the relevant extracts from the Magistrate's order :

"The trial officer has submitted a final report in this case on the ground that there is no further chance of getting any clue about the culprits of this case.

"The case diary contains only the statement of the said Dilip Bose in whose quarter the fire was set.

"As per his statement, the miscreants came by a minibus, one truck and one taxi and they were 40/50 in number. His categorical statement is that local boys were in the said group and he mentioned certain specific names of some of them.

"It is curious that those persons were not arrested by the investigating officer in C/W in this case. Before submitting the final report in this case by the police, it is pertinent to mention that the said Shri Dilip Bose, complained before the court about the inactiveness on the part of the police and alleged that since the culprits belonged to a particular party, the police had been trying to settle this case. On the basis

of that petition, a report was called for from the I.O. and after reminders a report was sent to this court that no evidence could be gathered in this case so far.

"I fail to understand when the number of the minibus used by the culprits and the name of its driver (Sidheswar Bose) came to light, why the bus was not forthwith seized by the police and the said driver was not also arrested..... It is mentioned in the case diary that he could not throw any light relating to detention of this case. There is nothing in the case diary to show that any statement of the said driver was ever recorded by the police. It seems to be contradictory on the part of the investigating officer to mention that when the said driver could not supply any clue, he was asked to keep a sharp watch for the culprits of this case..... I fail to see why this driver was allowed to escape by the I.B. There is good ground for presuming inactiveness on the part of the police to hold a proper investigation in such a serious type of case.

" I totally disagree with the final report submitted in this case by the police and I am unable to accept it. In view of the power vested in me under the Code, I direct that proper and thorough investigation ought to be held again in this case to bring the miscreants to justice. Final report is not accepted."

Copies of the order were directed to be sent to the Superintendent of Police, Burdwan, and Additional Superintendent of Police, Asansol, for necessary action.

We wish only to add that nothing was done in pursuance of the order of the Magistrate.

Such attacks, with the connivance of the police, and raids on villages, are now taking place in the districts of North Malabar. In many places the police are forcibly closing down shops and factories in order to deprive the workers who owe allegiance to the CITU of employment and get them replaced by supporters of the ruling party. Comrade A.K. Gopalan had already sent you the details of such attacks and hence we are not dealing with them in detail.

Meetings Banned Throughout the Country

We would like.to point out that ever since the imposition of Emergency on June 26, 1975, public meetings have been banned throughout the country and when our Party seeks permission to hold meetings - even hall meetings - permission is invariably denied.

The ridiculous length to which this has gone can be seen from the fact that a silent procession of workers to mourn the death of the victims of the Chasnala coal mine disaster was dispersed by the police in West Bengal. Permission to hold a meeting of condolence over the death of Comrade Chou En-lai was refused !

Press Censorship

The way in which the Press has been muzzled by the censors who act most arbitrarily has been well brought out by the judgements of the Maharashtra High Court and certain other High Courts in some cases which were taken to them.

After some time, the Government removed pre-censorship in the case of most of the newspapers and asked them to publish news and comments within the framework of guidelines framed by the Chief Censor. But the guidelines are such that no effective criticism of the Government or its policies can be made.

But in the case of newspapers and journals published by our Party, Centre of Indian Trade Unions, All India Kisan Sabha, etc., exception has been made and all of them are subject to pre-censorship. The censor prevents publication in our newspapers of even news items and comments which have been published in other newspapers. What is published, after pre-censorship in one edition of "*Deshabimani*" from Calicut or Ernakulam, is prohibited from publication by the Censor of the other edition. Items allowed to be published by the Censor in "*People's Democracy*" the English organ of our Central Committee, is disallowed in other newspapers and journals of our Party by the same or other censors.

Exception has been taken to the publication of even Gazette notifications of the Governments of West Bengal and Kerala in our newspapers ! Even news items received through the teleprinter from the "Samachar" News Agency, which are sent out after censorship have to be submitted to the Censor, who prevents publications of many items. Even publication of the news of arrested persons is prevented.

Slanders and absolutely false statements about our Party by the ruling party and the Right Communist Party are freely published; but publication of our rebuttal of these slanders and false allegations is disallowed.

All these show that our Press is completely at the mercy of the whims and fancies and absolutely arbitrary decisions of the censoring officers.

We are prevented from publishing the speeches of Members of Parliament. After all, an Act had been passed, abrogating the earlier Act which made the publication of speeches of Members of Parliament privileged, thus taking away their immunity from prosecution for defamation. Under such conditions prevention of publication of speeches of Members of Parliament can only mean that the Government has imposed an absolute ban on any criticism of its policies and the advocacy of alternate policies.

'National Debate on Amendments to the Constitution'

Our Party has been for long demanding amendments to the Constitution with a view to seeing that legislations aimed at socio-economic changes in the interest of the weaker sections of society became immune to attack. We were also demanding amendments which would strengthen the federal structure and thus help the strengthening of the unity and integrity of the country. For this purpose, our members of Parliament had introduced amending Bills in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Now that the question of amendments of the Constitution has been put on the Agenda by the Government itself, we are very much interested in projecting our view and canvassing

public opinion. It is the right of every Opposition Party and other organisations to project their views.

But although you yourself have been repeatedly talking of the need for a national debate on this question, our Party is prohibited from holding meetings, organizing seminars, and other forms of debate on this question. We cannot even publish our viewpoint in our journals.

A hall meeting by eight Left parties, including ours, to discuss Constitutional amendments was banned in Calcutta. In Kerala the Chief Minister gives permission to address hall meetings on this subject to Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad, but the local authorities virtually ban them by prohibiting the use of mikes.

On the other hand, some lawyers and Jurists' Conferences are being organised by the ruling party, but the discussions in these conferences are also not published, when they are disadvantageous to the Government. Even the speeches of Judges and eminent jurists are not published, only the speeches of the Ministers and the President and other luminaries of the Congress party are published. Nothing concrete is found in those speeches. Some vague suggestions of amendments are being made. Thus what goes on in the country on this question is a monologue and no national debate.

It is significant, that while you talk of the need for a national debate on Constitutional changes, the 38th and 39th Amendments to the Constitution were rushed through in Parliament without any public debate.

Denial of Trade Union Rights and attacks on C.I.T.U.

Ever since the imposition of Internal Emergency, all trade union rights have virtually been abrogated. In particular, the CITU has been made the main target of attack. Many of its functionaries and active trade union leaders have been detained under the MISA in most of the States.

Earlier, membership of the Tripartite Indian Labour Conference, where policy questions and proposed legislations were discussed, was on the basis of verification of membership

by an official machinery. Although the machinery was far from satisfactory, the CITU offered to the Government that its claims may be verified by the official machinery. A preliminary verification showed that it had several times the requisite membership for being qualified for membership for the Tripartite Indian Labour Conference.

But since the AITUC refused to submit to verification, the official verification has not been done for nearly a decade now. However, the CITU was offered the status of an 'observer' in those conferences.

Evidently because the presence of the CITU's representatives in those conferences even as an observer was proving irksome, the Tripartite Indian Labour Conference has now been given a decent burial. The National Council of Trade Unions, with the INTUC, AITUC and HMS was started with official blessings. No one knows what its deliberations were, or what decisions it took a few times it met at Government expense. That body too has become defunct long ago.

And now, a so-called 'Apex Body' is set up at the Central and State levels, to which only the INTUC, AITUC and a section of the HMS are invited. When questioned why the CITU was not invited for consultations, the Central Labour Minister stated that the CITU does not accept Government's policies.

Where is the democracy, if for consultations on policies affecting labour, only those organisations that accept Government 's policies are to be consulted ?

This is not all. Trade Unions had been recognised at the factory level on the basis of verification of membership and a large number of CITU unions had secured recognition even on this basis.

After the Emergency, a circular has gone not to entertain any representation from the CITU or its affiliates. Thus, the CITU is deliberately debarred from the right of collective bargaining even though it may represent the majority of workers even on the basis of the verification procedure, which is highly biased against it.

Apart from the fact that the unions cannot hold any public meetings, even the holding of meetings of Executive Committee has become impossible.

They cannot bring out any leaflets on questions affecting the workers. Publication of the statement is prohibited by the censor in the organs of the CITU and our Party Press.

The CITU had earlier brought to the notice of the Central Government as well as the ILO that hundreds of CITU trade union offices have been forcibly occupied by Congressmen with the active assistance of the police in West Bengal in 1972.

In a tripartite meeting presided over by the State Labour Minister of West Bengal, a resolution was unanimously adopted recommending that such occupied unions should be returned to the CITU union office-bearers. This itself shows the truth of the allegation.

But yet, these unions continue to be under the occupation of those who forcibly occupied them and the resolution was never implemented.

Now similar attempts are being made in other states, particularly in Kerala and Rajasthan.

Taking advantage of this situation, employers have resorted to arbitrary increase of workload, large-scale retrenchment, lay-off and absolute wage-cut. The Central Labour Minister has admitted in Parliament that over 3 lakh workers had been laid off and several thousands have been retrenched. This is an understatement and refers to the position in organized industries only. Besides many units have closed down.

Bonus has been cut or totally denied by legislation to both workers and employees. And now a Bill has been introduced amending the bipartite agreement in the LIC to the disadvantage of the employees. Thus collective bargaining has been reduced to a farce.

But the workers cannot resist these arbitrary attacks on their working conditions like increased workload and wage-cut. Any protest is met with repression by the Government.

On the other hand, during this very period, innumerable concessions have been given to the big capitalists in the name of "incentive to production and investment". The Economic Survey for 1975-76 placed in Parliament in March has stated that despite a steep fall in the prices of agricultural produce there has not been corresponding fall in the prices of industrial goods manufactured out of them. The Central Labour Minister himself publicly admitted in a speech that the big capitalists, even after receiving big concessions, restricted production to keep up prices and maximise their profits. No action is being taken against them, although the Government has clothed itself with enormous powers during Emergency.

Attacks on the Kisan Sabha and Agricultural Labour Organization

The Kisan Sabha and the Agricultural Labour Organization organised and functioned by our Party cadre face the same attacks as the CITU. A large number of our cadre working in these organizations have been detained. Those that remain outside cannot hold meetings or conferences of peasants and agricultural labourers on their problems and mobilise them for relief.

It is proclaimed again and again that those points of the 20-point programme which pertain to relief to peasants and agricultural labourers, such as implementation of ceiling laws, tenancy laws, rent reduction Acts, minimum wages for agricultural labourers, debt relief for agricultural labourers and peasants, distribution of house-sites for the landless and the abolition of bonded labour, are the most important ones of the 20-point programme.

While our Party cannot support the points in the programme relating to liberal concessions to big capitalists and the declaration that there will be no nationalisation of industries, and while we do not entertain any illusion that the measures announced with regard to peasants and agricultural labourers will bring about a fundamental socio-economic change, yet we are of the opinion that if these points

relating to peasants and agricultural labourers are honestly and sincerely implemented, they would give some relief to these sections.

As a matter of fact, it is well-known that our Party wherever it exists in the rural areas, has been organising precisely the peasants and agricultural labourers and fighting for radical land reforms, protection of tenants against evictions, rent reduction, higher wages for agricultural labourers, debt relief, provision of house-sites for landless labourers, distribution of *banjar* (fallow) and forest lands to landless labour, etc. After a protracted agitation, when certain laws were being enacted on some of these questions, our Party fought against loopholes in these legislations. After their enactment, our Party and the Kisan Sabha and the Agricultural Labour Organization were fighting for the implementation of these acts despite their inadequacy and half-hearted nature.

In these struggles our Party cadre as well as thousands of peasants and agricultural labourers organized by us have had to face heavy repression by way of arrests and imprisonment and other kinds of attacks by the police as well as by goonda gangs organised by the landlords. Hundreds of our cadres as well as kisans and agricultural labourers have laid down their lives in these murderous attacks. The burning of 43 Harijan women and children belonging to the agricultural labour class alive after locking them up in their huts in Kilvenmani village in the Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu is well-known. Innumerable cases of such attacks against agricultural labourers have taken place in several States during the last eight months.

The land reform measures enacted by the Congress Government have neither resulted in abolishing landlordism or even breaking land monopoly. In the early fifties, the Mahalnobis Commission had calculated that with a ceiling of 20 standard acres, 63 milion acres of suplus land would be available for distribution. Dandekar and Raj in 1970-71 estimated the figure of surplus land at 42 million acres. In 1972, the Minister of Agriculture made a statement in the

Lok Sabha that 40 million acres of surplus land would be available. In 1975, the estimate of surplus land given by the Government came down to 37 lakh acrrs. The extent of surplus land thus went on diminishing, while the Congress rulers were making big promises for their land reform measures. The situation that has ultimately emerged was revealed in the answer to a recent question in the Rajya Sabha that only 9 lakh acres of land have been declared surplus of which only less than 4.1 lakh acres have been taken possession of, and even out of this only 1.2 lakh acres have been distributed. That is the dismal tale of Congress land reforms. Land monopoly in some form or other continues and the number of the landless is on the increase.

The reasons for this state of affairs have been identified long ago by the Task Force of the Planning Commission as being (1) lack of political will, and (2) numerous ties between landlords and the officials.

That a state of Emergency has been imposed and a declaration of intention to implement these laws, that should have been implemented long ago is being repeated and sought to be propagandised as a great programme, needs no comment.

What is the position now nearly ten months after the declaration following the imposition of the Emergency? A Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture recently came to the conclusion that not much has been done by way of implementation of these Acts.

You yourself admitted as much when, addressing on March 5, 1975, at two-day Conference of Chief Ministers of States, you stated that, "in order to show achievement both common and forest land were being distributed", and added "I do not think that this can come under land reforms and so these figures of distribution are not correct figures."

Regarding tenancy reforms you admitted in the same speech that the position was "unsatisfactory". Also, as regards land records and record of rights, you said that the position was "unsatisfactory".

Why does this position continue as before despite all the

declarations since the Emergency that these reforms would be implemented?

You yourself gave the answer when you stated in the speech that there was "a certain amount of lethargy and hesitation in implementation of land reforms. It was either due to people who had a vested interest in not having land reforms or because of a general lack of appreciation of the vital role of land reforms."

Coming eight months after the imposition of Emergency, during which period all Opposition parties and mass organisations run by them have been put out of action, this statement is a tacit admission that the vested interests you referred to in this speech who are obstructing the implementation of land reforms are in your own party. They are entrenched in key positions in the Government and in the organization. And over and above this, "The general lack of appreciation of the vital role of land reforms" by your party, to which you referred, can only lead to the lack of that political will so very vital to the implementation of land reforms. You also stated that "a major problem that had been brought to my notice was the collusion between the local revenue staff and big farmers".

You asked the Chief Ministers assembled to find a quick "ad hoc" remedy to overcome these formidable difficulties. They deliberated for two days and found no answer. The reasons are obvious.

Mr. S.P. Appu, then Joint Secretary in the Planning Commission, who conducted a survey of implementation of tenancy laws in 1975, found that the reasons for non-implementation were:

"The fact that the tenants are 'weak socially and economically and that they are obliged to the landlords in many ways and in the context of ever increasing pressure on land there is keen competition to lease in the available land' and also the collusion between the revenue officials with the land owners."

Under such conditions of the weak position, socially and

economically of the peasants and agricultural labourers, the formidable obstacles to the implementation of land reforms and other measures beneficial to the peasants and agricultural labourers can be removed to a considerable extent and these measures can be implemented with a degree of success only if the beneficiaries of these measures—the peasants and agricultural labourers—are organised, made conscious of their right and made to assert their rights through their organised strength. This is the only way of making people participate in implementing these measures in a meaningful way. Otherwise the slogan 'people's participation' is devoid of any content.

By detaining our cadre working in the Kisan Sabha and Agricultural Labourers' organization who have been organising them and fighting for their rights for decades, depriving the peasants and agricultural labourers of their democratic rights to organize and assert rights against the landlords and officialdom linked with the vested interests, the Government is preventing just that "people's participation" about whose need it talks day in and day out.

In conclusion we have to state that by arresting and detaining the cadres of our Party, Trade Union, Kisan Sabha, Agricultural Labourers organization, Students and Youth Organization by denying us the right to hold meetings and pre-censoring our newspapers and journals and thus prohibiting us from expressing our views on over so many issues of day-to-day life of the people as well as on the economic and other policies and measures of the Government and preventing us from propagating the need for alternative policies and measures, the legality of our Party and these mass organizations has been completely eroded. They are legal only in name but in fact they are illegal.

Conditions of the Detenus in Jails

The treatment meted out to the detenus today is extremely bad, some of the facilities which political detenus had secured by struggle in pre-independence days have also been withdrawn.

The rules under Preventive Detention Law have been revised

by the State Governments to the detriment of the detenus. Most of them have been placed in "C" class and in certain respects their conditions are worse than those of convicted 'C' class prisoners. Their food is inadequate and they are not even allowed to supplement their food with their own resources or with the help of friends.

Their clothing is inadequate and such thin blankets have been supplied to those detained in the colder regions of North Bengal that they have to be supplemented by additional supplies by their friends from outside. Medical treatment is inadequate as a result of which Comrade Bhairav Bharati, a popular leader of Nagda (Madhya Pradesh), former M.L.A. and a well-known freedom fighter died in Jail.

Interviews have been cut down and even these are restricted to close relatives. They are allowed only after obtaining the prior sanction of the Chief Secretary of the State concerned whereas previously persons could go directly to the jails and have interview with the detenus by applying to the Superintendent of jails.

But even these facilities remain only on paper and in practice cannot be availed of by most detenus. The detenus of Tripura are detained in far off Vellore jail in Tamil Nadu. How many of the relations of these detenus can spend the huge travel and other expenses to go from Tripura to Vellore and spend nearly a fortnight in travelling? Letters from the family members are sent back by Tamil Nadu State Government to the Government of Tripura for censorship and reach the detenus nearly a month after the letters are posted. Other detenus are detained not in the jails nearest to the places of their residences but in far off jails.

Family allowances, which were being given till recently have been completely withdrawn. Some of the detenus like Comrade Jyotirmoy Bosu, M.P., have been given virtually solitary confinement. This was done and revealed to the public in the case of Mrs. Mrinal Goray. The High Court of Maharashtra had characterised her detention as a case of "punitive detention" and not preventive detention.

The Polit Bureau requests that pending the release of these detenus, their conditions of detention should be improved and the rules should be revised so as to make the conditions of detentions tolerable in respect of food, clothing, interviews and letters and that the detenus should be transferred to jails nearest to their places of residence and adequate family allowance should be provided.

In conclusion, we would point out that you have repeatedly stated that the Opposition should learn to behave as a condition for lifting the Emergency. We are unable to understand what this means. The role of the Opposition is very important in parliamentary democracy. The right of dissent is fundamental. Even if Parliament has passed a measure by majority, the minority has the inherent and inviolable right to mobilise public opinion against the measure, if it thinks that the measure is harmful, get the minority converted into a majority and get the measure reversed or suitably changed.

In view of all that we have stated above, we would urge the Government to immediately revoke the Emergency; repeal the MISA; remove pre-censorship; repeal the 39th Amendment to the Constitution; remove all those legislations that do not pertain to socio-economic changes from the 9th Schedule of the Constitution, the protection of such socio-economic laws alone being the purpose of the 9th Schedule; release all leaders and workers of political parties and mass organisations who are under detention; withdraw all pending warrants; and restore civil liberties and democratic and trade union rights existing before the imposition of Emergency.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- P. Ramamurti
Sd/- Jyoti Basu
Sd/- E.M.S. Namboodiripad
Sd/- Harkishan Singh Surjeet
Sd/- A.K. Gopalan

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Polit Bureau Greetings to Vietnam*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its revolutionary greetings to the Workers' Party of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam when they are celebrating the first anniversary of the complete liberation of their Fatherland.

A year ago, on April 30, along with of the people of the rest of the world, the people of India demonstrated their ecstatic joy when the news of the liberation of Saigon reached them, marking the end of the long and glorious struggle for freedom and peace, and today, all the more are we happy, because the first anniversary of the liberation also marks the accomplishment of the reunification of Vietnam.

On this occasion, we, again, pay our homage to Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of the Vietnamese revolution, we respectfully greet the Workers' Party of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam, we bow our heads before the millions who sacrificed their all and themselves to bring freedom and peace to Vietnam and reunification of the Fatherland.

Vietnam's struggle for liberation and re-unification will ever remain a momentous chapter in the history of the world. A small nation of a few million people, ill-equipped and with no worthwhile weapon in their hands to start with, defeating the mightiest imperialist power which spread unprecedented devastation and death in the most diabolically criminal war of recent times, it not only thrilled the freedom

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loving people of the the world, it has become a lesson which will for ever be inscribed in their hearts that a people fired with the urge for freedom, when they are led by the working class and its party, the Communist Party, will win, however vicious, however cruel, however mighty the enemy is.

The devastation created by the U.S. imperialists during their war of aggression and the division of the country for such a long time have created difficult problems for the Vietnamese people—overcoming the ravages of the war, building Socialism in the North and completing the democratic revolution in the South. In the North, the Socialist task is being completed, in the South, democratic tasks are being completed with a simultaneous advance to building of Socialism. The Workers' Party of Vietnam has brilliantly combined all these tasks into one strategic task—that of building Socialism throughout the country. While in the North, Socialist construction will be stepped up, in the South Socialist transformation will be carried out simultaneously with Socialist construction. We wish all success to the Vietnamese people, the Workers' Party and the Government of Vietnam in this historic task they have set for themselves.

The victory in Vietnam was a magnificent victory denoting the continuing advance of the world Socialist system, the international working class movement and the national liberation mevement—three currents of revolution which continue to be on the offensive.

But U.S. imperialism, crisis-ridden within, meeting defeat after defeat outside, continues its efforts not only to attack the national liberation movements but also to prevent the spread of Socialism.

This places an immense task on the people of the newly independent countries to defeat U.S. policies and those in their own countries who pursue policies which promote the interests of U.S. imperialism and indigenous vested interests, defend the freedom they have won and march forward to Socialism.

Vietnam's victory would have been achieved much earlier

and with less sacrifices, but for the disunity in the international Communist movement and the Socialist World despite the enormous material help which the Soviet Union, People's Republic of China and other Socialist countries rendered, not to mention the tremendous moral support from anti-imperialist forces all over the world including those in the USA.

Today, we recall the moving passage on the unity of Communist movement in Ho Chi Minh's Testament and pledge ourselves again to exert all our efforts for the re-unification of the World Communist movement and the Socialist Camp on the basis of Marxism -Leninism and proletarian internationalism, so as to deal the final death blow to imperialism.

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P.B. on Some Recent Developments*

Press Communique issued on May 22, 1976, by P. Sundarayya, General Secretary of CPI(M), on Polit Bureau meeting held in Delhi on May 20-21, 1976

Comrade P. Sundarayya, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist) issued a Press Communique on May 22, 1976, on the recent meeting of the Polit Bureau of the Party.

The Polit Bureau met in Delhi on May 20-21 with Comrade Jyoti Basu in the Chair.

National Economy

Reviewing briefly the economic situation in the country, the Polit Bureau noted the reality that the wholesale price index has once again started rising, whatever fall in prices has taken place has been mainly at the cost of the cultivators and other sections of small producers. The entire peasantry is facing the problem of crashing prices of their product. In the industrial sector, too, there has been admittedly large-scale lay-off, retrenchment, closures, etc. This has resulted in a fall in the purchasing power of the working people in the industrial as well as the agricultural sector.

The CPI(M) along with other Left and democratic parties has consistently demanded changes in government policies so that the people at large are not forced to bear the double burden of high prices of the articles of consumption and the fall in prices of the products of the agriculturists and the small industrialists. The demand for such reversal of policies has been endorsed by sections within the ruling party itself. But the activities of landlords, wholesalers, monopolists

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, May 30, 1976.

and other anti-social elements who are keeping the prices high to garner huge profits for themselves, have been continuing. The latest concessions have been given to Big Business at the very time when fresh difficulties are being created for the working class by way of further extending the compulsory deposit scheme and the proposal to freeze the Rs. 1,000 crores contributed by the working class and employees.

The Polit Bureau expressed its opinion against compulsory sterilisation. The draft Constitution (Fortysecond) Amendment Bill which proposes to include among others the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act in the Ninth Schedule was opposed.

This step means that even after the Emergency is lifted Government control over the Press and democratic opinion will stay.

Constitution Amendments

The Swaran Singh Committee appointed by the Congress President has made several proposals to amend the Constitution in a direction in which the democratic features of the Constitution will be adversely affected. The Polit Bureau made a detailed study of the recommendation of the Swaran Singh Committee report and formulated the proposals that the CPI(M) wants to place before the people as its contribution to the national debate on Constitutional reforms. A separate document spelling out the Party's objections to the Swaran Singh Committee's Report and its own views on Constitutional amendments was adopted by the Polit Bureau.

India-China

Reviewing the recent development in India's relations with the neighbouring countries, the Polit Bureau welcomed the decision to send an ambassador to China. This, as is well-known, was the demand made by the Party several years ago for which it was denounced not only by the Congress party but also by most of the Opposition parties, above all by the Right Communist Party. Now that the Government and those

Opposition parties which had taken a violently anti-China stand have made a shift in their stand, the Polit Bureau hopes that further measures will be taken to bring India-China relations back to complete normalcy and to resolve the outstanding problems of dispute between the two countries, even while strengthening Indo-Soviet relations.

India-Pakistan

Equally important is the agreement arrived at between India and Pakistan which has resolved many issues of dispute pending between the two countries. In relation to Kashmir, a dispute formally exists in the view of Pakistan. This, too, should not be difficult of solution since the abnormal internal situation in Kashmir has been changed with the settlement between the Central Government and Sheikh Abdullah. The Polit Bureau hopes that very effort will be made to further improve the relations between India and Pakistan and to put the Kashmir problem out of the agenda.

The Polit Bureau welcomed the improvement of Indo-Sri Lanka and Indo-Nepal relations.

Madame Binh's Visit

The current visit of the foreign minister of South Vietnam, Madame Binh, is of great significance to India, Vietnam and all the countries of the South and South East Asian regions. It is taking place on the eve of the joyful reunification of North and South Vietnam, artificially separated under American imperialism's orders but reunited thanks to the heroism and self-sacrifice of the Vietnamese people, supplemented by the material assistance of the Socialist world and the moral support of the democratic people in every part of the world. India having made its own humble contribution to this consummation, Madame Binh's visit should have been used as a golden opportunity for establishing personal contacts between the leadership of the Vietnamese people and as big a section of the Indian people as could be arranged within the time at her disposal. Tens of thousands of people would

have gathered in any part of India if the Government had shown the imagination to request her to see and address the Indian people.

The Polit Bureau called upon all its units to organise solidarity demonstrations in co-operation with other democratic parties and organisations at the occasion of unification of Vietnam.

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CPI(M) on Constitutional Changes*

In the following pages are set out the views of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) about changes in the Indian Constitution.

Since this document was finalised, the final report of the Swaran Singh Committee, appointed by the Congress party to suggest constitutional changes, has appeared in the Press.

Apart from making some minor changes in the interim report in regard to the jurisdiction of High Courts, the final report has suggested an amendment to the Preamble of the Constitution to add "Socialism" and "Secularism" to the character of the Indian Republic.

For long the Congress party has been talking about the "Socialist pattern", "Democratic Socialism", etc.,while all the time what its Government has been doing is to build capitalism in the country and strengthen the monopolists, Indian and foreign, and the landed vested interests.

The amendment to the Preamble proposed now is nothing but a continuation of this demagogy.

In an epoch of triumphantly advancing Socialism and dying capitalism, when ideas of Socialism have gripped the minds of vast masses in all continents, when their striving

*Published as a booklet in June 1976. Refer Document under Item No. 36 of this Volume published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', of January 11, 1976 entitled 'CPI(M) and Constitutional Amendment'; this Document was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' after going through the regular process of censor imposed under National Emergency since June 26, 1975.

to build a Socialist future for themselves is becoming more and more evident, the ruling classes of various countries have begun to wear the labels of "National Socialism", "Democratic Socialism", "Humanitarian Socialism" and so on. History is replete with instances of ruling classes adopting this tactic to cover up their reactionary exploiting policies. The Swaran Singh Committtee's proposed amendment falls in the same category. Wearing of "Socialist" labels in no way changes the reality of capitalism being built in the country with the concomitant strengthening of all the reactionary vested interests.

Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Constitutional Changes

During the last few months, the leaders of the ruling party have been talking of the urgent need for amending the Constitution. They are now in a hurry to carry out their intended amendments by a Parliament whose mandate has expired and which continues to exist only by declaring a state of Emergency and using the Emergency powers to perpetuate itself.

The background and context in which these attempts to amend the Constitution are being made must be clearly seen. The Government of India's policies pursued since independence, of developing capitalism in collaboration with foreign monopolists and in compromise with landlords, have landed the country in the throes of a very deep crisis. The conditions of the people have worsened. Unemployment, both in the urban and rural areas, has been galloping. Whatever industrial capacity has been built up cannot be fully utilised because of the lack of purchasing power of the people. A severe recession has gripped the industries, leading to mass retrenchments and lay-offs of lakhs of workers. In the countryside, too, the agricultural labourers and common peasants face tremendous hardships due to low wages, indebtedness, high cost of all goods needed for their personal consumption as well as for carrying on their agricultural operations.

These policies, on the other hand, have led to a colossal growth of monopolists and the amassing of wealth by a small upper stratum in the countryside.

In this situation the Government of India is bent upon pursuing the same policies and in order to solve the crisis, it has heaped more burdens on the people; denial of bonus, impoundig of D.A.; refusal to entertain any wage claim, increasing workloads—these are the order of the day. At the same time the Government is giving concession after concession to the big capitalists. It relies on more and more massive aid from the imperialist countries.

These policies far from solving the problems of the people will intensify their miseries, and are bound to lead to resistance from the masses.

The proposals for amendments to the Constitution come at a time when democratic and trade union rights cannot be exercised. Parliament itself is in no position to check the Executive when even the privilege in regard to publication of speeches inside Parliament made by its members has been abrogated—in fact, the proposals are being made at a time when any debate on them in the country is impossible. The views of the ruling party and its supporters alone have reached the people, having been circulated through all the available media.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) in its Programme characterised the present Indian State as "the organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, led by the big bourgeoisie, who are increasingly collaborating with foreign finance capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development". It stated that this class character esentially determines the role and functions of the State in the life of the country.

The Constitution that was framed after Independence and the three organs of the State—the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary—reflected this character of the State.

However, the Indian State having come into existence after a prolonged struggle against British rule, in the course of

which the national movement had raised the demands for a parliamentary system based on adult franchise, a federal republic and fundamental freedoms, the Constitution embodied some Fundamental Rights in Chapter Three. Article 13 of the Constitution provided that no legislation or action by the Executive which infringes these Fundamental Rights is valid and Article 32 gave the right to the citizen to move the Supreme Court to issue writs in cases of any such violation.

These rights included equality before the law, freedom of speech and expression, right to assemble and to form associations or unions, freedom of movement, protection to life and liberty. However, the Constitution hedged these rights with many qualifications, which authorised the abrogation of these rights or rendering them meaningless for the common people. For example, it authorised the provision for preventive detention without trial, against which the Congress had fought during British rule describing it as a lawless law. But since independence the Preventive Detention Act has been a permanent feature of the Statute Book.

The one equality in relation to the means of production without which all these rights can only remain formal—it did not concede. On the other hand, it deliberately guaranteed the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property, without any distinction between small property-owners on the one hand and big landlords, big capitalists and foreign monopolists on the other. Article 31 provided that even if a property had to be acquired for a public purpose, it could be done only by paying due compensation. At the same time many vital rights of the common people such as the right to work or receive unemployment relief, education, medical help, old-age pension, equal wage for men and women, etc., were excluded from the Fundamental Rights. As a sop to popular sentiment, it included them in Chapter IV under the heading "Directive Principles of State Policy"—principles against the non-observance of which people have no Constitutional remedy.

All these clearly show that the Constitution was framed for the purpose of developing a capitalist system of economy,

in which the main mass of the people could only fulfil th role of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Our Party Programme also underlined the fact that "al though the State structure is supposed to be a federal on practically all power is concentrated in the Central Govern ment—the constituent States enjoy very limited power and opportunities."

The Party, therefore, held that a real democratic life for the masses of India cannot be ensured except under a Constitution which directly enshrines their rule, which is genuinely loyal to the principle of rule by the people, for the people and of the people. Such a rule cannot be ensured without an end to the economic and political domination of the bourgeois-landlord classes. Only a People's Democratic Government can ensure real democracy for the people.

While the Programme enjoined on us to assiduosly work for this objective, it held that although a form of class rule of the bourgeoisie, India's present parliamentary system embodies an advance for the people. It offers certain opportunities to them to defend their interests, intervene in the affairs of the State to a certain extent and mobilise them to carry forward the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

The Programme sharply underlined the fact that "the threat to parliamentary democracy comes from the exploiting classes.....when the people use parliamentary institutions for advancing their cause.....these classes do not hesitate to trample underfoot parliamentary democracy". It therefore postulated that "it is of utmost importance that parliamentary and democratic institutions are defended against such threats".

In line with this understanding, our Party has been making valid criticism of some of the provisions of the Constitution which provide ample weapons to suppress even the limited democratic rights under the Constitution. Our Party MPs in both Houses of Parliament have introduced comprehensive Bills to amend the Constitution, in the interest of the people.

Events during the last 26 years have shown the correctness of the Party's stand and the misuse of the provisions criticised by the Party.

The Government used these provisions to continously suppress the rising mass movements against the increasing burdens on the people resulting from its basic policies. It exploited Presidential powers to bring down United Front Governments of Left and democratic parties and other non-Congress Governments.

The conditions at present prevailing in the country in regard to the Fundamental Rights given by the Constitution—freedom of assembly, speech, organization, etc.—are too well-known to be gone into in detail here. Government's own lawyers made the claim before the Supreme Court that under the Emergency, citizens cannot claim any right, including the right to life.

All these years, the Government turned a deaf ear to the persistent demand of our Party and of many other Left parties for substantial amendments to the Constitution, which would strengthen and expand the democratic rights of the common people and enlarge the powers of the States with a view to strengthening the unity and integrity of the country.

But suddenly, during the last few months, a propaganda barrage has been let loose by the Government and the ruling party on the need for Constitutional changes. A number of Government-sponsored conferences have been held with high-powered publicity, and vague talk of the need to change the Constitution "to serve as an instrument of social change" has been indulged in.

The menacing context in which this propaganda was started clearly showed the purpose of the amendments. To mislead the people, catchy slogans like Supremacy of Parliament, Defence of weaker sections, Directive Principles of the Constitution, Defending the Harijans and Tribals, Protecting the Have-nots against the Haves, Legal and Judicial Reforms, Unity of the Country, etc., have been raised.

What is sought to be achieved by this is to find scapegoats

for the Government's own failure on the economic front and the increasing miseries of the common people, for strengthening the monopolists and other vested interests and for its failure to remove social oppression.

And now the proposals of the Swaran Singh Committee have come out, spelling out the concrete amendments they propose. It is therefore possible and necessary to analyse their implications, realise what the Government's real intentions are and why the Government is in haste to make these amendments.

It is stated that the judiciary has stood as the biggest stumbling block in carrying out socio-economic reforms, particularly land reforms. This claim that judicial decisions and behaviour ALONE have been responsible for postponement and delay in implementing social legislation is untrue. It is just a trick to establish an alibi for GOVERNMENT's failture in this regard.

It is true that the courts often took a conservative view on questions concerning property rights and came in defence of landlords and other vested interests.

But after the last amendment of the Constitution this plea has no legs to stand on. This amendment (of Article 31b) empowered Parliament to place any enactment or regulation in the IX Schedule of the Constitution by a Constitutional amendment, and if so placed that Act or Regulation could not be questioned in a court. But the Government did not place many Land Reforms Acts in the IX Schedule for long—despite persistent demand by the Kisan Sabha and democratic opinion.

Moreover, it is a fact that the Government deliberately left loopholes in these Acts so that the landlords could use them to defeat the purpose of the legislation and as a result very little surplus land is available for distribution under these Acts.

It is now argued that while the validity of the legislation is not questioned in courts, writ petitions are filed in courts by landlords against particular steps taken by the officers

for implementing the Acts and this causes inordinate delay. But it is also a fact that the Government never opposed the grant of stay in these cases nor took steps to expedite their disposal.

That land reforms could not be implemented during the last two decades, despite all these facilities available to the Government, indisputably proves that the bourgeois-landlord Government had no intention of implementing even these limited land reforms, let alone the question of total abolition of landlordism and implementing the slogan "land to the tiller", on the other hand, the Central Government toppled Left and democratic State Governments which sought to implement Land Reforms Acts.

Besides, it cannot be said that progress in fighting untouchability, improving the lot of the tribals, agricultural workers, etc., has been hampered by any judicial decision. It is the policy of repression on the working class, agricultural labourers, poor peasants and middle classes in the interest of the capitalists and landlords that keeps them in indescribable poverty and squalor.

(1) Power To Amend The Constitution

Article 368 empowers Parliament to amend the Constitution by passing a Bill in either House of Parliament by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of that House present and voting.

The Supreme Court had held in the Golaknath case that whatever might have happened in the past, Parliament has no power in future to make amendments which would abridge or abrogate the Fundamental Rights guaranteed in the Constitution. That judgement was in relation to case of defence of property rights, and naturally it aroused the anger of all progressive people. Parliament passed an amendment to this Article 368 of the Constitution to upset the decision in the Golaknath case.

That amendment added two clauses to Article 368. The

first clause which was numbered 368 (1) stated—"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Constitution, Parliament may, in exercise of its constituent power amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of this Constitution in accordance with the procedure laid down in this Article." (The procedure was laid down in the initial Article 368 and it was renumbered as 368 (2).

The other clause which was numbered Article 368 (3) stated : "Nothing in Article 13 shall apply to any amendment made under the Article".

It may be recalled that Article 13 guarantees the Fundamental Rights embodied in Chapter III.

By these two new sub-clauses the Government sought power to amend any Article of the Constitution including those relating to Fundamental Rights.

When this amendment was again challenged in what is known as the Keshavanand Bharati case, the Supreme Court, while upholding the amendment, placed a limit to the powers of amendment. It said that no amendment should have the effect of altering the basic features of the Constitution. While it did not clearly specify the basic features, it, however, categorically stated that the right to property is NOT a basic feature.

If, as the Government claims, the earlier Golaknath case judgement which barred amendment leading to abridgement or abrogation of the right to property, had created the biggest obstacle for the plans of socio-economic measures, that hurdle was removed in April 1973 by the judgement in the Keshvanand Bharati case. It could have straightaway come forward with an amendment confining the right to property to small property-owners and abrogating it to landlords and monopolists. The Congress party had more than two-thirds majority in both the Houses and hence nothing stood in the way except its own solicitude for these vested interests.

Instead of bringing forward such an amendment regarding right to property, the Swaran Singh Committee proposes that the right of Parliament to amend the Constitution must be untrammelled. For this purpose, it recommends the following :

"To place the matter beyond doubt, a new clause may be inserted in Article 368 to the effect that any amendment to the Constitution shall not be called in question in any court on any ground. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country and any amendment thereof, as provided in Article 368, is as much a fundamental law as is the rest of the Constitution."

This specifically debars any court including the Supreme Court from entertaining any petition on the validity of Constitutional amendments and concentrates all powers in the Legislature and the Executive. This is an open demand for the acceptance of the Executive's right to undermine, subvert and destroy all the fundamental freedoms of the people and even abrogate the Constitution under the cover of supremacy of Parliament.

This is no figment of imagination or even an exaggeration. That this is the meaning of the proposal was made clear during the hearing of the Keshavanand Bharati case by the Government's advocates while claiming untrammelled power for Parliament to amend the Constitution.

Two of the Judges in their joint judgement had noted :

"At one stage, counsel for the Union and the States had grudgingly conceded that the power conferred under Article 368 cannot be used to abrogate the Constitution, but later under pressure of questioning by some of us they changed their position and said that by "abrogation" they meant repeal of the Constitution as a whole. When they were asked as to what they meant by saying that power conferred under Article 368 cannot be used to repeal the Constitution, all they said was that while amending the Constitution, at least one clause in the Constitution must be retained, though every other clause, or part of the Constitution including the preamble can be deleted and some other provisions substituted. Their submission, in short, was that so long as the expression "Constitution of India" was retained every other Article or part of it can be "replaced".

They further pointed out :

"According to the Union and States that power (i.e. of amending the Constitution), inter-alia, includes the power to :

1. Destroy the sovereignty of this country and make this country the satellite of any other country;
2. Substitute the democratic form of Government by monarchical or authoritarian form of Government;
3. Break up the unity of this country and form various independent States;
4. Destroy the secular character of this country and substitute the same by a theocratic form of Government;
5. Abrogate completely the various rights conferred on the citizens as well as on the minorities;
6. Revoke the mandate given to the State to build a Welfare State;
7. Extend the life of the two Houses of Parliament indefinitely; and
8. Amend the amending power in such a way as to make the Constitution legally or at any rate practically unamendable.

Another Judge commented : ".....nor can Article 368 (power to amend the Constitution) be so construed as to embody the death-wish of the Constitution or provide for what might perhaps be called its lawful harakiri".

It is this contention of the Government at the time of the hearing of that case that the Swaran Singh Committee wants to sanctify by its proposed additional clarificatory clause.

Not only should this dangerous proposal be rejected but the amendments made on Article 368, and embodied in 368 (1) and 368 (3) should be repealed and Article 368 restored to its original position. Further, it should be made clear that Article 13 applies not only to ordinary legislation but also to Constitutional amendments.

(2) Precedence Of Directive Principles Over Fundamental Rights

The Swaran Singh Committee says :

"Article 31 (c) provides that no law giving effect to the

Directive Principles specified in clause (b) or clause (c) of Article 39 (distribution of the control and ownership of the material resources of the community in a way to best subserve the common good and the operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to common detriment) shall be deemed to be void on the ground that it contravenes Articles 14,19 or 31. It is proposed that the scope of the present Article 31 (c) should be widened so as to cover legislation in respect of all or any of the Directive Principles enumerated in Part IV of the Constitution and that legislation shall not be called in question on the ground of infringement of any of the Fundamental Rights contained in Part III. Provision, however, should be made to the effect that no such law shall affect the safeguards or rights conferred on the minorities or the Scheduled Castes."

The plea that such a provision is necessary in order to make the Directive Principles take precedence over Fundamental Rights is a spurious one.

The right to property contained in Part III comes into contradiction with the Directive Principles contained in Article 39(b) and 39(c) and comes in the way of implementing other objectives. Instead of attacking this right to property, the Swaran Singh Committee seeks to attack all Fundamental Rights. Is it because of any such contradiction that the Directive Principles such as right to work, to education and public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, provision for living wage, for free and compulsory education for children, for raising the nutrition and standard of living of the people, equal pay for equal work for men and women, prevention of exploitation of children and youth, etc., could not be implemented all these years?

Why should fear be expressed that legislation purporting to implement the Directive Principles will come into conflict with the people's freedom of speech, of assembly and organization—unless there is a design to attack these rights

under cover of precedence of Directive Principles over Fundamental Rights?

One has to ask the question how serious the Government has been in implementing the Directive Principles. Article 39 stated : "The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing—

(a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have an adequate means of livelihood;

(b) that the ownership and control of the material resources are so distributed as best to subserve the common good;

(c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment;

(d) that there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women."

Every one of these directives has been a dead letter. Just the opposite has taken place. Not only has the standard of living for the common people been continuously lowered; but unemployment has been galloping. This means that far from adequate means of livelihood being secured for citizens, the number of people without any means of livelihood has been increasing by leaps and bounds.

Every Five-Year Plan has been solemnly declaring that one of its chief aims and objects is to substantially lessen the disparities in income and wealth. But the result of the implementation of all Plans has been the colossal growth of the monopolists and concentration of land in the hands of a small upper stratum in the countryside. Millions of tenants and poor peasants have lost their land by means of evictions and otherwise. The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act has been a dead letter. Increasing concessions have been continually given to the monopolists and other vested interests in the the name of "incentive for investment and production".

No steps were taken to implement the Directive Principle of equal pay for equal work for both men and women despite

repeated demands and movements by the trade unions and workers.

Other directives embodied in the other articles of the chapter like the right to work, to education, to medical aid, fair wage, etc., fared no better.

If it were really keen on implementation of the Directive Principles, it should agree to include the right to work and unemployment relief, old-age pension and sickness assistance, education and medical care as justiciable Fundamental Rights in Chapter III. Otherwise, these Directive Principles will continue to remain sham demagogic declarations as they have been all these 25 years.

The reality is that the ruling party wants somehow or other to deny the Fundamental Rights of the people and seeks every opportunity and resorts to every device to see that they are made unenforceable.

Article 226

It has been noted that under Article 32 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court can be directly approached by a citizen if he feels aggrieved that any action by the Government is in violation of any of the Fundamental Rights mentioned in Chapter III.

Article 226 of the Constitution confers the same power to the High Courts to issue writs to any person, authority or appropriate Government within its jurisdiction in cases of violation of the Fundamental Rights. In addition to this the High Courts have been conferred with power to issue writ orders or any other direction "for any other purpose", and not merely for the enforcement of Fundamental Rights.

The Swaran Singh Committee proposes that the power to issue writs "for any other purpose" under this Article should be abolished altogether. What are its implications ?

Under this provision, citizens, including peasants, workers and employees, can approach the High Court against highhanded action without the authority of law of officials and other authorities and also against powerful private

individuals. For example, if the authorities acquired the land of poor peasants without the procedure laid down in the Land Acquisition Act or without adequate compensation, they could approach the High Court.

It is true that Big Business and other vested interests take advantage of these powers. But on that account common people cannot be deprived of this facility.

The acceptance and implementation of this proposal of the Swaran Singh Committee will lead to this avenue being completely closed to the citizens, and absolute power to the Executive and powerful vested interests to do what they like, law or no law.

Powers of the Supreme Court to go into the Constitutional Validity of Laws

If the proposal of the Swaran Singh Committee to amend Article 368 with a view to barring the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to review the Constitutional validity of amendments to the Constitution is accepted, all that is left to the court is to see whether ordinary legislation passed by Parliament and Assemblies is consistent with all the unconstitutional amendments of the Constitution that Parliament may adopt and not to go by the principles proclaimed by the Constitution.

Further, the Committee seeks to curtail even this limited power of the courts. It proposes that for declaring a law invalid even within this limited framework there should be a two-third majority in a bench of seven Judges of the Supreme Court. The meaning is plain and simple. Even if a majority holds a legislation to be invalid, the minority view will prevail and the law will be valid.

Further, the High Courts are to be deprived of the power to go into the question of validity of any legislation.

These proposals should be rejected. The principle of majority view prevailing over the minority view must continue. The existing powers of the High Courts in this regard also must continue.

Barring Jurisdiction of Courts on Any Matter Concerning Implementation of Land Reforms, Revenue Collections and Foodgrains Procurement

The Swaran Singh Committee proposes that any matter concerning revenue collections, or any act relating to implementation of land reforms, procurement of foodgrains, etc., should be excluded from the purview of courts. This is another proposal to clothe the Executive with absolute powers.

One of the reasons advanced, namely inordinate delays because of petitions pending in courts regarding acts done in implementation of land reforms, has been dealt with earlier, and it has been shown that most of these cases are there because of connivance of the Government with the landlords.

It is also argued that these matters affect only the rich people who take advantage of the facility to go to court. In reality there is a lot of arbitrariness and partiality to distribution of whatever surplus land is available. Land is distributed to favourites of the ruling party and deserving landless labourers are denied land. There is also a lot of arbitrariness on questions of revenue orders for collections against the lower and middle sections of the peasantry, and the landlords and richer sections are able to make up with the officials. Similarly, procurement officials in collusion with the landlords and other vested interests often harass and procure the bulk of the quota of foodgrains to be procured, from the lower and middle sections of the peasantry. To accept this proposal is to give free rein to the bureaucracy and leave no legal opening to the lower sections against injustice of the Executive.

We are aware that the vested interests take advantage of this provision. But, on that account, poorer sections cannot be denied this avenue.

As for the question of delay caused by the landlords in going to courts, it can be obviated to a considerable extent by providing for standing orders to Government Counsels that in case of all such petitions filed by landlords, grant of stay must be opposed and that all such cases must be disposed of within a period of two months.

From all this it is clear that the plea of social legislation in the interest of the people put forward by the Swaran Singh Committee for making these proposals for curtailing the powers of the Judiciary has no real basis. Had it been so, it would not have made recommendations which concentrate their attack on the Fundamental Rights of the people, and on preventing them from seeking whatever redress may be available from courts today. It could have made proposals which concentrate their attack only on the right to property, restricting it in the manner stated earlier. It could have made other proposals which, if implemented, would lead to the removal of restrictions on the exercise of Fundamental Rights like the freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly, freedom to form associations and unions, etc. It could have made recommendations to expand the Fundamental freedoms by including in the guaranteed Fundamental Rights such rights as the right to work, to receive assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, to receive free education, free medical aid, etc.

It has clearly been stated at the beginning that the present Indian State is the organ of the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords led by the big bourgeoisie and hence the three organs of the State, namely, the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, cannot but reflect this class character.

The most glaring examples are the Supreme Court judgments in the bank nationalisation and Princes' Privy Purse abolition cases.

Even on issue of personal liberty, it has very often dittoed the Executive. The recent judgement of the Supreme Court has upheld the Executive's contention that during Emergency a detenu under MISA cannot approach the court on any ground, even on grounds of mala fide or even if an official has acted out of motives of private vengeance.

This sociological phenomenon cannot be wished away under the existing order. Nevertheless, as has already been noted, on several occasions, the Judiciary has protected citizens

from arbitrary actions of the Executive and even Big Business and given them relief.

But the issue today is not that of an independent Judiciary acting as the unfailing guardian of the citizens' Fundamental Rights, life and liberty, and their welfare. The issue today is one of barring, to the extent possible, the diabolical conspiracy to rapidly move towards the establishment of one-party rule with an authoritarian Executive clothed with absolute, unlimited powers. The issue is how far the separation of powers between the three organs, and the existing powers of the Judiciary, in the present context, help the people in the fight against Executive tyranny. The Judiciary, even while operating within this system, can help to some extent in upholding the liberties of the citizens and defending their legitimate interests against Executive onslaughts. The ruling party, however, has reached a stage where it is afraid to take the risk in preserving the existing power of the Judiciary. Hence the existing powers of the Judiciary must be retained.

Removal of Jurisdiction of Courts under Article 311 and Service Tribunals

Article 311(2) provides that a Government servant cannot be dismissed, removed from service or demoted except after an enquiry on the basis of charges furnished to him and giving reasonable opportunity of being heard in defence in respect of these charges. After that enquiry, he must be given an opportunity to make representation on any penalty proposed and the penalty proposed must be only on the basis of the evidence adduced during the enquiry.

Under the bureaucratic mode of functioning, there is extreme corruption, favouritism, high-handedness, vindictiveness and political partisanship in the matter of disciplinary actions against Government employees. In these circumstances, this provision of the Constitution affords some protection to the employees. Even this protection is hedged in by provisions (b) and (c) of the Article. The employees can go to court in case of infringement of this provision.

The Swaran Singh Committee wants to take away the jurisdiction of courts in this case also and wants to have what it calls "Administrative Tribunals".

This is a dangerous proposal. The danger is there of these tribunals being staffed with Government favourites and stormtroopers of the ruling party and used as a means to terroise Government servants to get all partisan and unholy tasks done.

Election Disputes and Qualification of Members

The Swaran Singh Committee proposes to bar the jurisdiction of courts in regard to election disputes and qualifications of membership of Parliament or State legislatures and transfer them to Parliament or a Committee of Parliament. Experience during the last 25 years has clearly shown that even those who lay down the election law, including the Prime Minister, violate it to somehow win the election.

To distort the verdict of the people by whatever means is one of the biggest crimes and it is the responsibility of the Constitution to provide that elections are free and fair and free from the corrupting influence of money, official pressure, etc.

Election disputes are not ordinary disputes and the interests of political parties are involved in them. To transfer these disputes to Parliament or a Committee of Parliament means transferring to a body dominated by the ruling party. Its verdict can easily be imagined. The election of the ruling party's candidates will always be upheld, whatever and however grave crimes against the election laws they may have committed, and the verdict will be biased against the Opposition parties' candidates.

For long election disputes were disposed of by Parliament in Great Britain and because of this partisan character of the verdicts there was a hue and cry and they have been transferred to courts there.

This proposal of the Committee means transferring the election disputes to one of the parties to the dispute. It only shows the fear of the ruling party to face a tribunal which is not subservient to it.

Centre-State Relations

The Swaran Singh Committee also proposes the following:

1. Agriculture and Education should be placed in the Concurrent List, instead of the State List as at present. That means that on these subjects both the Centre and States can legislate and pass regulations, and in case of conflict, the Centre's legislations and regulations will prevail. This is done under the plea of the necessity to evolve all-India policies on these important subjects.

2. Provision in the Constitution for power to the Central Government to deploy Central police or other similar forces under its own superintendence and control in any State. This is proposed under the plea of helping States to deal with grave problems of law and order.

While during the last two decades there has been a growing demand for greater powers to the States so as to make States' autonomy real, there have been persistent efforts to erode even the limited powers of the States and reduce the democratic functioning in the States. The right of the people to manage their affairs even within the limited sphere allotted in the State List of the Constitution has been sought to be reduced to a farce. For this purpose all manner of pressures have been used, sometimes formally through the power of the Centre, sometimes indirectly by denying finances and other resources, etc., to non-Congress Governments and by pressure on the Chief Ministers of the Congress party through the organization and leadership. During the last ten years, the Centre's tentacles have further spread to the States in the sphere of law and order, which is a State subject, through the creation of the Central Reserve Police, Border Security Force, Industrial Security Force, etc. The process is to fast reduce the States to the status of subordinate departments of the Centre through the Central Home Ministry. The Emergency has immensely accelerated the process and the actions

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While during the last two decades there has been a growing demand for greater powers to the States so as to make States' autonomy real, there have been persistent efforts to erode even the limited powers of the States and reduce the democratic functioning in the States. The right of the people to manage their affairs even within the limited sphere allotted in the State List of the Constitution has been sought to be reduced to a farce. For this purpose all manner of pressures have been used, sometimes formally through the power of the Centre, sometimes indirectly by denying finances and other resources, etc., to non-Congress Governments and by pressure on the Chief Ministers of the Congress party through the organization and leadership. During the last ten years, the Centre's tentacles have further spread to the States in the sphere of law and order, which is a State subject, through the creation of the Central Reserve Police, Border Security Force, Industrial Security Force, etc. The process is to fast reduce the States to the status of subordinate departments of the Centre through the Central Home Ministry. The Emergency has immensely accelerated the process and the actions

taken in the last ten months have made it clear beyond doubt that the State Ministries and Legislatures face the perpetual threat of being removed by hook or crook, if they do not fall in line.

And now the Swaran Singh Committee demands Constitutional power to over-run the States with the armed police and para-military forces of the Centre without the consent of the duly elected Government—even in opposition to it—and to overthrow it if it does not fall in line with the Centre's policies or gives protection to people's movement. This is one act which can put an end to whatever remains of States' autonomy and the federal structure and change India into a unitary State.

What is recommended, therefore, is a concerted attack on the people, on whatever basic Fundamental Rights of the people that have been placed in the Constitution with all their restrictions. It is an attack on every democratic feature, on whatever autonomy for the States that exist in the Constitution. It is intended to place the people and their rights at the mercy of the Executive.

The leaders of the ruling party toyed with the idea of suppressing the parliamentary form and instituting a presidential dictatorship. Caught red-handed in the act and with the fury the proposal raised in all sections in the country, they repudiated any such intention. But yet they pursue the same basic aim of undermining the basic rights of the people, and make the Constitution a pliant instrument of one-party dictatorship, of securing monopoly of power for itself, of securing uninhibited power for the executive—all, of course, of rule in the interests of the bourgeois-landlord classes.

The Swaran Singh Committee's report is a device towards this end. The entire design is (1) to attack the Fundamental Rights of the people, (2) to destroy the powers of the Judiciary in its essentials, (3) to over-run the powers of the States and reduce States' autonomy and democracy to a farce, (4) to change the procedures, methods and reduce the importance of Parliament itself, and (5) through all these

get all power concentrated in the hands of the ruling Congress and exercise it through a caucus.

For this purpose the slogan of supremacy of Parliament is raised. As against this, it must be asserted that there is such a thing as sovereignty of the people and that is the highest and supreme power in the land. No organ of the State can be allowed to subvert it.

By their slogan of supremacy of Parliament, the leaders of the ruling party mean the supremacy of the Executive over the people, over their basic Fundamental Rights—the subordination of people's sovereignty to the dictates of the Executive. This must be rejected outright.

Their claim that they have been trying to bring about socio-economic transformations in the interest of the underdog and these proposals are in furtherance of these efforts is not borne out by facts. Non-implementation of Land Reforms Acts of the last two decades which were put beyond the purview of courts by including them in the IX Schedule, the colossal growth of monopolies with the active assistance of the Government, the continuing and ever-increasing concessions to the monopolists, the invitation to the multinationals with the offer of cheap labour and the promise of keeping the workers "disciplined" on the one hand, and the ever-increasing army of unemployed and people below the poverty line, the impoverishment of the masses, the Bonus Act, the impounding of D.A. and wages, all belie the tall claims of the ruling party.

The implementation of these proposals of the Swaran Singh Committee spells grave danger to whatever democratic rights exist under the Constitution. People can be denied even the right to protest against exploitation, oppression and struggle for a better life. The working class, peasantry, agricultural labourers, middle class employees, aritsans, unemployed youth, professionals, teachers, small industrialists, academicians and all who value democracy willl be the worst sufferers. These proposals should, therefore, be rejected.

The ruling party, in this period of Emergency, has got the

Parliament, the normal term of which was about to expire, t
enact obnoxious amendments to the Constitution and all fun
damental freedoms and democratic rights of the people canno
be practically exercised. The functioning of Parliament itsel
has been severely hamstrung by changing rules and prevent
ing publication of speeches of members. It has already passe
an amendment to the Constitution taking the disputes in re
gard to the election of the President, Vice-President. Speaker
and Prime Minister out of the purview of the Judiciary. It ha
barred legitimate criticism of these dignitaries under the Pres
Objectionable Matters Act. Through all these measures these
dignitaries have been elevated and they have been given im
munity which none of their compeers in countries with a demo
cratic Constitution enjoy. It has extended the life of the Lok
Sabha, without securing the mandate of the people on the expiry
of its term. From all this one can easily imagine the dangers
inherent in the acceptance of these proposals.

The people of India elected the members of the present Lok Sabha and the Government for a period of five years and their term expired on 18th March, 1976. The present Parliament and Government have no mandate of the people. The ruling party itself received only 43% of the votes polled in the last elections. Besides, apart from the fact that many leaders of Opposition parties and even dissidents within the ruling party itself have been detained without trial under the MISA, the threat of such detention hangs over every member of Parliament. Moreover, no public debate on the proposed amendment is allowed. Under such conditions, it is an outrage on democracy to allow this Parliament and the ruling party to make such far-reaching amendments to the Constitution. Any Constitutional amendment can come only after the election that is overdue.

Besides preventing the implementation of these dangerous proposals, the basic weaknesses in the Constitution revealed during the 26 years of its functioning must be realised. It is because of these weaknesses that the ruling party has been able to bring about the present situation.

The experience of these years shows—(1) that the Congress party was always ruling on the basis of minority votes and it gets representation out of all proportion to its support among the people; (2) that other parties do not get representation in proportion to their strength; (3) that the people and the electorate have no control over those whom they have elected after the elections, (4) that the elected representatives of the ruling party break their promises and betray their pledges, betray their pledge to defend the Constitution and attack people's rights. Thus the sovereignty of the people is reduced to a sham and a farce. Parliament, the instrument of the people, becomes their master and arrogates to itself the right to suppress them.

Besides, there are certain inherent weaknesses in the Constitution which can be exploited with far reaching consequences. The provisions relating to the declaration of a State of Emergency and the special powers conferred during the Emergency, have the danger of being utilised by an unscrupulous Government to declare a State of Emergency whenever its rule is threatened by the loss of majority in Parliament; continue it till this threat lasts; suspend all elections for the duration of the Emergency; imprison all members of Parliament and other elected bodies who do not ditto its policies and actions; parade before the people of India and abroad that the decision taken by the remaining yesmen members as the democratically expressed will of people's representatives. These decisions can, in short, be used continually to subvert the basic structure of the Constitution, abolish the Fundamental Rights of the people, and transform Parliament into an instrument for an authoritarian system. All the democratic rights won by our people after decades of struggle and enshrined in the Constitution can thus be nullified. These weaknesses have to be overcome and suitable amendments made in the Constitution so that attempts at attacking people's rights and subverting the objects of the Constitution meet with obstacles at every stage.

For this purpose the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

proposes the following main amendments, which are no exhaustive, but only indicate the direction:

1. In order to make elections free and fair Constitu tional provision must be made to check the power of money and Government pressure. Provision should be made fo conducting the elections under the supervision of all-party committees.

2. Proportional representation and right to vote to all those above the age of eighteen should be ensured in the elections to Parliament and the Assemblies.

3. Provision must be made for the right to recall an elected representative.

4. The right to acquire, hold and dispose of property under Article 19(f) should be reformulated to ensure that the right of small property-holders and earners of income alone is protected while the property of big landlords and big capitalists will not be protected as a Fundamental Right. Also a provision must be made that such property can be acquired without compensation.

5. The Supreme Court judgment in the Keshavanand Bharati case that any amendment which changes the basic features of the Constitution is invalid, is too vague and the judgment always faces the risk of being reversed.

It is, therefore, necessary that the amendments made in 1971, viz, Article 368 (1) seeking to give absolute power to Parliament to amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of the Constitution and 368 (3) which states that nothing in Article 13 (relating to Fundamental Rights) should apply to any amendment made under this article, should be repealed.

6. The Constitution should specifically provide that no amendment changing the basic features of the Constitution, which include *inter alia,* Parliamentary republic, federal structure, adult franchise, accountability of the Executive to the Legislature, responsibility of the Cabinet to Legislature and restriction, abridgement or abrogation of Fundamental Rights of the people, can be made by Parliament.

7. It must further be provided that in case of conflict between Parliament and the Judiciary regarding the Constitutional validity of any measure, the Judiciary's verdict must prevail until the conflict is resolved by a referendum to the people.

It should also be provided that if 20 per cent of the members of either House or Legislatures of three States demand a referendum on any proposed measure, including amendment to the Constitution, the issue must be referred to the people through a referendum.

8. The power of making laws providing for preventive detention without trial must be removed and Article 22 authorising the making of such laws should be repealed.

9. It must be specifically provided that Acts like the MISA which restrict, abridge or abrogate any Fundamental Right, or the Election Law Amendment Act which has nothing to do with any socio-economic reforms cannot be placed in the IX Schedule. Only Acts which restrict, abridge or abrogate the property right of big property holders and landlords can be placed in the IX Schedule.

10. Article 31(c) should be deleted as under it all Fundamental Rights can be over-ridden. In fact there is no need for this Article once the right to property is taken away in the manner suggested above.

11. The following should be added to the list of Fundamental Rights in Chapter III:—

All citizens shall have the right,

(a) to work and a living wage after attaining the age of sixteen years.

(b) to have free education up to the secondary standard.

(c) to have State assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement;

(d) to free medical treatment;

(e) to have equal pay for equal work for men and women;

(f) to bear small arms

12. The arbitrary powers given to the President under the Emergency provisions provided in Articles 352 to 360 have

been the major cause of mischief and exploited by an unscrupulous Executive for attacking democratic rights and subverting elected Governments in States. These provisions must be drastically amended.

A declaration of Emergency can only be made if the country is involved in a war or is directly threatened by external aggression. The proclamation must automatically cease to operate on the cessation of armed hostilities or if no war takes place within a month of such proclamation.

The provision for automatic suspension of Fundamental Rights under Article 19, and to suspend the right to approach the court for enforcement of any of the Fundamental Rights must be scrapped.

Articles 356 and 357 which enable the President to dissolve a State Government or its Assembly or both should be deleted. In case of a breakdown in a State, provision must be made for the democratic step of holding election and installing a new Government as in the case of the Centre. Similarly, Article 360, which empowers the President to interfere in a State administration on the ground of a threat to financial instability or to the Government of India should be deleted.

13. The ordinance-making powers of the President and Governors must be drastically curtailed.

14. Articles 200, 201 which empower the Governor to reject Bills passed by the Assembly for President's assent should be done away with. The State Legislatures must be made supreme in the State sphere and no interference by the Centre in this should be allowed on any ground.

15. The President's power under Article 155, to nominate Governors, who invariably act as satraps of the Centre should be done away with. This provision has been used for partisan, anti-democratic purposes.

Instead, provision must be made that the Governors shall be elected by the State Legislatures.

16. Article 249, giving power to Parliament to legislate on a subject in the State List under the plea of national interest should be deleted.

17. There should be a drastic revision of the State, Central and Concurrent Lists so as to provide for more powers and finance to the States, in order to ensure real autonomy to the States.

18. The article regarding the Finance Commission and distribution of revenues should be amended to provide for 75 per cent of the total taxes collected by the Centre going to the States for allocation to different States by the Finance Commission. This is necessary to end the mendicant status of the States.

19. In order to enforce the principle of equality of the federating units, and to protect further erosion of States' autonomy, it is suggested that elections to the Rajya Sabha also should be directly by the people and all States must have equal representation in the Rajya Sabha except those with a population of less than three million. Both Houses must have equal powers.

20. Equality of all the national languages must be specifically recognized in the Constitution.

21. The provisions (b) and (c) to Article 311(2) which provide that an officer or the President or Governor can decide that an enquiry is not necessary to take disciplinary action against a Government employee nullifies the protection under Article 311(2). These provisions should be deleted.

22. The amendments giving special status to the Prime Minister, President, Vice-President and Speaker, and the Press Objectionable Matters Act prohibiting legitimate criticism of these dignitaries must be repealed.

23. The privilege that existed for publication of Parliamentary speeches must be restored.

24. Immunity from arrests of members of Parliament and Legislatures must be provided for in the Constitution.

25. All-India services like the IAS, IPS, etc., whose officers are posted to the States, but remain under the supervision and disciplinary control of the Central Government, must be abolished. There should be only Union services and

State services and recruitment to them should be made respectively by the Union Government and the State Government concerned. Personnel of the Union services should be under the disciplinary control of the Union Government and those of the State services should be under the disciplinary control of the State Government concerned. The Central Government should have no jurisdiction over the personnel of the State services.

26. There should be no provision for a Labour Appellate Tribunal.

It must be emphasised that the adoption of these amendments alone cannot ensure the ending of exploitation and oppression of the masses, and bring about the socio-economic transformation needed for it. This can be brought about only when the exploited and oppressed masses make united and determined efforts for their social and economic emancipation. But such Constitutional rights will be an advance for the people and will facilitate their efforts and striving for social progress.

47

Homage to Comrade Chu Teh*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M)

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its deep sense of grief at the passing away of Comrade Chu Teh, an outstanding leader of the Chinese Revolution and of the Communist Party of China and the People's Republic of China. Comrade Chu Teh's brilliant leadership of the Red Army and later the People's Liberation Army, had made him a legendary figure of the Chinese Revolution. At the time of his death, Comrade Chu Teh was a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China.

Comrade Chu Teh, born in 1886 in Szechuan, had his military training in the Yunnan Military Academy and with his outstanding talents distinguished himself in the revolution of 1911 and became a Brigadier General at the age of 30.

The historic May 4 movement in 1921 attracted Comrade Chu Teh to Communism and he joined the Communist Party of China a year after its formation in 1921 while he was in Berlin. Later, he took a course in the University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow before returning to China.

In 1927, after the betrayal of the united front by Chiang Kai-shek, Comrade Chu Teh played a leading role in organising the Red Army. During the next year, he joined forces with Comrade Mao Tse-tung and when a Chinese Soviet

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, July 25, 1976.

state was proclaimed in the Fukien-Kiangsi border, Comrade Mao Tse-tung became the Political Organiser and Comrade Chu Teh, the Commander-in-Chief. It was the extra-ordinary military talents that he displayed while in the leadership of the historic Long March to Yenan that made him a military legend. After the defeat of Japanese imperialism, Comrade Chu Teh led the People's Liberation Army in the liberation war and to victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949.

While paying its homage to this great proletarian revolutionary, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) conveys its deep-felt condolences to the people and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

48

CPI(M)'s Statement of Policy and its Implications*

Introduction

1. In April 1951, the Central Committee had released two documents, the Draft Programme of the Communist Party of India and the Statement of Policy for the Party ranks, inviting suggestions and criticisms. Both these Drafts were adopted by the All India Party Conference in October 1951. They were again endorsed by the Third Congress of the Party which was held between December 27, 1953 and January 4, 1954, at Madurai. The Statement of Policy was also called by another name, "The Tactical Line" which deals with the perspective path of Indian Revolution and the building up of the class and mass movements and the Communist Party in accordance with this perspective.

2. It is relevant to recall the historical fact that both the above mentioned party documents were the outcome of prolonged and bitter inner-party discussions and struggle during the years of 1947-51. In the period of 1946 and 1947, there erupted a number of militant mass anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles as an integral part of the post-war upsurge. The Worli tribal revolt in Maharashtra, the Tebhaga Kisan struggle in Bengal, the tribal armed resistance in Tripura, the Punnapra-Vayalar and North Malabar peasant struggles in Kerala and the Telangana peasants' armed struggle in the erstwhile princely State of Hyderabad were some of the most important struggles of that period.

*Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) on July 20, 1976. This is known as the 'DOCUMENT ON TACTICAL LINE'.

3. Out of all these struggles, the Telangana peasant struggle had not only acquired the character of peasant partis armed resistance against forced labour, evictions and f land, but also shaped itself into a liberation struggle agai Nizam and his autocratic feudal rule in the erstwhile st of Hyderabad. The Telangana peasant partisan war of resi ance, which began in the last quarter of the year 194 lasted till October 1951, when it had to be withdrawn d to the concentrated and heavy military attacks of the Co gress Government and also due to the new political situ tion that had come to prevail. The Telangana armed peasa revolt had risen to such heights as to be able to set up nearly as 3,000 village committees or "Gram Rajyalu" whi virtually took the entire administration into their hands a retained that for a year and more, till the military interve tion of the Indian Union Government in September 194 This military intervention, though termed as "Police A tion" against the intransigent feudal Nawab of the Stat was actually hastened with a view to putting down rapid advancing armed struggle of the Telangana peasants, led b the Andhra Mahasabha and the Communist Party.

4. The Andhra Provincial Committee of the CPI whi was in direct charge of guiding and leading the Telangan armed struggle, had faced a number of political, ideolog cal, theoretical and organizational questions. They had to b serious discussed and resolved. Those issues related to th Stage and Class strategy of the Indian Revolution, to th tactics, forms of struggle and organization; to the perspec tive path of revolution, i.e., whether it was likely to take th "Russian Path" or "Chinese Path" of development, to th specific role of the working class uprising in cities and th peasant partisan war in the rural areas, and to the correc understanding of the concept of proletarian hegemony, etc.

5. The Thesis of the Second Party Congress, the Note of the Andhra Provincial Sectt. in June 1948, Strategy and Tactics in the Struggle for People's Democratic Revolution in India by the then Polit Bureau, Report on Left-

Sectarianism in the Organizational Activities of the Polit Bureau and the Report of Left Deviation inside the CPI adopted at June 1950 CC meeting and a Note on the Present Situation in our Party, by late Ajoy Ghosh, S.V. Ghate and S.A. Dange, etc. were the major documents which fully reflect the differing views, on the different debated issues. Most of these documents are now published by the People's Publishing House, as Volume 7 of 1948-50 period. This is cited only to show the stupendous nature of the inner-party discussions, preceding the preparation and adoption of the two key documents, the Party Programme of 1951 and the Statement of Policy or otherwise called the Tactical Line.

6. But the tragic part of the story is that before long, within two to three years' time, some of the basic postulates made in the Party Programme of 1951 were found to be wrong and required correction. The then dominant section of the CC leadership, instead of correcting these wrong postulates that crept into the Party Programme, had begun to 'correct' them in an utterly right reformist and revisionist direction. Exploiting the mistakes in the 1951 Party Programme and drawing some totally *defeatist and Right Opportunist lessons* from the defeat suffered in the mid-term elections of Andhra State in March 1955, the CC leadership had worked a political resolution, under the caption, "Communist Party in the Struggle for Peace, Democracy and National Advance" in June 1955—a political resolution that once again threw the entire party line into a melting pot, intensified the differences inside the Party and finally paved the way for the split of the Party in the years 1963-64. The enormity and the extremely grave character of the differences and disunity that was prevalent inside the once united CPI during the years 1955-64 can be understood by those who witnessed the stormy scenes at several meetings of the CC and National Council besides the sharp divisions witnessed during the 4th Congress at Palghat and 6th Congress at Vijayawada. It was in the November and December months of 1964, the two split parties the Right CP and the CPI(M)

had adopted two different new Party Programmes. It go without saying that if the new Programme adopted by t CPI(M) is Marxist-Leninist, the Right CP has worked ou Right opportunist and class collaborationist programme.

7. In the long period from 1951-52 to 1967-68 the Sta ment of Policy was neither taken up for discussions *in depth* at any time nor its understanding was sought to translated into practice in building the class and mass orga zations and the Communist Party. In fact, the thesis of peace transition to socialism made at the 20th Congress of C.P.S.U. had its great impact on the *dominant section the Party leadership,* and the Statement of Policy or Tacti Line was *shelved* and *relegated* into the background, if formally repudiated. In the place of former slogans 1948-50 about "Telangana Path", "Chinese Path" and "Russ Path", etc., new slogans of "Peaceful Path", "Kerala Pat "Non-Capitalist Path" and the like had come up for discu sion. The other section of the Party leadership, though able to do anything regarding the Statement of Policy and the matter of orientating our work on its basis, was pledg its loyalty to the Statement of Policy treating it as a preci treasure of the Party.

8. The major part of the leadership of the CPI(Marxi was detained under Defence of India Rules between Janu 1965 and April 1966 and it had been susbequently releas The CC meeting at Nurmahal, in the last quarter of the y 1966, took upon its agenda the working out of 'Tasks' the Kisan, Trade Union and Party Fronts, in conformi with the new Party Programme of 1964 and the Stateme of Policy. The "Tasks on the Kisan Front," "Tasks on t Trade Union Front", and "Our Tasks on Party Organizatio are the documents, which were released by the Central Com mittee during the 1966-67 period, they go to reveal ou Party's earnest attempts to orientate our current work to th Statement of Policy and its guidelines.

9. It was precisely at this juncture that there arose the Naxalite's disruption inside our Party which began in

May-June months of 1967 and culminated in sizeable sections breaking away from our Party, in different States, by May-June months of 1968. The Naxalites challenged the Party Programme, the Statement of Policy and the entire political line of the CPI (Marxist) from an extreme Left opportunist standpoint and demanded that the CPI(M) should accept the so-called "Thought of Mao Tse-Tung" as the Marxism-Leninism of our epoch. Our Party was drawn into a furious political-ideological and organizational struggle in defence of the Party Programme, Statement of Policy and the general political line of the Party, at a time when it was striving its utmost to reorientate the entire work of the Party on the rails of the new Programme, adopted at the 7th Congress and the Statement of Policy or Tactical Line which was put in cold storage during the fifteen-year period from 1952 to 1967. The Polit Bureau and the Central Committee had firmly upheld and expounded its Marxist-Leninist viewpoint on the Party Programme, Statement of Policy and other issues while sharply opposing and rejecting the Naxalite line of thought on every score.

10. However, this positive defence of the Statement of Policy against the Left adventurist distortions of the Naxalites did not mean automatically that there existed a collective and common understanding of all the different propositions that were made in the Tactical Line document. In fact, the Tactical Line document was neither taken up for discussion, *in its depth*, any time, nor its understanding was sought to be translated into action in the building up of class and mass movements and the Party organization, as long as the united CPI was in existence. The new leadership, which was forged during the course of inner-party struggle against the Right revisionist policies and practice of the leaders of the united party, and which was elected into the new CC and the PB, also did not and could not discuss the Statement of Policy, afresh and collectively arrive at a correct and common understanding of different aspects of the same. Subsequent developments inside the PB and the CC go to

show that a general understanding and acceptance of t
Tactical Line document was not enough to unify our Par
or to orientate its work of the T.L. and the revolutiona
understanding it implies.

11. The 8th Party Congress in December, 1968, did e
dorse and reiterate the Statement of Policy. While publis
ing this Statement of Policy, the following note was i
serted as an introduction.

"The Statement of Policy which is being printed he
was adopted by the Communist Party of India at the A
India Party Conference in October 1951. It accompani
a Programme for the Party which was also adopted
the same Conference. The Statement of Policy was la
endorsed by the Third Party Congress at Madurai.

"The Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of Ind
(Marxist) has reiterated this Statement of Policy.

"But the Statement of Policy, based as it is on the o
Programme, contains some formulations regarding the sta
strategy and class alliance of the Indian Revolution whi
have since been corrected by the Party in its new pr
gramme adopted at the Seventh Congress.

"The old Programme described the stage of the rev
lution as anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, had advocated
general united front in which the big bourgeoisie w
also to be a participant. The present Party Programm
correctly characterising the present stage of the India
revolution as the second agrarian stage of the revolution
which is directed not only against the landlords an
imperialists, but also against the Indian big bourgeoisie
had laid down that the big bourgeoisie had no place i
the People's Democratic Front.

"It is necessary to keep this in mind while studying
this Statement of Policy which essentially deals with the
path of the Indian Revolution".

12. The above quoted Note of Introduction, mentioning
the changes, made in the new Party Programme, regarding
the stage, strategy and class alliance of the Indian Revolution,

exhorts the Party members with the words that, *"it is necessary to keep this in mind while studying the Statement of Policy which essentially deals with the path of* the Indian Revolution." This is clear admission, on the part of our Party's Central leadership that it had neither given serious thought to the basic changes in the Party Programme and their bearing on the Tactical Line and its implementation, nor made any comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic changes in our country that came about during the last 25 years and their impact on the Tactical Line and its implications in carrying the day-to-day work of the Party and the revolutionary movement. Under these circumstances all our attempts to orientate our work to different class and mass fronts, and all our efforts to concretise the "Tactical Line" in terms of tasks to be discharged in our day-to-day work of the Party are bound to suffer from inadequacies and even mistakes—all in their turn leading to the differences and disagreements in the Party leadership over the Tactical Line and the precise meaning of different formulations in it. This is what has exactly taken place, forcing us to undertake a discussion in the conditions of Emergency and severely restricted legal possibilities, on a most touchy topic as the Tactial Line. This will have to be born in mind while deciding the scope and extent of the inner-party discussion. Every effort should be made and all possible care will have to be taken to see that the Government shall not exploit the opportunity to intensify its attack on the Party.

The Salient Points in the Tactical Line

Before we assess the socio-economic developments during the last 25 years and the basic changes introduced about the stage, strategy and class alliance in the new Party Programme of 1964, and begin to integrate such an assessment with the Tactical Line and its implementation, it is first of all necessary to narrate, even briefly, all the salient points made in the Tactical Line document.

I

The immediate objectives set forth the 1951 Party Programm
was "the complete liquidation of feudalism, the distributio
of all land held by feudal owners among the peasants an
agricultural workers and achievement of full national inde
pendence and freedom. These objectives cannot be realise
in a peaceful, parliamentary way. These objectives can b
realised only through a revolution, through the overthrow o
the present Indian State and its replacement by a People'
Democratic State. For this the Communist Party shall striv
to rouse the entire peasantry and the working class again
the feudal exploiters, strengthen the alliance between th
working class and the peasantry and build, under the lead
ership of the working class, *a broad nation-wide unite
front of all anti-imperialist classes, including the na
tional bourgeoisie,* sections, groups, parties and element
willing to fight for democracy, and for the freedom an
independence of India". (Emphasis added).

II

The Tactical Line negates the two wrong and distorted ideas that were prevailing in our Party ranks

"For a period, after the Second Party Congress, the domi
nant tendency inside the Party leadership was to forget the
colonial nature of India's economy, to refuse to draw les
sons from the experience of the revolutionary movement in
China and other colonial countries, to minimise the impor
tance of peasant struggle and to put forward the thesis that
political general strike in the cities and in industrial areas is
in the main weapon of our revolution, that such a strike will
itself unleash countrywide insurrection and lead to the over
throw of the present state.

"Afterwards, on the basis of a wrong understanding of the experience of the Chinese Revolution, the thesis was put forward that the Indian Revolution would develop exactly in the same way as the revolution in China, and that partisan war would be the main or almost the only weapon to ensure its victory.

"While the former thesis minimised the importance of the peasant masses and their struggle, the latter thesis minimised the importance of the working class and its actions. Both tactical lines were the result of ignoring the specific situation in India and the tendency to draw mechanical parallels with other countries.

"In theory, as well as in practice, both tactical lines amounted to repudiation of the key task of building the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, repudiation, therefore, of the task of building the united national front of which this alliance alone could be the firm basis, repudiation of the leadership of the working class in the *anti-feudal* and *anti-imperialist revolution*."

Hence it is necessary to discard both the above tactical lines, in order to evolve a correct tactical line.

III

The Similarities and Differences : India & China

The Specific factors of the Chinese Revolution are :-

(a) "In China, the split in the United National Front in 1927, simultaneously split the armed forces also and the Chinese Communist Party had an army of 30,000 to start with."

(b) "Moreover, because of sparse development of railways and other means of transport, the enemy found it difficult to rapidly concentrate his forces against the areas held by the Communists."

(c) In China different imperialist powers had different spheres of influence and different warlords were at loggerheads with each other and could not combine and concentrate against the revolutionary bases.

(d) "Despite these advantages enjoyed by the revolutionary forces, they were repeatedly encircled by the enemy. Time and again, they had to break from this encirclement and threat of annihilation and migrate to new areas, to build again. It was only when they made their way to Manchuria and found the

firm rear of the Soviet Union that the threat of encirclemen
came to an end and they were able to launch the great offen
sive which finally led to the liberation of China. *It was th
the support given by the existence of a firm and mighty Sovi
rear that was of decisive importance in ensuring victory to th
tactic of peasant warfare in the countryside inside China.*"

In contrast to these Chinese conditions, the situation i
India is different :

(a) "We have no army to start with, it has to be created."

(b) "The transport system in India is far more develope
than in China, enabling the Government to swiftly concen
trate big forces against partisan areas."

(c) India has also a more centralised administration
Capitalism has developed far more than in China at th
comparable stage of the revolution. India was under a singl
imperialism.

(d) "And above all, the geographical position of India i
such that we cannot expect to have a friendly neighbouring
state which can serve as a firm and powerful rear."

IV

Peasant partisan war is one of the most powerful weapons in the armoury of the revolutionary movement in India

Do the difficult conditions in India, when compared to China, warrant the conclusion that partisan *warfare* has no place in India ? No.

"India is a vast country, with a backward and basically colonial economy and with 80 per cent of its people depending upon agriculture. In such a country partisan warfare, as the experience in China has shown, is one of the most powerful weapons in the armoury of the revolutionary movement, and this weapon will have to be wielded by the Communist Party as the case with all colonial countries.

"Partisan areas will inevitably arise in various parts of the country, as the crisis deepens and as the mass peasant movement rises to the level of revolutionary seizure of land

and foodgrains, paralysing and wiping out of the local forces of the enemy. These areas and the revolutionary forces operating in them, however, will continuously face the danger of encirclement at the hands of the enemy."

The partisan war can be developed even in areas where communications are well-developed, if the peasantry expressed its readiness to enforce its demands with arms. But when enemy encirclement occurs, we will have to lead the armed forces out of such encirclement and joint it with the partisan armed forces in another area, so as to create the liberation armies of our own. This of course, is envisaged when peasant partisan struggles break out in various parts of the country.

V

The peasant partisan war alone cannot ensure victory

It will have to be combined with the other major weapons, that of strike of the working class, general strike and uprising in cities.

It is so because "even the coming into existence of liberated territories with their own armed forces in several parts of the country will not eliminate this danger because these areas will themselves be surrounded by hostile forces from all sides. Therefore, *partisan war alone, no matter how widely extended, cannot ensure victory over the enemy in the concrete situation prevailing in India.* When the maturing crisis gives rise to partisan struggles on a wide scale, when the partisan forces in several areas are battling against the enemy, the workers in the cities, in vital industries, and especially in the transport system, will have to play a decisive role. The onslaught of the enemy against the partisan forces, against liberation areas will have to be hampered and paralysed by mass strike actions of the working class, with hundreds of partisan struggles merging with the general strike and uprisings of workers in the cities, the enemy will find it impossible to concentrate his forces anywhere and defeat the revolutionary forces but will himself face defeat, and annihilation. Even inside the armed forces of

the Government, the crisis will grow and big sections will joi
the forces of revolution." (Emphasis added.)

In this connection, "we should bear in mind that the *Chi*
nese Party stuck to the peasant partisan war alone, not out o
a principle, but out of sheer necessity. In their long-draw
struggles the Party and peasant bases got more and more sepa
rated from the towns and the working class therein, *whic*
prevented the Party and the liberation army from calling int
action the working class in factories, shipping and transpor
to help it against the enemy. Because it happened so with th
Chinese, why make their necessity into a binding principle fo
us and fail to bring the working class into practical leadership
and action in our liberation struggle ?" (Emphasis added.)

VI

THE ROLE OF THE WORKING CLASS UPRISINGS AND THE CORRECT MEANING OF PROLETARIAN HEGEMONY

The Tactical Line and the Statement of Policy documents,
while pointing out as to how the weapon of peasant partisan
struggles *alone or in the main* cannot ensure victory, how
"it is absolutely essential to combine two basic factors—the
partisan war of the peasants and workers' uprising in the
cities", and how important is the role of working class and
its hegemony in the Indian Revolution, highlight the fol-
lowing points :

India has a far bigger working class than China during the course of its revolutionary struggle, and it has a decisive role to play in the Indian liberation struggle. In order to frustrate the attempts of the class enemies—to keep the urban areas and industrial centres under their control and thus to be able to crush the partisan resistance and annihilate partisan areas and armed forces, the working class in cities and key industrial centres will have to play the most crucial role, through its direct actions and armed uprisings.

Emphasising the worker-peasant alliance and the correct meaning of the concept of proletarian hegemony, the Tactical Line says :

"Such a perspective demands closest alliance between the working class and the peasantry and the realisation of the working class leadership in this alliance. This alliance will be built in action, by the bold championship by the working class of the demands of the peasantry, by the direct support given by the working class in the form of demonstrations and strikes to the struggles waged by the peasantry. *Leadership of the working class will be realised not merely through the leadership of the Communist Party but above all, through the mass action of the working class itself in support of the demands and struggles of the peasantry.* Of all classes, the working class is looked upon by the peasants as their most closest friend and ally. Many workers come from the rural areas and are connected with the peasants by a thousand and one ties. Actions by the working class help not merely the existing struggles but also, as the history of our national movement shows, inspires the peasants in the neighbouring areas, radicalise them and help in developing new peasant struggles. In the present situation in India when all classes, all sections, except the exploiting few are facing starvation and when hatred against the present Government is growing, strike actions of the working class on such issues as food, ration cuts can be a most powerful weapon to inspire the entire people, to give concrete forms to their discontent, to build their unity in action and to raise the popular movement to a higher level. By fighting not merely for its own demands but for the demands of all discontented sections and classes, especially the peasantry, by acting as the foremost champion of the interests of the general democratic movement, the working class will come forward as the leader of the revolutionary people and build their revolutionary unity.

"It is of the utmost importance therefore that the *Party creates political consciousness in the working class, makes it conscious of its role of hegemony, overcomes the present disunity of the working class, wins over the majority of the workers in the vital industries and builds a powerful*

underground movement with factory and workshop committees as its nucleus. The best and most advanced elements must be recruited in the Party. All this demands intensive political agitation in the working class, patient day-to-day work, leadership of immediate struggles for the winning of the concrete demands and the building up of a strong trade union movement. Only a united working class and a working class conscious of its role of hegemony can build national unity. (Emphasis added).

Thus the Tactical Line pronounced its judgement on the then prevailing confusion, controversy and mistaken notions about the concept of proletarian hegemony : Though it is absolutely correct that the working class can exercise its hegemony through its political party, i.e., Communist and Workers' parties that are guided by Marxism-Leninism, it is wrong and incorrect to equate, or substitute the leadership of the Communist Party with that of the working class.

VII

The Scope of Peasant Partisan Actions

"As the crisis matures, as the unity, consciousness and organization of the masses grows, as the strength and influence of the Party develops and as the enemy resorts to more and more ruthless measures to crush the agrarian movements, the question of when, where and how to resort to arms, will be more and more forced on the agenda. As the question is of immense practical importance it is absolutely necessary that the Party will be able to give a clear and unambiguous answer to it.

"It must be realised that because of the vast area of India, because of the uneven level of mass consciousness and mass movement in different parts of the country, uneven-acuteness of the agrarian crisis and uneven strength of and influence of the Party itself, the peasant movement cannot develop at the same tempo everywhere. Premature uprisings and adventurist actions of every type must be undoubtedly eschewed. At the same time, it will be wrong to lay down that

the armed actions in the form of partisan warfare should be resorted to in every specific area only when the movement in all parts of the country rises to the level of uprising. On the contrary, in the course of development of the movement a situation will arise in several areas which would demand armed struggle in the form of partisan warfare. For example, in a big and topographically suitable area where the peasant movement has risen to the level of seizure of land, the question of how to effect that seizure, how to defend the land will become a burning and live question. The Party is of the opinion that partisan warfare in such a situation, undertaken on the basis of a genuine mass peasant movement and the firm unity, under the leadership of the party of the peasant masses, especially the most oppressed and exploited strata, combined with other forms of struggle, such as social boycott of landlords, mass 'no rent' struggles, agricultural workers' strikes, if correctly conducted and led, have a rousing and galvanising effect on the peasant masses in all areas and raise their own struggles to a higher level.

"Wherever such partisan struggles develop they must also be combined with mass actions of the working class, especially in the neighbouring areas, in the form of strikes and demonstrations. Undertaken on the basis of most careful preparations and assessment of all factors the partisan struggles must be conducted with the utmost boldness and tenacity, defending the gains of the movement by every means at our disposal. At the same time, the Party has to act with the utmost flexibility when overwhelming forces of the enemy are concentrated against the partisan areas and partisan forces run into danger of defeat and total annihilation.

VIII

Individual or Squad Terrorism is Incompatible with Partisan War

The Tactical Line rejects the assertion, "that individual terrorism is a part of partisan struggle and not even a part but even the basis of the partisan struggle. This is absolutely

wrong. What is more, individual terrorism contradicts t
spirit and objective of partisan struggle. And it is absolut
incompatible with partisan struggle. In the first place, t
objective of individual terrorism is to destroy particul
individuals while not pursuing the aim of destroying t
regime of feudal exploitation and subjugation of the peop
whereas the objective of partisan struggle is not to destr
particular individuals but to destroy the hated regime in
prolonged struggle of the popular masses. In the seco
place, individual terrorism is carried out by individual te
rorists or by small squads of terrorists acting apart from th
masses, whereas the partisan struggle is carried on by th
popular masses and not by individuals, it is carried on
close contact with the struggle of the masses against th
existing regime."

Individual terrorism "creates in the minds of masses
harmful illusion as if it would be possible to destroy th
regime by destroying individual representatives of the re
gime, that the main evil is not the existence of the regi
but the existence of particular worst representatives of th
regime whom it is precisely necessary to destroy. It is cle
that such a feeling created by individual terrorism can onl
weaken the onslaught of the masses against the regime an
thus facilitate the struggle of the Govt. against the people.
"Individual terrorism leads to an undue minimisation of th
role of the mass movement and to equally undue exaggera-
tion of the role of the terrorists, who are alleged to be
capable of securing the liberation of the people by their own
forces, independent of the growth of the mass partisan
movement. It is clear that such a feeling created by indi-
vidual terrorism can undermine the development of the par-
tisan struggle."

"The theory of individual terrorism comes to the front
when the revolution recedes. It is a reflection of weaknesses
in the movement. Whenever the revolution is rising and the
masses themselves rise, the theory of individual terrorism
disappears from the horizon."

IX

Peasant Partisan Struggles to Enforce Partial Demands

Partisan struggles to enforce partial demands are not to be confused with partisan struggles as part of liberation struggles.

The phrase or concept of partisan warfare was understood and used in the earlier discussions before the Tactical Line document was worked out, in a particular sense, as part of liberation war, especially as peasant guerrilla warfare. In a period of revolutionary crisis, a series of armed clashes waged by worker combatants or unemployed workers against the armed forces of the state were characterized as partisan struggles connected with these armed uprisings. The resistance movements conducted by the anti-fascist forces during the Second World War were also termed as partisan warfare. The Telangana armed struggle which was conducted against the autocracy of the Nizam from 1947 to September 1948, i.e., until the Indian Army intervened, was called partisan warfare, as it was an armed liberation struggle against the rule of the Nizam. The Telangana struggle during the 1948-51 period was also a peasant partisan struggle which was waged in defence of the peasants' gains made earlier.

The Tactical Line document and the questions and answers which are appended to it have enriched our understanding. This phrase partisan warfare has a much wider connotation. The clarification incorporated by the peasantry even for enforcing a partial demand like reduction of rent or against eviction is characterised as partisan struggle. This, some times, in our discussion, is also being described as "partial partisan struggle", i.e., peasant partisan struggle to enforce partial demands, makes it clear that armed resistance in the Tactical Line.

Question : Is it correct to resort to partisan war in one particular area where the conditions are ripe for it, even though other rural areas are not ripe for it, and the workers are not ready to support it with mass actions ?

Answer : Yes, you can and should resort to it. To start not, does not depend on us. It depends on the organization state of the masses and their mood. If the masses are read you must start it.

Question : Have we to take up partisan struggle on when the stage has been reached of land distribution a establishment of village peasant committees ? Or can w take it up when the movement is still in the stage of stru gle for partial demands, for example, rent reduction ?

Answer : The partisan struggle also has stages. It star with smaller demands—let us say, reduction or rent. It not yet a partisan struggle. If the enemy refuses to grant t demands and the peasant is eager to win it by force, the partisan struggles can start. True, it is not the struggle f seizure of land but only for a reduction of rent, still it w be partisan struggle.

Hence, it does not depend on us. If the masses are read and eager, we should assist them.

Question : Can partisan warfare even of the most e ementary type be developed in areas where communicatio are well-developed ?

Answer : Yes, when encirclement occurs, transfer the be forces to another area. Lead out the armed forces so as t join it with the armed forces in another area, so as to creat a liberation army of your own.

Question : The aim of the partisan struggle must be th liquidation of the enemy's armed forces with the activ assistance of the masses of peasants. To kill individua oppressors with a view to terrorising all the other oppres sors and making them renounce their oppression is terro ism. But I cannot understand the complete banning of any individual action against any oppressor landlord, notorious official or a spy, as a matter of principle, under the name o terrorism. In my opinion, at times, it becomes necessary, in the earlier phase of the partisan struggle, not in order to terrorise other oppressors, into renouncing their oppression, but to guard the safety of the partisan squads. I am unable

to understand how such actions make the people passive. As I understand international literature, such individual actions were conducted by partisans against German and Japanese facists in the occupied territories during the anti-fascist war, and they are being done even in Asian countries where partisan warfare is going on—Malaya, Burma, Indo-China, etc. If I remember rightly, such actions were not only not banned by Lenin in his article on partisan warfare on the other hand, he severely criticised the Mensheviks who condemned them as anarchism. I seek clarification on this point.

Answer : The comrade says he cannot understand why individual terrorism should slow down the action of the masses. Individual terrorism is called so not merely because it is directed against individuals or groups irrespective of the masses. Individual terrorism creates the illusion that the main evil is not the regime but individuals; that only if a few more are destroyed, the regime will be finished off. What conclusion will the masses draw ? That with the help of terrorism of this type, it is possible to destroy the regime after a long struggle. And if such conclusions are drawn by the peasants, they will say, "No use developing the struggle against the regime. Our glorious terrorists will do the job. Such sentiments weaken the onslaught of the masses against the regime. Therefore, it is harmful and dangerous."

Individual terrorism creates the belief that the main force lies in the heroic terrorists and not in the masses. The role of the masses becomes to watch and applaud. That means to cultivate passivity. Marx and Engels taught that the liberation of the masses has to be won by the masses themselves. That is what you ought to tell them. Different results follow from individual terrorism. The masses look to the terrorists as heroes and liberators.

The comrade's reference to Lenin is without foundation. We can give him articles by Lenin directed against individual terrorism. You must know how hard Lenin hit the Mensheviks when the revolution was at an ebb and they took to terror.

The theory of individual terrorism comes to the forefro when the revolution recedes. It is a reflection of the wea ness of the movement. When the revolutionary movement rising and the masses themselves rise, the theory of ind vidual terrorism disappears from the horizon. The comra must bear that in mind.

X

Build a Mass Communist Party Based on Marxism-Leninism

The Tactical Line stresses the need to soberly objectivel estimate the current situation, at a particular period, so as avoid both adventuristic or reformistic tactics and action. points out to the fact that the growth of the popular mov ment is lagging behind the growth of popular disconte "This lag is due not merely to the repressive measures adopt by the government, but primarily and above all to the wea ness of the Party and the existing disunity of the progre sive forces. It is, therefore, one of the key tasks of t Party to forge the unity of the working class, to unite t popular forces on the basis of a concrete programme, a to grow into a mass Party so as to be able to supply t leadership which alone can extend the mass movement a raise it to a higher level.

"It has to lead the masses in their day-to-day struggle and take them forward step by step so that the people, throug their own experience, come to realise the necessity and in evitability of armed revolution."

It concludes with the statement that : "The fact that if th crisis bursts forth in the near future, the Party in its presen disorgainsed and weak state will not be able to fully utilis it to lead the people to revolution. It is not prepared t shoulder the gigantic responsibilities that such a situation will place on it. It is necessary, therefore, that the presen weaknesses are overcome with the utmost rapidity, the ranks of the Party are unified and steps are taken to extend the mass basis of the Party and strengthen it. While recruiting

the best elements from the working class and other fighting classes into the Party and developing it into a mass Party, it is necessary at the same time to exercise the utmost vigilance against the swamping of the Party by elements that cannot yet be considered fully tested and trustworthy. The system of candidate membership must be introduced for this purpose. It is also necessary that while utilising all legal possibilities, the existing illegal apparatus of the Party is strengthened enormously".

"The building of a mass Communist Party equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, a Party mastering the strategy and tactics, a Party practising self-criticism and strict discipline and which is closely connected with the masses, is a crucial task."

XI

The Tactical Line Rejects the Two Wrong Estimates of the Situation

It is stated in the Tactical Line that, "it would be gross exaggeration to assert that India is already on the verge of armed exaggeration, that civil war is already raging in the country, that the Governments, its leaders, and agents are already, and completely isolated and so on and so forth. Such exaggeration leads to the ignoring of the concrete tasks facing the Party; the organizing and advocacy of adventuristic actions and the issuing of futile calls for action and pompous slogans which bear no relation either to the existing level of mass consciousness or to the actual maturity of the situation. In practice, it results in the self-isolation of the Party, making it easy for the enemy to destroy it.

"Equally wrong are they who through their reformism see only the weakness and disunity of the popular movement, the offensive of the enemy and advocate a policy of retreat and "lying low", a policy of regrouping forces, eschewing all militant actions in the cities and countryside for the present. Tactics based on such an understanding of the situation will result in the worst type of reformism and

make the party trail behind the masses instead of needi
them".

XII

Lead the Masses in their day-to-day Struggles

The Tactical Line document, while noting the fast maturi
crisis, the growing mass discontent against the policies
the Government and the weakness of the popular moveme
and its unity to lead the people's struggles calls for t
forging of unity of the working class and to unite the popul
forces on the concrete programme.

The Statement of Policy while laying down the "path a
the perspective" of the Indian revolution raises the questi
of current tactics and gives the following answer:

"The question of the immediate, while certainly infl
enced by the perspective, is not solely determined by it.
is also governed by the assessment of the present situatio
How far is the Government isolated, how far are the peop
disillusioned, how far are they ready to struggle, are so
of the questions that determine tasks and slogans for them

*"The Party must not preach the inevitability of fascis
but utilize the enormous volume of the democratic opinio
in the country to unite the people to halt the growing dri
towards fascism on the part of the present Government.*

*"Taking fascism to be inevitable or already in pow
they would scoff at Parliamentary elections or fighting fo
civil liberties, for which broad sections of the people ca
and should be mobilized."*

"We must fight the Parliamentary elections and election
in every sphere where the broad strata of people can b
mobilised and their interests defended. We must be whe
ever the masses are and would like us to be." (Emphasi
added).

It enjoins the Party to give the slogan that the present
Government must go and be replaced by a popular goverm
ment, representing the unity of the democratic forces, a
Government that will break with the British Empire and carry

out the programme of agrarian reform and democracy. It has to utilize the coming general elections for the most extensive popularisation of its programme, for mobilizing and unifying the democratic forces, for exposing the policies and methods of the present Government. It has to lead the masses in their day-to-day struggles and take them forward step by step so that the people, through their own experience, come to realise the necessity and inevitability of armed revolution.

The Tactical Line document ends with a stirring appeal to organize the peace movement against the war danger from the Anglo-American war mongers. It pinpoints the sectarian mistakes in the conducting of peace movement; it sharply criticises the peace policy of the Congress Government as "essentially a policy of manoeuvres between the main enemy of peace, the United States of America, and its junior partner, Britain, on the one hand and the peace loving countries on the other; and it shows how "the peace movement is not a pacifist movement, not a movement recording abstract support to peace—but is a fighting movement for concrete action in defence of peace and against the imperialist war mongers including those waging colonial wars."

Such were the salient points made in the Tactical Line document of 1951. They were made after a serious inner-party debate which lasted for three years during 1948 and 1951.

All the political-theoretical generalizations made in the Tactical Line, regarding the forms of struggles, organization and the perspective path of development of the Indian revolution are absolutely correct, and hold good even today, though they were made some 25 years ago.

A really revolutionary trade union, Kisan and democratic movement and a genuine Communist Party can be built in our country when the leadership of the CPI(M) at different levels understand these tactical and organizational precepts and orientates the work of the Party on the lines laid in the Tactical Line document.

To sum up, whatever the modifications that are necessary and whatever the enrichment that is required in the Policy

Statement of 1951, fulfilment of these tasks alone can ensu
victory of the revolution in our country. *The building up
a united and revolutionary working class movement,
organising of a widespread and powerful Kisan moveme
with special emphasis on the agricultural labourers a
poor peasants, the forging of durable alliance between
working class and the peasantry and weilding of the
major weapons of peasant partisan warfare and worki
class general strike and armed uprisings, the building
of a broad nation-wide People's Democratic Front and
assertion of the working class hegemony over it, and
building of the Communist Party which should be able
combine the legal and illegal work and build illegal a
paratus to be* in a position to withstand all the possible attac
of the class enemies, etc. are some of the most important ta
that the Statement of Policy enjoins us to discharge.

Socio-Economic Changes and Their Impact on Tactical Line

1. It is not enough to simply reiterate the principal prop
sitions contained in the document of Tactical Line, and on
again to pledge to stand by it. This we had been doing sinc
our 7th Party Congress in the year 1964. Nor it is corre
to content ourselves with the fact the Party documents suc
as Tasks on the Party Organization etc. go to reveal ou
earnest efforts to orientate our work on the lines indicated
in the Tactical Line resolution, and there is nothing more
that need be done.

2. The inner-P.B. discussions since the year 1969-70, and
the inner P.B. and CC discussions during the year of 1975
and 1976, in particular reveal that there exist sharp differ-
ences of opinion in interpreting different postulates of the
Tactical Line document, they sometimes assuming the po-
lemical character of the 1948-50 period, the so-called "Rus-
sian Path" vs. "Chinese Path".

3. The Tactical Line document when it was formulated in
1951, was discussed in the CC and was reported to the

State Committees and adopted in the Special Conference in 1951. It has been referred to from time to time and explained by individual comrades to State and District Committees and in Party Schools also. The Tactical Line was defended against Naxalite distortions, and it was in that background that the Eighth Congress of the Party endorsed it. But yet the understanding of the Tactical Line has not been deep going. The Party leadership did not discuss in depth the Tactical Line document, the bearing the basic changes made subsequently in the Party Programme had on the Tactical Line and its implementation for the impact of the socio-economic changes in the country after 1951 on the Tactical Line and its implications in carrying the day-to-day work of the Party and the revolutionary movement. It is incumbent on us now to do so, to unify the Party and to orientate our work on the lines laid down in the Statement of Policy. Otherwise all earlier resolutions of our CC and the Party, dealing with this subject, are liable for different interpretations or some emphasising particular aspects of the Tactical Line and others disagreeing with such an emphasis.

4. Such a discussion of the Tactical Line is additionally emphasised because of the two very important factors, namely the socio-economic developments during the last 25 years, in particular the changes in the agrarian front, and the vital changes introduced in the new Party Programme of 1964, on stage, class strategy and the nature of the Indian revolution, sharply departing from those made in the 1951 Programme. These changes will have to be correctly assessed and analysed as these have got a direct bearing on the two principal forms of the struggle advocated in the Tactical Line, i.e. the *"combination of partisan war in the countryside and workers' risings in the cities"*.

What are the Principal Changes Effected in the 1964 Programme

(a) If the *stage* of the Indian Revolution was described in the 1951 Programme as the "revolution of the *general united*

national front" against imperialism and its feudal allies, the programme of the 7th Party Congress defines it as essentially *agrarian stage* of People's Democratic Stage with the agrarian revolution as its axis.

(b) If the 1951 Programme defined the class strategy or class alliance of the revolution as one comprising of the "Working class, the peasantry, the toiling intelligentsia, the middle classes as well as the national bourgeoisie" *including the big bourgeoisie*, the new Party Programme advocates the class alliance of workers, peasants, middle classes and the non-big bourgeoisie, *excluding the entire big bourgeoisie from the alliance and putting it as the force which stands in the forefront of violent opposition to revolution.*

(c) If the 1951 Programme characterised the nature of the revolution as only anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, the 1964 programme characterises it as not only anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, *but also anti-monopolist.*

(d) If the 1951 Programme had put the demand for "the confiscation and nationalisation of all factories, banks, plantations, shipping and mining *owned by the British in India*, and did not even raise the slogan of confiscating *all the foreign capital*, such as that of U.S., German or Japanese, the new programme raises the slogan of "taking over all foreign capital in plantations, mines, oil refineries and factories, shipping and trade" including "the nationalisation of *all banks and credit institutions and other monopolistic industries.*"

"Thus the target of attack is not only British capital, but *all foreign capital and big or monopolistic Indian capital.*

(e) According to new programme our revolution is not only in irreconciliable opposition to feudal landlordism and foreign monopoly, but together with them, it is opposed to the big bourgeois class which is heading the state and collaborates with foreign finance capital and forges alliance with feudal and semi-feudal landlordism. Naturally, under these circumstances the People's Democratic Revolution comes into clash with the state power headed by the big bourgeoisie of India.

(f) Thus the Indian big bourgeoisie, which was considered by the 1951 Programme as an ally of the workers and peasants in the struggle against feudalism and foreign capital, according to the new Programme, has been found to be allying with feudalism and collaborating with foreign capital, hostile to the workers, peasants and other democratic forces.

Can one say that the above changes in the class alliance for the People's Democratic Revolution has no *adverse impact* on the two principal forms of struggle envisaged in the Tactical Line for attaining the victory of the revolution ?

It is bound to have some unfavourable affect on both the peasants' partisan struggle and the urban workers' uprisings, though it cannot alter the basic content of the Tactical Line and the perspective given therein.

Changes in the Agrarian Sector

One of the important developments, that needs a proper and correct assessment, is the changed agrarian set-up under the rule of the Congress Party during the last 30 years or so.

As nearly as 10 years ago, the CC in its document, "Tasks on the Kisan Front", had the following to state :

"However, the bourgeois agrarian programme aims at achieving certain limited objectives, it seeks, in the main, to reform the old-type feudal landlordism by inducing the landlords to break up and partition their big estates among their kith and kin, to sell some of their "surplus" lands to the peasants and to take to personal cultivation and supervision of their farms more and more through employing hired labour and farm servants, instead of unrestricted renting out of their lands to the tenants as practised earlier. It also attempts at creating a narrow stratum of the rich peasantry who, together with the new-type landlords, can become not only the new political base of the bourgeoisie in the country-side but also can produce the limited surpluses of foodgrains to supply the Govt. for feeding urban centres.

".....They are not aimed at transforming our agriculture

into a modern capitalist enterprise, but are intended only to modify and reform the earlier forms of crude feudal exploitation, and super-impose on it capitalist forms of ..... and relations".

"The Congress agrarian reforms had created and extended a new type of landlordism which combines in itself both the features of capitalism as well as feudalism; they created a 'tenant' who combines in himself the features of the serf and the wage-workers; and they created a rural wage-labour, who, as a pauperised peasant, forced by circumstances, is tied to the villages and farming and has no other go except to accept any miserable wage-rate his rural employer is willing to pay. His struggle for better wages is inseparably linked with the struggle for the abolition of landlordism and land to the tiller, because no appreciable improvement in the way of securing better wages is possible without breaking the land monopoly and drastically reducing the huge numbers of the pauperised peasant army. All these aspects will have to be borne in mind while formulating the programme on the agrarian front and building the revolutionary kisan movement, which strives to unite the entire peasantry in the fight against landlordism.

"The present countryside somewhat resembles, in a way what was described by Lenin in the year 1901, regarding Russia. He observed that in the modern Russian contryside "two kinds of class antagonism exists side by side: first, antagonism between the rural workers and employers and the second between the peasantry as a whole and the landlord class as a whole. The first antagonism is developing and becoming acute, the second to a considerable degree already belongs to the past. And yet, in spite of this, it is the second antagonism that has the most vital and most practical significance for Russian Social Democrats at the present time". It is on these lines that our Party was called upon to make a concrete study of the class changes brought about in the countryside, assess them properly, and work out its agrarian strategy and tactics." (From paras 8,9 and 11 of Tasks on the Kisan Front.)

This does not by any means imply that the present-day conditions in our rural areas are exactly the same as in Russia of 1901. But, at the same time, the contradiction between the peasantry as a whole and landlordism continues in our agrarian front.

After the above statement was made, the Congress Govt. with its pressure tactics on landlords through the enactment of new land ceiling law, by the introduction of some amendments to the old land ceiling and tenancy legislations and be repeatedly raising the slogans of land reforms, has enabled the landlords to evict benants more and more, to further partition the lands among their kith and kin, to sell some portion of their land at good prices, and to increasingly take to "personal cultivation" and intensive agriculture and modern farming.

There has been further rise in the percentage of agricultural laboures among the rural households. Millions of tenants, protected, and tenants-at-will, have either been evicted outright and thrown into the army of landless or forced to purchase the land rights paying varying prices to the landlords. The so-called "Green Revolution" has helped the landlords and the rich peasants, in the main, to be benefitted by the loans granted, fertilisers supplied, highyielding breeds of seed provided and several other so-called rural development programmes.

To briefly sum up the changes affected in the agrarian set up under the Congress rule since 1946-47 are :

1. The old form of land concentration in the hands of zamindars, jagirdars, and big landlords is reduced, even though 35 to 40 per cent of the land is still concentrated in the hands of 5 to 6 per cent of the top landlords.

2. Millions of tenants are evicted and thrown into army of the agricultural labourers and tenants-at-will. A section of them could become owners of certain portion of land on which they were working as tenants, by paying compensation or by purchasing at the rates lower than the market rate. Today's tenants are mostly "tenants-at-will", with no

legal record of rights. They are, today, neither conscious an organized as to demand the granting of the ownership fo the lands they are cultivating or to enforce even the legall fixed rent, i.e. 1/3, 1/4, or 1/5 of the produce as the cas may be.

3. Today, in the rural households, there exist as nearly a *50 per cent* of the families who own no land at all or ow tiny pieces of land which is totally inadequate for them t eke out a livelihood and *who earn their livelihood in th main by hiring themselves to others* such as rich peasant landlords, etc. They are in the category of agricultural work ers, handicrafts-men and those engaged in village service In contrast to these 50 per cent rural labour families, ther exist five to six per cent of landlords who own 35 to 40 pe cent of the land under cultivation.

There are another 20 per cent who have to be defined a poor peasants possessing one to two acres of wet land or tw to five acres of dry land. The income they derive from fam lies, and hence they are compelled to earn a part of the living either by hiring themselves to others or engaging them selves in some side professions. They earn incomes whic are hardly of subsistence level and become debt-ridden.

Another *15 per cent* or so of the present rural familie come under the category of *middle peasants* who own fro two to five acres of wet land or 10 to 12 acres of dry land They and their families do manual labour of their land, employ a cowboy for tending cattle and hire some agricultural labourers in seasons when there is pressure of work in agricultural operations.

Those who own five to ten acres of wet land or ten to 20 acres of dry land constitute some *ten per cent* of our rural families. They are to be defined as rich peasants. They and their families do manual labour on their farms and also employ considerable number of wage labourers and farm servants. They, normally, not only have enough for their consumption needs but are also able to secure some surplus which can be converted into capital.

This division and class differentiation, of course, varies from State to State and region to region.

Under these circumstances, it is evident that the middle and rich peasant families which constitute 25 per cent of the rural households are not moved by the slogan of abolition of landlordism and the distribution of their land among the agricultural workers and poor peasants, though the slogan remains the central slogan of the agrarian revolution which is not only in the interests of the agricultural workers and poor peasants but also in the objective interests of the peasants in general and the country as a whole.

4. The agricultural labours and poor peasants, who are land-hungry and respond to the slogan of land distribution, wherever they are organized and led, have not yet earned the confidence to go *into action for the expropriation of landlords' land and its distribution among the agricultural labour and poor peasants*. They are moved into action, mostly, for the occupation of waste-lands, Govt.'s lands and the forest lands. Even the occupation of the so-called surplus lands of the landlords, over and above the ceiling laws, could be undertaken only when the State Government of United Democratic Front in West Bengal, under the influence of the CPI(M) has restrained the police from going against the fighting peasants. The experience of Kerala shows that the agricultural labourers and poor peasants who are drawn into the struggle for land are inclined to occupy the Govt. and forest lands, but are not yet prepared to seize even the surplus land of landlords on a big scale.

5. The ruling Congress party, utilising its hold over the State and Govt. during the last three decades, has been able to draw a sizeable section of the peasantry into its political fold and disrupt the peasant unity that has been prevailing prior to the winning of political independence. It is true that this peasant unity was there centering round the rich and middle peasants unlike the peasant unity which we seek to forge on the basis of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The Congress party's hold on the village

panchayats, block samithis and zilla parishads is being uti
lised to perpetuate division and disruption among the peas
antry. This type of hold on the peasant is not to be ignore
and brushed aside as the general ideological hold of th
bourgeois-landlord classes on the peasantry, as it disrup
the peasants' unity, and prevents sections of the peasantr
from fighting for the realisation of anti-feudal and demo
cratic demands.

The foregoing material goes to show that the Congres
agrarian reforms during the last three decades, though the
did not abolish landlordism and give land to the landless
succeeded in disrupting whatever peasant unity that was buil
in the earlier decades around the Central slogan of abolitio
of landlordism and land to the actual tiller.

The phenomenal increase in the number of landless whic
has nearly doubled under the Congress rule, the continue
concentration of 35 to 40 per cent of land in the hands o
5 to 6 per cent of landlord farms; the growing big percen
age of our people—as big as 70 per cent—into the categor
that falls below the poverty line. The poverty, hunger an
misery of the great majority of our people and the conse
quent fall in the purchasing capacity of people, the deepen
ing economic crisis and above all the aggravation of th
agrarian crisis additionally emphasise the urgency of agra
ian revolution.

But this task cannot be fulfilled unless the revolutionary
working class and its Communist Party undertake sustained
and deep going work among the peasant masses. It requires
the creation of new awakening and awareness on the part of
the peasants in general and toiling and exploiting in particu-
lar to build the peasant unity, united organization and united
movement, on the basis of a new heightened class con-
sciousness. It demands hectic efforts on the part of the pro-
letariat and its political party to dislodge the bourgeois-
landlord political -ideological hold on the peasantry, and
win it as its firm and reliable ally in the struggle for Peo-
ple's Democratic Revolution.

The slogan of the complete abolition of landlordism and distribution of the land gratis among the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, though continue to be the central slogan of agrarian revolution, for the entire stage of our People's Democratic Revolution, taking into account the structural changes affected in the agrarian front by the Congress agrarian reforms, and also taking to serious account the existing state of organization, the level of consciousness, and the degree of unity among the peasantry, this central slogan still remains a *propaganda slogan*.

Until and unless basic slogan of abolition of landlordism and its distribution among the landless, and the poor peasantry, becomes a *slogan of action*, the peasant movement will not be able to reach the level of partisan struggles on the scale and intensity as enforcing of partial demands such as reduction of rent, against the eviction and for the abolition of forced labour, etc., which were visualised in the T.L. have their serious limitations under the present changed conditions i.e. tenancy, rents and forced labour, etc. do no more remain in that old *form, scale* and *intensity*.

In the light of all these developments, the Kisan movement led by our Party, while projecting the land seizure of landlords' land and its redistribution slogan as the central propaganda slogan, and while organising struggles for waste lands, forest lands, and the so-called "surplus" lands under the ceiling acts, will have to channelise many other agrarian currents, like the question of wages for the rural workers, the issue of rent reduction, the abolition of scaling down of peasant indebtedness, fair price for agricultural produce, the reduction of tax burdens, and the abolition of landlord and police zoolum, against corruption, etc. so that all these current might be harnessed into one big agrarian stream. Otherwise, the maximum peasant unity, isolating the handful of landlords and their hirelings cannot be achieved. Armed peasant partisan will not be able to move among the peasantry like fish in water. The armed guerilla areas will not be able to survive and liberation areas and liberation armed forces cannot be created.

In this connection, it is necessary to remind of what Party Programme stated :

"The agricultural labourers and poor peasants who c stitute 70 per cent of the rural households and are subjec to ruthless exploitation by landlords, by their very cl position in present day society, will be basic allies of working class. The middle peasantry, too, are the victim the depradations of usurious capital, of feudal and capita landlordism in the countryside and of the capitalist mar and landlord domination in rural life so affects their soc position in innumerable ways as to make them reliable lies in the democratic front.

"The rich peasants are another influential section amo the peasantry. The agrarian reforms have undoubtedly benefi certain sections of them and to some extent they gai under the rule of the post-Independence regime. They as to join the ranks of capitalist-landlords and by virtue their engaging agricultural labour on hire for work in t farms, they entertain hostility to them. *Nonetheless, he taxation, high prices for industrial goods and inflati constantly harass them so as to make their future unc tain. Subject to ravages of the market under the grip the monopolist traders, both foreign and Indian, they co up often against the oppressive policies pursued by bourgeois-landlord Government.* By and large, they also therefore be brought into the Democratic movement, retained as allies in the People's Democratic Revolution".

With the aggravation of the economic crisis, the feud and semi-feudal exploitation of the peasants, the oppressi of the peasants by the monopolists, both Indian and foreig have intensified the gulf between prices of agricultural pr duce and the prices of inputs and other industrial commo ties. All these make it possible to build a powerful unit peasant movement—unity build around the rural labour and poor peasants and mainly basing upon them.

In the "Tasks on the Kisan Front", which was released April, 1967, our Party's efforts to assess the developm

taking place in the agrarian front can be seen from the following passages, while exposing the Congress land ceiling and emphasising the need to unite different sections of the peasantry on different issues facing them, it was stated:

"Experience has proved that the efforts to solve the problem of redistribution of land through legislations fixing ceilings on landholdings are totally ineffective. The landlords and their hangers-on are clever enough to bypass all such legislations to keep with themselves the bulk of their lands. Our Party and the Kisan and agricultural labour organizations should, therefore, not allow themselves to be fooled by the idea that the basic slogan of "land to the tiller" can be realised through adoption and implementation of legislations fixing ceilings on landholdings. Our Party should ceaselessly educate the peasant and agricultural labour masses that the basic slogan of "abolition of landlordism without compensation and the giving of land to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants free of cost" is to be realised through the mass action of the entire peasantry. In fact, these struggles for the realisation of their basic demands are a part of the main revolutionary struggle, the struggle for the establishment of a People's Democratic State.

"It is, however, possible, for strong, militant and well-organized movements of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers to force the unwilling Government and landlords to distribute fallow lands to some extent. It is also possible, through effective mass struggles, to prevent the eviction of tenants from the land they are cultivating, and to achieve land for house-sites for the rural poor, free of cost, to a limited extent. Such struggle against evictions and for the distribution of fallow lands will so strengthen the force of agrarian revolution that revolutionary redistribution of land will be possible at a subsequent stage. These struggles, therefore, are of particular interest to the agricultural labourers and poor peasants. But directed as they are against the landlords and the Government, no stratum of the peasantry is opposed to it. Those middle peasants who are holding lands

under landlords as tenants are, in fact, interested in the a
eviction struggles. There is, therefore, every possibility
making these struggles the united struggles of the entire pe
antry. It is, however, the agricultural labourers and p
peasants who are immediately and directly interested in the
These struggles, therefore, can succeed only if the mass
agricultural labourers and poor peasants are actively dra
into them and widest democratic support is built for the

"It should be also realised, that, while the agricultu
labourers, poor peasants, middle peasants and rich peasa
have their different (and some times even conflicting) int
ests, there is something which unites them all—unity agai
landlord oppression and anti-peasant policies of the bo
geois-landlord state, led by the big bourgeoisie. On a ser
of questions like taxation, prices, allocation of finance
projects and so on, conflicts develop between the urba
and rural sectors of the economy. Conflicts also devel
between the landlords and rich peasants and the big bo
geoisie, on a number of issues. All these conflicts be
within the framework of the class alliance of the bo
geoise and the landlords they invariably attempt to reso
them "peacefully", i.e., within the framework of their so
darity as against the proletarian and semi-proletarian stra
Undue emphasis on these conflicts would, therefore, l
the Party to Right opportunist mistakes. It would, howev
be equally wrong to dismiss these conflicts within the cla
alliance of the ruling classes as of no significance. Occa
sions may, in fact, arise when these conflicts among t
various strata of the ruling classes can be so utilised as
isolate the big monopolist bourgeoisie—the strongest pa
ner of the ruling class alliance, the most ruthless enemy
the proletarian and semi-proletarian strata. *This, howeve
depends on the extent to which the agricultural labourer
and poor peasants are organized and brought into actio
both on their own specific slogans and on the general slo
gans of the peasantry as a whole.*" (Emphasis added).

While striving our utmost to forge all-in-peasant unit

against landlordism and the bourgeois State power, we should always guard against the Right-reformist deviation of basing our kisan movement on the middle and rich peasantry, instead of building the united peasant movement around the agricultural labourers and poor peasants.

Certain Other Developments that Need be Assessed

So far, we have tried to briefly point out the changes made in the Party Programme of 1964, departing from that of the 1951 Party Programme, and the changes that were brought about by the Congress reforms on the agrarian front—both of which have a direct bearing on our perspective Tactical Line.

Before we attempt to study the impact of these changes on the Tactical Line and its implementation, there are other developments which too need be taken into serious account, if our Party has to really orientate its work on the lines chalked out in the Statement of Policy.

(a) In the Tactical Line document while comparing and contrasting the favourable and unfavourable factors between China of 1927-49 and India of 1951, it was stated that in China, "because of the sparse development of railways and other means of transport, the enemy found it difficult to rapidly concentrate his forces against the areas held by the Communists," and "the transport system in India is far more developed than in China, enabling the Government to swiftly concentrate big forces against partisan areas".

This was stated full 25 years ago : Today, the entire transport system, road, rail, air and other communications have developed manifold, thus enabling the enemy to swiftly move its armed forces against the workers' and peasants' struggles, no matter whether they are in rural or urban areas. The continuous state of war with Pakistan since partition and the three wars fought with it in 1947, 1965 and 1971, the border clashes between India and China since 1959 and border war with it in 1962 and the tribal revolts such as Nagas and Mizos, etc. were fully utilized by the

Congress Government to develop the transport system every nook and corner of the country. Today, unlike in years of 1947-50, the entire police forces, special arm constabulary, border security force, the Central Reserve Pol etc. is fully equipped with telecommunication system.

(b) If, during the years of 1947-50, the strength of t Indian army was around two lakhs or so, today it is nea a million strong, including the Border Security Force. It one of the most modernised armies next only to that of t developed imperialist states in the capitalist world. Togeth with the different categories of constabulary, the arm personnel of the Government of India stands anywhere arou 2 million men who constitute a formidable force of orga ized violence against the struggles of the workers, peasan and other exploited sections of our people.

(c) Our class enemies, the capitalists, landlords and t imperialists, drawing upon the innumerable lessons fr the post-war revolutions and partisan armed struggles Asia, Africa and Latin American countries, have been sy tematically and constantly perfecting the weapons of cou ter-revolution, enormously enriching the most cruel tec nique of counter-insurgency. In this regard, the Congre Government in our country is not lagging behind. So far o Party is concerned it remains a helpless victim at the han of the class enemies, and not even a systematic study these "counter-insurgency" techniques could be undertake up to now, let alone setting up even a counter-espionag nucleus at the CC level to study the enemy's ingenious form methods and technical devices, and to devise ways and mea to counter them and overcome them.

(d) The time-old, hated "Arms Act", imposed by the Britis imperialists is still operative in the politically independen India, even after 30 years, after the transfer of power to th Congress party. Not even one per cent of our people hav any opportunity to learn what the butt and barrel of a gun is, let alone having any knowledge of multiple sophisticated weapons of our times.

(e) *The big bourgeoisie*, which was visualised in the Tactical Line of 1951 as an ally of the working class in the struggle against feudalism and imperialism, has now not only ceased to be an ally and turned out to be the enemy in the forefront, but it *has secured one additional advantage that was not contemplated in 1951*. In its pursuit of capitalist path of development in alliance with landlordism and in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital, it is now able to utilise the contradiction between the socialist and imperialist worlds, and to bargain with both in its efforts to build capitalism. Thus the Socialist aid, which enables the bourgeoisie of the newly independent countries to resist imperialist pressures, is also being used as a weapon to strengthen itself in its struggle against the working class and the other toiling people. This new factor and its impact on the advance of our revolutionary working class movement will have to be studied in detail.

These above cited factors which impose additional difficulties in the implementation of the Tactical Line will have to be overcome. A correct appreciation of all these factors alone will enable us to give serious thought to the entire question, i.e., taking the perspective Tactical Line seriously, and working out the immediate tasks on different fronts in such a way as they dovetail into the Tactical Line and the perspective laid in it.

The apprehension expressed by some of our comrades, that the listing of all the unfavourable factors which have come into operation would result in either pouring cold water on the perspective Tactical Line or its virtual abandoning in favour of the classical urban based working class insurrection, are unfounded and unwarranted.

Since the issues that we are here dealing with concern the art and craft of warfare in a civil war and People's Democratic Revolution, every new technological factor introduced in the field of warfare will have to be duly taken into account and assessed. That is what Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin were doing.

For example, the following passages from Engels wo
show how the questions of warfare and its techniques w
subjected to close study and discussion from time to ti

Answering the belief of the opponents of the proletari
revolution that "the militant proletariat had been finally bur
with the Paris Commune", Engels as late as on 6th Mar
1895, observed :

> "The recruitment of the whole of the population ab
> to bear arms into armies that henceforth could be count
> only in millions, and the introduction of fire-arms, pr
> jectiles and explosives of hitherto undreamt of efficienc
> created a complete, but a sudden end to the Bonaparti
> war period and ensured peaceful industrial developme
> by making any war, other than a world war of unhear
> of cruelty and absolutely incalculable outcome, an in
> possibility. On the other hand, it caused military expenditu
> to rise in geometrical progression and thereby force
> taxes in exorbitant levels and so drove the poorer class
> of people into the arms of socialism".

Thus it was shown as to how certain unfavourable co
ditions though temporarily retard the advance of the prol
tarian revolutionary movement, certain other favourable facto
come into play to counteract them.

Writing about the German bourgeoisie and its fear
working class victories in elections and how they seem t
be preferring to face an open rebellion of the working class
Engels said :

> "For here, too, the conditions of the struggle had es
> sentially changed. Rebellion in the old style, street fight
> ing with barricades, which decided the issue everywhere
> up to 1848, was to a considerable extent obsolete".

"Let us have no illusions about it: a real victory of an
insurrection over the military in street fighting; i.e. a victory
as between two arms, is one of the rarest exceptions. And
insurgents counted on it just as rarely. For them it was
solely a question of making the troops yield to moral influ-
ences which, in a fight between the armies of two warring

countries do not come into a play at all or do so to a much smaller extent. If they succeed in this, the troops fail to respond, or the commanding officers lose their heads, and the insurrection wins. If they do not succeed in this, then, even where the military are in the minority, the superiority of better equipment and training, of single leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself felt.

"But since then there have been very many more changes, and all in favour of the military. If the big towns have become considerably bigger, the armies have become bigger still. Paris and Berlin, have, since 1848, grown less than four-fold; but their garrisons can, in twenty-four hours, be more than doubled. The arming of this enormously increased number of troops has become incomparably more effective. In 1848, the smooth-bore, muzzle-loading percussion gun, today, the small-calibre, breach-loading magazine rifle, which shoots four times as far, ten times as accurately and ten times as fast as the former. At that time the relatively ineffective round shot and grape-shot of the artillery; today the percussion shells, of which one is sufficient to demolish the best barricade. At that time, the pick-axe of the sapper for breaking through fire-walls; today the dynamite cartridge.

"On the other hand, all the conditions of the insurgent's side have grown worse. An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathise will hardly recur; in the class struggle all the middle strata will probably never group themselves round the proletariat so exclusively that in comparison the party of reaction gathered round in the bourgeoisie will well-nigh disappear. The "people" therefore, will always appear divided, and thus a most powerful lever, so extra-ordinarily effective in 1848 is gone.

"Does that mean that in the future street fighting will no longer play any role ? Certainly not. It only means that the conditions since 1848 have become far more unfavourable for civilian fighters and far more favourable for the military. In future, street fighting can, therefore, be victorious

only if the disadvantageous situation is compensated by other factors. Accordingly, it will occur more seldom in the beginning of a great revolution than in its further progress, and will have to be undertaken with greater forces." (Introduction to *"The Class Struggles in France 1848-50"*) (Emphasis added).

On another occasion, Engels, writing to Bebel on 18th November, 1884, about the German Government's demand of the Social Democratic Party to declare that in no circumstances it will resort to force, asserts that "indeed no party has renounced the right to armed resistance, in certain circumstances, without lying. None has ever been able to relinquish this ultimate right"...."To require an unconditional declaration of this kind from such a party is sheer absurdity."

"For the rest, the gentlemen can keep calm. *With military conditions as they are at present we shall not start our attack so long as there is still an armed force against us.* We can wait until the armed force itself ceases to be a force against us." (Emphasis added).

These are cited only to show that the issues such as the forms of struggle, the state of armed forces and the technical developments and the new mode of arms etc. were the subject matter of repeated discussions by the founders of Marxism-Leninism. It would be folly on our part to shut our eyes to the difficulties, on the alleged ground that those difficulties might be shown by some as an excuse to run away from the real path of the revolution. Our job is to be in constant search for the ways and means to overcome such difficulties, and to find out from time to time the vulnerable points in the enemy's camp, and to make full use of them to compensate the weak spots on the revolutionary front.

Factors which can Compensate the Unfavourable Developments

1. If the Tactical Line noted the fact that "India had a far bigger working class than China was having during her march to freedom", today it has more than trebled during the last

30 years, with the marked growth of certain key and heavy industries and the development of huge urban complexes. This is the first biggest asset, and it should be fully utilised in the People's Democratic Revolution, in every respect.

2. The big percentage of agricultural labourers, whose numbers too have nearly doubled during the last two and half decades, is not only a valuable asset to the working class and its Communist Party in organising the agrarian revolutionary struggles, but also proves extremely useful in effecting the transition to the next, Socialist stage of our revolution. In the matter of conducting peasant partisan struggles too, 30 to 50 per cent of the agricultural labourers who together with the poor peasants constitute 70 per cent of the rural house-holds would prove invaluable asset, provided they are organized, awakened and united.

3. The sizeable growth of middle classes, both as white-collar employees in the Government offices, public undertakings, banks, L.I.C. and the like and in several institutes under the private sector is a new development. They, mainly as wage earners and as vocal sections of our people, are a valuable segment of our revolutionary forces. The role of this middle class, unlike in the developed capitalist imperialist states, is much more militant and revolutionary. A well-organized industrial and factory working class movement will be in a happy position to organize and lead this big middle class as its close ally.

4. The big growth of the armed force, which has grown four-fold since independence if intended for the use of suppressing the revolutionary forces as pointed out earlier, it has another important aspect. The mercenary army that was organized by the British rulers was a compact and hand-picked one, recruited mainly from the so-called martial races and from other backward and tribal areas. The growth of the three wings of the armed forces, i.e., army, navy and air force, its modernization and expansion etc. is forcing the Govt. to come out of the former, narrow-frame work and recruit more and more educated people and also people

belonging to different big and small nationalities, the ma
mass being from the peasantry. The deepening agrarian cr
sis, the growing centralization of power resulting in th
nullification of autonomy for different nationalities, and th
increasing bankruptcy of the capitalist path of developme
chosen by the big bourgeois leadership—all these provi
greater and greater opportunities to work in the armed forc
and win them to progressive path.

A more favourable international situation : The intern
tional situation today is far more favourable to our revol
tion than it was the case in 1950. The correlation of cla
forces on a world-scale has shifted in favour of the forc
of peace, democracy, national independence and Socialism
The world imperialists had not only lost their political co
trol over their former colonies, but also face sharpene
opposition from the non-aligned countries, mainly on th
economic front ; and this they face at a time when the
capitalist world is under the grip of a serious crisis, and the
countries of the Socialist system are registering big, eco-
nomic, industrial and material advance and achievements.
Though the disunity in world Communist movement—and
the Socialist Camp is, today, preventing the world revolution-
ary forces to take full advantage of the world capitalist
crisis, and in some measure even hindering their speedy
growth, the fact remains that the very existence and growth
of a powerful world Socialist system in a third of the world,
is objectively helping the unleashing of different revolution-
ary currents. While noting the adverse impact of world
Communist disunity on the revolutionary movements of dif-
ferent Communist contingents in the world, we should draw
positive inspiration from the big advances that are being
made by the Socialist countries, the national liberation move-
ment and the working class movements in the capitalist
countries.

The Socialist world's share of world industrial production which was about 25 per cent in 1951 is now 40-45 per cent. The Soviet Union produces more steel, oil, coal, cement,

milk and sugar than the USA. In missiles and nuclear weapons in naval strength, the Soviet Union has acquired parity with the USA with certain advantage in its favour, apart from the superiority of its ground forces.

People's Republic of China has emerged as the third great Power in the world after the USA and the USSR. With annual production of 30 million tons of steel, 80-100 million tons of oil, 400 million tons of coal, 290-300 million tons of foodgrains, it is able to supply the minimum needs of its 800 million people. It has by its own efforts become the third in nuclear might and has modern weapons, navy and air force, capable of defending itself against any foreign aggression.

The most significant and world historic event during the last 25 years is the final and total victory of the Vietnamese people over U.S. imperialism after 30 years of bitter war and reunification of their country. This has been followed by the victories of the peoples of Cambodia and Laos.

The Cuban Revolution has won and the first Socialist State in the Western Hemisphere has been established and is continuing to develop on the very doorstep of U.S. imperialism.

All of Africa has become politically free and bitter battles are being fought by the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa against the white rascist regimes there.

West Asian countries are today preventing Israeli expansion and U.S. domination over the vast oil resources of the countries of West Asia.

The working class and democratic forces are more doggedly fighting their monopolist rulers in the capitalist countries. This is reflected in the great increase in working class strike actions in these countries and the growing influence of Communist Parties in countries like Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Japan.

6. Finally, the most important factor that has developed in favour of our revolution and its perspective path of development is the thirty years rule of the bourgeois-landlord Government and its bankrupt path of capitalist development.

If the people in 1951-52 had big illusions about the ne
won independence and the Congress promises of "welf
state" and "Socialistic pattern" of development, the situa
today, is vastly changed, rapid disillusionment and grow
mass discontent being the order of the day. The econo
crisis, as an integral part of the world capitalist crisis,
in its turn introduced crisis in the bourgeois-parliamen
system. The imposition of Emergency, the virtual bann
of all legal activities of the opposition parties, their tr
unions and other class and mass organizations is continu
for the last 10 months. The bourgeois Opposition parties
groups which were, from time to time, able to mislead
popular discontent and frustrate the growth of the Left
democratic forces and the fructification of their united fro
stand more and more exposed as no real and genuine alt
natives. The people suffering under the despotic, one pa
rule of the Indian National Congress, are beginning, to lo
upon our Party and its political line as the genuine and on
alternative to the Congress misrule. Thus, the situation, tod
is far more favourable to our Party and its perspective pa
of revolution, provided our Party rises to the occasion, u
lise the opportunities that are present before us, and it co
cretely and correctly estimates the current situation to wo
out suitable slogans and forms of action that step by st
lead us to the implementation of the perspective of Tactic
Line to achieve victory in the revolution.

The Tactical Line and the Current Controversies on

The question is raised by some comrades as to why th
Tactical Line or the Statement of Policy and the revolution
ary tactical and organizational concepts it contains remai
unimplemented all these years since 1951.

It is also asked whether the Tactical Line and all th
postulates it contains are still valid. Or that many develop
ments that had taken place during the last 25 years invali
date one or several propositions in it.

Criticisms also are made that the work on Kisan, Trade

Union and Party organizational fronts is not in conformity with the lines laid down in the Statement of Policy.

Some express the doubts whether reformist, revisionist and parliamentary illusions still persist amongst us, thus preventing our work from being orientated to the Tactical Line and the perspective it embodies.

For some of these questions, there had been answers, already, in the foregoing pages of the present Note, and they might be briefly mentioned again.

The serious political-ideological differences and the disunity that plagued the united C.P.I during the years of 1955-64, and the right opportunist outlook that was present in the dominant leadership of the CC and the National Council had, certainly played a big role in virtually shelving the Tactical Line, till the party split in 1963-64. In reality, it was not merely on programmatic issues of stage, strategy and Nature of Indian Revolution that there was sharply divided opinion, but the divergent views on the Tactical Line and the perspective that it has embodied in it did also play a big part in this prolonged inner-Party struggle. In a word the so-called "Peaceful path" projected by the 20th Congress of C.P.S.U., and the clash of opinions in our Party over this right-reformist thesis cannot be separated from our inner-party struggle over the Tactical Line. Thus there was a struggle between the years 1955 and 1964 inside the united C.P.I., some for shelving the Tactical Line and others though a minority, for upholding the Tactical Line. This part of the Party's history cannot be ignored or overlooked.

Then coming to the period, following our 7th Party Congress in November, 1964, the major part of the Central and State Party leaders were detained under D.I.R., and there was no opportunity to attend to the task of working out the lines for different class and mass organizations, in accordance with the Tactical Line, till the last quarter of the year 1966. It was exactly during 1966-67, earnest efforts were made in this regard, and the Tasks on Kisan Front, Tasks on Trade Union Front, Tasks on Party Organization

and the New Situation and Party's Tasks were worked
by the P.B. and CC. Every one of these above-mentio
resolutions of our CC contain serious and forthright atte
to orient our mass work to the Tactical Line.

The resolution, Tasks on the Kisan Front, called for
scious efforts to develop the kisan movement in some
pact and contiguous areas. Similarly, the Calicut Resolu
our Tasks on Party Organization, of November, 1967, a
called for kisan work, especially among agricultural wor
and poor peasants, round the industrial and educational
tres, to large and larger areas in a contiguous belt, an
consolidate scattered kisan areas into contiguous areas, try
to link them up with industrial and educational centres, n
est to it. The plan to develop the revolutionary movemen
certain compact areas, zones or territories and the attemp
see that such areas, zones or territories are linked up with
or the other big urban centre or industrial city is correct.

To under-rate the significance of this effort in any m
ner does neither do justice to the Tactical Line, nor to
Party's efforts to translate it into action.

In the middle of 1967, with the rise of Naxalism, and
left adventurist political-tactical line, the Party's attenti
was once again side-tracked, forcing it to defend the Tac
cal Line and its revolutionary contents from the Left adventur
and terrorist distortions of it, by the Naxalites and th
Chinese Communist mentors. But it is an integral part
our Party's struggle to defend and uphold Tactical Line a
its revolutionary content. To lose sight of all this or to glo
over it, and on that basis to advance the criticism that a
our shortcomings or failures in not succeeding in the build
ing up of the Kisan, Trade Union and Party Organization o
the lines laid down in the Tactical Line, is because of ou
"revisionist hangover" and "parliamentary illusions" is ne
ther correct nor objective. From this, it does not follow, tha
the Right revisionist and Left adventurist tendencies amongst
us are completely liquidated, that parliamentary and legalist
illusions have totally disappeared and there is nothing more

to re-educate and remould our Party in the spirit of the new party programme and the Statement of Policy.

In reality, the differences in the interpretation of different formulations in the Tactical Line have been cropping up in the course of our struggle to orient our work on different tactics, from time to time, which will have to dovetail into the perspective Tactical Line.

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

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

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

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

The agitation, propaganda and activity on the Kisan front, during the last 7 to 8 years, in most of the States where our Kisan movement exists, conform largely to the lines laid down in the above cited resolutions.

In so struggling to reorient our kisan work, if old reformist mistakes still persist or new left sectarian mistakes creep in, the Party leadership at different levels will have to correct them, keeping constant track of them. The very weak state of the present organized kisan movement in the country, its spliting up under different political parties and groups and the Congress Govt.'s disruption and suppression of kisan struggles have imposed many limitations on our Party's struggle

to organize it on revolutionary lines. Also, we cannot af
to forget the fact that the kisan movement that our Par
heading today, is a part of the old united kisan move
built under the leadership of the united CPI, and all
weaknesses that it had inherited cannot be liquidated
quickly and as thoroughly as we wish. But all effort mus
made to liquidate this legacy as quickly as possible.

Despite all these difficulties our Party's efforts to cor
the earlier mistakes on the kisan front have registered s
progress in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Pun
Bihar and Tripura and some other States.

Tactical Line and its Application on Trade Union Movement

The Trade Union front, it is true, cannot be treated as one
the several class and mass fronts by any Communist Pa
since *it is the political party of the working class.* Thou
the Communists in India have been working in the tr
union movement during the last half a century and more,
political influence in the class as a whole and in the org
ized trade union movement as such remains very weak.

As regards our work on the trade union front, it must
stated that, as on other fronts, we were not starting o
clean slate. Although the formal split in the Commun
movement took place in 1964 when we broke away from t
Right revisionist party, we continued to work in the AITU
led by the revisionists and carried on a prolonged strug
with them their revisionism and class collaborationist po
cies for six years, with a view to preserving the unity of t
T.U. movement. It was only when we found it impossible
unleash mass struggles of workers by continuing to rem
in the AITUC that we decided to form a separate organiz
tion. In April, 1970, a preparatory meeting was held in Go
and CITU founded in May 1970—Just five years ago.

Despite this break with the AITUC, when it called
conference of Central T.U. organizations in May. 1971, thre
months after the parliamentary elections, we were instru

mental in evolving a common platform of unity and strug-
gle and forced formation of a steering group for evolving
steps in furtherance of that platform. That unity was dis-
rupted when AITUC and HMS sabotaged its functioning
and finally deserted it by the formation of a national coor-
dination Committee of Trade Unions under the auspices of
and with the blessings of the Govt. It was after that we
formed the UCTU.

Our independent activity couple with the pursuit of the
tactics of united front has led to many strike struggles on
our own, and also united struggles, frustrating the attempts
of the class collaborationist leadership of the INTUC, AITUC,
HMS to prevent struggles. Not only were there local and
factory based struggles but State-wide strikes in a number
of industries like textiles, jute, engineering, sugar had been
there. This period also witnessed all-India strikes of cement
workers, loco and running staff and of all-Railway workers.
*For the first time in the history of India, there was an all-
India General Strike in all industries in support of the
Railway workers' strike.*

The role of the CITU in these developments has been
such that the CITU has come to be looked upon by the mass
of workers as the most militant trade union organization,
while the Govt. and employers were treating it as thier enemy
number one. We have become the foremost T.U. organiza-
tion in the States of West Bengal and Kerala and the most
effective among all the T.U. organizations in Tamil Nadu
and Rajasthan. Our organization has spread to new areas—
Delhi, Western U.P., Haryana, coal mines of in M.P., Bhilai,
Jamshedpur, etc. These facts must be kept in view while
discussing the understanding and application of the Tactical
Line document to the Trade Union Front.

However, in spite of all these developments during the
last five years since the foundations of the CITU, it must be
represents only a minority of the organized working class in
the country, and in key and vital industries in particular, let
alone the whole working class in the country.

This broad generalisation is not enough. That will h
good for a long time to come. We must assess concret
CITU strength, its TU membership and influence, in relat
to the total workers (i) in different states, (ii) in differ
industrial centres in the States, (iii) in key and vital ind
tries in the states as well as on all-India scale; we sho
also assess CITU strength in relation to the strength
other Trade Union organizations affiliated to the INTU
AITUC and others, as well as non-affiliated independ
unions. Without this, we will be carried away by our s
jective desires and not by objective realities. Without
objective assessment we will be dragged into wrong tact
in course of developing working class mass actions, bui
ing trade union unity over coming the present divisions.

It is precisely to overcame this above-mentioned wea
ness and several other shortcomings, it is stated in the doc
ment "Tasks on Trade Union Front", the following :-

"The working class as a class can play its historic, polit
cal class role in the People's Democratic Revolution if t
trade union struggle where it gains the initial consciousne
trains it, disciplines and raises its consciousness to discharg
its political obligations". (Para 2, page 1, Tasks on TU Front

"For the Marxist-Leninist Party the tasks on the trad
union front do not comprise of only the Tactical Line o
running the trade unions as organs of daily struggle for th
effective defence of the economic interests of the workin
class under given conditions. While defending the daily i
terests, they aim at organising disciplined working clas
with revolutionary socialist-consciousness, drawing it neare
the Party, with its best elements—joining the Party in hun
dreds, enabling the class as a whole to play its historic
political role in the revolutionary struggle. (Para 4, page 1,
Tasks on TU Front).

While attaching vital importance to the defence of the
daily interests of the working class, and the building of its
mass trade union organization, it measures its own success
and the success of the working class movement by the level

of revolutionary consciousness created during the course of these struggles, *the advance of the Marxist-Leninist Party among the workers*, and the extent to which the Party is able to exercise its leadership over the trade union movement. (Page 2, line14-21, Tasks on TU Front) (Emphasis added.)

Working Class Hegemony

It is necessary to remember that one of the major issues on which we fought the revisionists is the hegemony of the working class—its pre-condition—for the victory of the democratic revolution. While the revisionists discarded it, we stuck to the Leninist concept.

Secondly, the passages quoted above from the Tasks on Trade Union Front emphasise the nation-wide role of the working class, its trade union movement and forging the unity. That means the entire class has to be organized and united. Its trade union unity must be brought about. In the course of the struggle political consciousness has to be roused. The majority of the workers in the vital industries as a class not only in priority areas—is to be won over.

In developing working class hegemony in the Indian revolution, our struggle for trade union unity has a vital role to play. The struggle for trade union unity is the preliminary struggle for preparing the class hegemony – of the leading class. The struggle for trade union unity through the application of united front tactics has to be seen in this light. Its role should be clearly grasped. A failure to understand the class role leads to the undermining of the struggle for the unity of the working class.

The CC Resolution on Tasks on Party Organization of November 1967 has stated, "Thirdly in our choice of fronts, priority is for the working class and students in cities, and agricultural labour and poor peasants in rural areas. In the working class, too, the priority is for key and major industries, and then the scattered small-scale or household industries." This is the correct orientation of the Tactical Line document.

While we attempt to concentrate and build the TUs key industries, we must also build the movement industryw Statewise and on all-India basis. The two do not con with each other, and in fact, could go together. In this, importance of developing the movement in contiguous a and regions should be kept in mind.

Further the T.U. pockets and movements our Party inherited when the CITU was founded do not fit into a scheme of priority areas and industries. These have to kept in view in developing the movement.

We have to stick to this understanding and examine whe any formulations made in subsequent documents conflict w or is capable of giving a different understanding. We h also to take into account life's experience. Examined in t light, if any corrections are necessary, they must be mad

The Muzaffarpur resolution of the CC of 1973, stat "Our tactics in face of uneven development of the mov ment must be to consolidate and extend to contiguous ar from the existing states and develop these as wider a wider mass bases, while in the weaker States or areas, sel the key centres or fronts begin with, and link with major strong centre till we have a wider area, where we can rea function as a powerful mass and political force."

It is also stated, "When we are concentrating on k industries, we begin first these key industries in the prior areas and develop neighbouring peasant belts *before we t to spread and extend the organization even in these k industries on a state-wide basis*."

It is again stated :"It is no use, in the name of develop a State-wide trade union movement, even in the key a basic industries, the Party dispersing its energies through the State, T.U. work in that priority area means beginnin with the key industries and spreading to other industries i that area, spreading among the peasantry all around. ... ... *Work among the railway and road transport or other strate gic industries means priority to those industries in these areas and expansion of those through the State gets secondary*

importance, after other fronts in the priority areas are looked after and in no case at the cost of other fronts in the priority areas." (Emphasis added)

In the above cited passages from our CC Resolution of Muzaffarpur, the March 1973, there are certain ideas and formulations which give the wrong meaning of counterposing the importance of work in the compact areas and zones to that of extension and expansion of our T.U. work, industry-wide and State-wide. These will have to be corrected.

There have been some views, and criticism regarding the shortcomings and drawbacks in our Party's work on the Trade Union Front. All such views and criticism fall into three broad categories.

One is about the shortcomings and weaknesses that are common to the trade union movement in the entire country, in which our Party is able to assume leadership for a small part it only. *They pertain to the issue of building the party in the TUs, developing Kisan work around the industrial centres raising the political consciousness among the working class, failure to work in reformist trade unions and organising of secret party units in factories and trades etc.* Further these weaknesses are a legacy of the long past, and it requires patient and prolonged work to overcome them and that too cannot be achieved as long as our influence on the trade union movement in the country is confined to a few pockets in States, a few branches of industries and concerns in the whole Indian Union and a minority of the industrial working class. The fact that many such shortcomings and weaknesses still persist in the working class movement led by the CITU does not automatically and necessarily follow that it is so because of the incorrect understanding of the perspective Tactical Line and the role of the working class as visualised in it. These are long-term tasks on the T.U. front, and sustained and prolonged work, with a correct Marxist-Leninist understanding alone, can overcome them.

The *Second* concerns about setting up state-wide, all India-wide and industry-wide Federations which will not be in

a position to really and effectively function, the organising
some trade unions separately under the CITU which is
ther desirable from the angle of the trade union unity
from the angle of their desirability under the conditions
growing repression, and the functioning or otherwise of
T.U. Sub-Committees and fractions etc. in accordance w
the lines laid by the CC on the subject. Strictly speaking
such criticism about the shortcomings or mistakes in
CITU, functioning, if there exist any, can and should
taken up separately, and it cannot be and need not be i
ported into the discussion on the Tactical Line and its i
plementation on the T.U. by our Party.

The *Third* viewpoint and criticism relates to the conc
of proletarian hegemony, its interpretation and the me
and methods of achieving it in the concrete conditions
taining in our country. In other words it pertains to t
correct application of the concept of combining the tw
major weapons of struggle in our revolution, namely, t
peasant partisan war and the general strike and armed upri
ing of the working class.

In the views and criticisms cited above, the last one
very much germane to the discussion of the Tactical Lin
and the differences that have appeared over it.

The Tactical Line and the Statement of Policy document
while laying down the perspective path of the People
Democratic Revolution in India, have negated the two pe
spective paths that were projected and debated during th
years of 1948-51, namely, the so-called Russian Path an
the Chinese Path. The Russian Path was understood as th
capture of power in the cities and urban centres throug
political general strike and armed insurrection, and then t
proceed for the liberation of the vast rural areas, while th
Chinese path was understood as the creation of liberated
areas and liberation armies, through prolonged peasant par-
tisan warfare under the leadership of the Communist Party,
and then proceed to liberate the cities and urban centres.

If the advocates of the Chinese Path contemplated the

prolonged peasant partisan war as *the major weapon* for the success of the Indian Revolution, the opponents of the Chinese Path and the advocates of the Russian Path contemplated the political general strike and armed uprising of the working class to capture power in the cities and urban centres, as *the major weapon* for the victory of the Indian Revolution.

The Tactical Line document of 1951, has rejected both the schools of thought, on the ground that in the specific Indian conditions, neither of these two weapons can become the major weapon for a successful revolution, but a combination of both these weapons is a must.

The T.L. not only rejected the two "paths" but also the specific role allotted to the working class and the peasantry, by the advocates of respective "paths". If observed that if those who believed in Chinese Path relegated the role of the working class into the background, the others who upheld the Russian path had ignored the role of the peasantry in a colonial or semi-colonial country as India, with a huge peasant population, suffering under feudal and semi-feudal oppression.

Thus the T.L. postulates the perspective path of Tactics as the combination of peasant partisan warfare and urban working uprising, while specifying the role of both the working class and peasantry, under specific conditions prevailing in India.

Thus, it is quite evident that the perspective Tactical Line, which negates the political general strike and armed uprising of the workers as *the major weapon* for the success of the revolution, does not rule out general strike and armed uprising of the working class during the course of the revolutionary struggle for power, visualising it to take place *only at the final stage* of the capturing of political power. Similarly, the T.L. which negates peasant partisan war as *the major weapon* for the victory of our revolution, does not rule out widespread partisan warfare, the creation of liberated armies and liberated areas in the rural side, visualising them to take place *only simultaneously* with the political general strike and armed insurrection of the working class.

In fact, the T.L. document envisaged partisan warfare, eration areas and liberation armies in the course of the re lutionary struggle for power, of course, without ruling the prospect or the possibility of a political general st and armed rising of the working class.

Our Party, while adhering to the basic postulates mad the perspective Tactical Line document worked out in year 1951, should also take into serious account the big soc economic developments that have taken place in our coun during the last 25 years, and work its tasks in conform with the perspectives projected in the T.L. document.

Since the possibility of either a short and swift attack, was the case in the Russian Revolution or a prolonged p sant partisan warfare for 20 years and more like the Chine revolution cannot be materialised in specific Indian cond tions, we should strive to combine both the weapons for t success of our revolution.

The economic crisis and its maturity, the widespread d veloping of the revolutionary movement in the working clas peasantry and other exploited masses, the building of powerful and steeled Marxist Party, the building up of th People's Democratic Front, the most skilled and organize work in the armed forces, the successful utilisation of th legal possibilities and its combination with the illegal ac tivities, and the wielding of the two major weapons of workers insurrection and peasant war—all these constitute the com ponents of Tactical Line.

Any lop-sided stress on one or two of the above men tioned aspects, to the neglect of visual negation of othe equally important aspects, is bound to undermine the very basis of Tactical Line and its living spirit.

Weaknesses in the TU Movement

Despite the advance registered in the trade union movement during the last few years after our split from the revisionists, it is a fact that serious weaknesses persist and without overcoming these, the working class cannot play the role of

hegemony, nor can the democratic movement be developed widely, which alone will create the basis for a successful revolutionary struggle. These weaknesses have been spotted long ago in the "Tasks on the Trade Union Front" and repeatedly emphasised in the CITU documents.

The working class movement in the country is badly divided, and it is not yet sufficiently organized even on the trade basis. A big section of it is still under the influence of the ruling Congress Party and other petty-bourgeois parties. The level of political consciousness is very low, and even the section that is organized under the CITU and on which there is general political influence of the CPI(M) cannot be described as having socialist consciousness. We have not yet succeeded to organize the auxiliary units and regular party units from those who are under our Party's general political influence. Unless the working class under the leadership of the CITU succeeds in uniting the class on a much bigger and wider scale, and makes big advance in politicalising the class and building a strong Communist Party out of it, the revolutionary tasks enjoyed by the perspective Tactical Line can never be fulfilled. Our Party must make redoubled efforts to liquidate these grave shortcomings on the working class front.

In general, the trade unions under our leadership have not yet succeeded to rouse even that section of the working class to take up the issues of the peasantry, without which there is neither the worker-peasant alliance nor working class hegemony. Many workers come from the rural areas and are connected with the peasants by a thousand and one ties. If they are made conscious, they can organize the peasantry in those areas. That this is possible has been shown by experience. A serious effort must be made to devote developed class conscious working class cadres to discharge this task.

Secondly, the T.L. document explains that the close and firm alliance of the working class and peasantry can be built if the working class champions the demands of the peasants and comes out in actions in support of the struggles of the peasants. This has also been repeatedly emphasised in the

"Tasks on the Trade Union Front", "Tasks on Party Orga zation" and in the documents of the CITU.

But barring rare cases like the Bombay working cl collecting sizeable funds for the relief of the Mahara peasants when the State was going through a severe fam and the jute workers of West Bengal in their confere taking up in a big way the issue of the prices of raw jute the growers, nothing much has been done.

Thirdly, the raising of the consciousness of the en working class under our influence, on the general politi situation in the country and the tasks they have to perfo in this regard relating them to our objective of Peopl Democratic Revolution has been very weak. Repeatedly TU documents have pointed out the weakness of "economis in the TU movement and the need to politicalise the wo ers. and yet this weakness persists even in that section whi is under the influence of the CITU, let alone the worki class as a whole which is far bigger.

The deepening and expansion of the popular moveme in general is necessary for the widespread development partisan struggles, city uprisings and successful revolutio

This cannot be brought about without the working cla championing the cause of all sections of the people, the demands and actions supporting their struggles.

These weaknesses are due to weaknesses arising out lack of conciousness and also born out of reformist outloo still persisting despite our break from the revisionists. serious and sustained struggle has to be carried on again the hangover of the revisionist out look, economism, et and these shortcomings quickly overcome by the Party at a levels.

Development of the Movement on Wide Scale

The T.L. document stated :"It is one of the key tasks of the Party to forge the unity of the working class, to *unite the popular forces* on the basis of the concrete programme and to grow into a mass Party so as to be able to supply the

leadership which alone can unify and expand the mass movements to raise it to a higher level."

This means that for the successful overthrow of the bourgeois-landlord Government, for the success of the revolutionary movement, the Party must have the people. The basic condition is the widest possible mass base to operate.

After we founded our Party in 1964 and came out of jail and after the general elections, we worked out the tasks on Party Organization in November 1967. In that initial stage, taking into consideration the tremendous uneven development of the Party and its mass base, the document directed that the movement be built in compact and contiguous areas.

Since that document was written, the mass movement has grown in West Bengal and Kerala. It is the strongest force and has a wide mass base in these two States. In Tripura also, the Party has a wide mass base, but it is a very small State.

This development has frightened the Govt. It unleashed semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and savage repression in Kerala and Tripura.

The defence and further advance of these advanced movements requires the extension of the movements to ever new areas, new States and industries. This has become and urgent necessity.

The development of the mass base in the other States requires the intervention of the Party as effectively as possible in the popular mevements that have been developing there and are bound to develop in the future.

The documents of 1967 as well as the organizational resolution by the CC at Muzaffarpur were first attempts to orientate our current work on different fronts, to the perspective Tactical Line. They were prepared without either a collective discussion of the T.L. or a common understanding arrived at. Their basic orientation was correct. But we cannot stick to every formulation made or to stick to the letter of the position regarding "priority areas" or "Strategic areas" without making provision for the possibilities of

developing our movements and influence on a wide s
through intervention in struggles that break out beacus
objective conditions. The T.L. document directs the crea
of a wide mass base all over the country and organiza
of the working class on an all-India basis and win over
majority in the strategic industries all over the country.
perience has shown that it is not possible to defend
expand the advanced movements in the face of semi-fa
terror without all-India support.

It must be realised that mass struggles are breaking
in various places where we are weak. In the absence
our Party, other reactionary parties take the leadership
these strugles and hence those struggles do not get
ented to the democratic revolution. Every effort must
made to establish the Party's links with these struggl
help them spread further, and politically influence the mas
involved in these struggles in the direction of the dem
cratic revolution. It must be be remenbered that a situ
tion of general break-down of the order is an essenti
element, which itself is produced by widespread struggl
partisan struggles, etc.

It is in this connection that widespread political pro
ganda and development of the mevement by the Party in t
country as a whole — not only in the priority areas a
strong States—becomes a must.

It must also be realised that at present the growth of t
popular democratic movement lags far behind the growth
popular discontent. While discharging its tasks on the Tr
Union and peasant fronts and while intervening in popu
struggles when and where they break out, the Party has
give due attention to organize and lead the movements
students, youth and women.

These weaknesses must be quickly overcome.

The T.L. document also deals with the need to build
mass Party for successfully carrying out the People's Demo
cratic Revolution. Its implications on Party building ar
dealt with in a separate document.

The 30 years' rule of the bourgeois-landlord Govt., the policies it has pursued in pursuit of the path of building capitalism in collaboration with foreign monopolists and in alliance with feudal landlordism, have all landed the country in a very deep crisis. They have led to tremendous intensification of the exploitation of the people. Mass unemployment, poverty and misery have grown. As a result, the conflict between the people and Govt. has intensified. The policies and measures that the Govt. has taken in its attempt to get over the crisis will aggravate the conflict.

Further these policies have led to intense conflicts between the ruling party and all other bourgeois Opposition parties, the in-fights inside the ruling party is a continuous feature and is getting aggravated. The Govt. has declared a state of Internal Emergency and following it, it has not only done away with all freedoms but has abrogated the Rule of Law. Vast sections who hitherto were unaffected by political developments, are getting enraged by these developments. All these have opened up big opportunities for developing the democratic movement on a far wider scale for fulfilling the tasks laid down in the T.L. document.

In concluding the discussion on the perspective Tactical Line and its implications we should bear in mind that the T.L. visualises the possible course of the development of the People's Democratic Revolution in our country and the key importance of the combination of the peasant partisan war and workers' uprisings and general strike in that development. While adhering to it and building our working class and peasant movement and the Communist Party in conformity with the line laid down in it, we must also be prepared for every contingency.

Many developments which we cannot foresee at the present stage of our movement may confront us. In which national and international situtation, the Indian Revolution breaks out, and how our nationalities problem shapes itself, if the present path of capitalist development is allowed to persist

for long, we cannot view with any precision and exactit
However, we should orientate our work in building the c
and mass movements in the country, in building the P
and in forging the People's Democratic Front on
general guidelines provided in the perspective Tactical L

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Present Political Situation*

CPI(M) Central Committee's Statement dated July 25, 1976

The Present Political Situation

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) at its last meeting had pointed out that the Congress Government, while advertising measures to ameliorate the conditions of the most down-trodden sections of the people, would intensify its inexorable drive to authoritarian rule and attacks on all democratic rights and fundamental freedoms of the people in order to stifle all opposition to its anti-people policies and in defence of the interests of the monopolists and Big Business. During the last six months, this drive has been accelerated in all conceivable ways. All sections of the common people are attacked. The police, the bureaucracy and anti-social elements are running amok and intimidating and terrorising the people.

The DMK Government in Tamil Nadu was dismissed on the ground that it was not following the Centre's policies in regard to the Emergency.

Government has enacted the Press and Objectionable Matters Publication Act making any criticism of Government impossible. District Magistrates have been empowered to demand heavy securities and even confiscate a press arbitrarily and virtually no legal remedy against such arbitrary actions is open to the victims. Such a draconian law was not enacted ever before.

*This Document was adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its Calcutta session of July 15-20, 1976. A censored version of this statement was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, August 1, 1976.

The IX Schedule of the Constitution was intend
prevent the courts from striking down land reforms and si
socio-economic legislations on the ground of infringe
of property rights. But, knowing that this Press and C
tionable Matters Publication Act was unconstitutiona
liable to be struck down by the courts, the Governmen
no scruple to misuse the provisions of the Constitutio
garding IX Schedule and included the Act in the Sche
thus removing the Act from the purview of the courts.

The Samachar, the news agency created by the merge
the PTI and UNI, is completely under Government co
and all senior correspondents who were critical of Gov
ment policies had been demoted and some of them remo
from service. The Press is terrorised and prevented f
publishing news of atrocities by the police and the bure
racy on the common people. Opposition Party Press and
Party Press in particular are subject to vindictive attacks
the censor. In Kerala, copies of our Party publication
Constitutional Amendments were seized from the Press e
before any officer of the Government had seen them. A
when asked the Home Minister gives the answer that
Government will go through the pamphlet and if they f
anything objectionable, they will take action. In Tamil Na
the censor does not allow the publication of words like "I
perialism", "CIA", "Exploitation","Oppression", "Fabulo
Profits" etc. Other newspapers that refuse to toe the offic
line are discriminated against in the matter of Governm
advertisements and are harassed in many ways. Publicati
of Judgements of High Courts adverse to Government
prohibited.

And now the Government has come for the creation of wh
is called the news pool by the under-developed countries. Wh
it is true that the monopoly of the imperialist news agencie
which distort the events in the under-developed countries a
completely suppress news of anti-imperialist struggles in thes
countries has to be broken, the alternative that is suggested i
no solution. Under this scheme only news favourable to th

ruling parties in most of these countries of the Third World will be published. Further, news about the struggles of peoples of these countries against exploitation and oppression, the severe repression meted out to them by the regimes there, will be completely blacked out, as is being done in our country since the Emergency. No objective criticism of the policies of these Governments will be allowed. All this will prevent the common peoples of these countries from drawing inspiration from the struggles of their compeers in other countries and forging solidarity among them.

Even the judiciary is not immune from the intimidation and terrorisation. For the first time since Independence, nearly 70 judges of various High Courts, including those that delivered judgements against the arbitrary acts of the Government and the Executive have been transferred within a short period of three months.

The MISA has been again amended by an ordinance empowering detention without trial for two years at a stretch, without furnishing the grounds of detention.

Thousands of Government employees including activists of employees' associations have been compulsorily retired. Circulars have been issued to State Governments to screen all employees and remove from service any one suspected of indulging in trade union activities. This Damocle's sword hangs over all Government employees so that they may be coerced to do the bidding of the ministers, the Congress party and the bureaucracy, law or no law.

Students are intimidated in all ways. In some States they are denied admissions on the basis of police reports regarding their political leanings, and particularly if they had been members of the Students' Federation of India and other students' organizations that do not fall in line with Congress policies. They are coerced to give an undertaking that they would support the 20-point programme and are compelled to join the Congress-sponsored National Union of Students.

Municipalities, panchayat samitis, panchayats and co-operative societies controlled by Opposition parties and

even Congress groups opposed to the ruling coterie are
perseded *en masse*. Elections to the local bodies are
poned and in Kerala, they have not been held for 16 y

In the name of unearthing undisclosed wealth favou
of the ruling party are let scotfree while those opposing
ruling party are harassed, The bureaucracy is running a
Income tax official carry out raids on the residences of
fessionals, doctors, lawyers, etc. and demand large br
with threats of action on false charges. Small and medi
shop-keepers and small scale industrialists are groaning u
similar harassments by the sales-tax and excise officials
police. As a result of the unbridled licence given to
officials, corruption has increased tremendously, despite
tall talk of fighting corruption.

The urban ceiling Acts, which were enacted with a
fare of propaganda that they are intended to provide hous
to the poorer sections have remained a dead letter. On
other hand, in the name of beautifying the cities, slum cle
ance, unauthorised buildings etc. lakhs of poor peopl
dwellings have been mercilessly demolished by bulldoze
in cities like Delhi. They are asked to move to places 8
10 miles from their places of work and no elementary ameni
like drinking water have been provided.

In Delhi, even the chambers of lawyers in Tees Haz
Court have been demolished, suddenly on a Sunday a
their law books, etc. have been completely destroyed. Th
were prevented from going in a silent procession to t
Delhi High Court to make representation to the Chief Ju
tice by the CRP. When they went separately by various mod
of transport, all the lawyers travelling by a chartered bu
were arrested on criminal charges.

The gruesome teargassing, lathi-charges and firing o
innocent people who refused to vacate their dwellings i
Turkman Gate in New Delhi, killing scores of people and
seriously wounding many more including women and chil-
dren, shows the merciless and inhuman drive to uproot the
poorer sections of the people about whose conditions the

Government sheds copious tears through all the media of propaganda at its command.

Apart from these official atrocities, the Congress gangsters are let loose on the people. In cities like Delhi shopkeepers are compelled to buy from them Congress flags at prices varying from Rs. 7 to Rs. 10 and forced to put them up on their shops. They forcibly take over offices of trade unions which do not toe the official line, and threaten and beat up workers and compel them to join the Congress unions. In Kerala, offices of trade unions, of Opposition parties and even libraries are attacked and occupied or destroyed. Physical attacks and murders are committed by them with impunity on the leaders and supporters of the Opposition parties with the police remaining silent spectators in many places. And in those cases when the victims register complaints in police station or where people dare to resist these atrocities, the victims of these attacks are arrested. In West Bengal, all these attacks have been going on since 1972.

Apart from these, harassment of the people in the name of population control knows no bounds. Instead of raising the living standards, education and cultural level of the people which would lead people resorting to family planning voluntarily, instead of popularising the need for family planning and making people take to it voluntarily, the Government has resorted to a massive drive of compulsory sterilization. The entire Government machinery, including police, teachers, Govt. employees, has been pressed into service for this purpose.

All methods such as stopping ration cards to those who have more than three children, denying annual increments, promotions, medical and housing facilities to Government employees who have more than three children, meting out similar punishments to those who do not fulfill the quota of "motivation", i.e., getting people for sterilization, and even withholding the salaries of the employees of the Public Health Department for not fulfilling the quota fixed by Government are being resorted to.

In many Government hospitals people are denied medical

treatment if they cannot produce certificates of steriliza
The Maharashtra Government has introduced a Bill in
Asssembly, which has been finalised by the Select Com
tee. The Bill provides for imprisonment for those who
more than three children and compulsory abortion in c
of women having a third conception. Such a legislation
never been enacted in any country.

On the one hand, while this all-round attack on the w
ers and employees goes on, the much advertised 20-p
programme has proved a dismal failure. The target dat
June 30, 1976, for the implementation of the land ceil
Act is over. And yet, Government's own statements sh
that the surplus land declared is 17 lakh acres only, the l
taken over by the Government is only 10 lakh acres and
land actually distributed is only 4 lakh acres among 2 l
families. Many of those to whom land is distributed
prevented from occupying them by landlords with the co
nivance of the police and other officials.

The minimum wages fixed by the State Governments ha
remained on paper and any attempt to organize the agric
tural labourers and make them assert their rights is met wi
the severest repression and goonda attacks with the conni
ance of the police.

In the absence of provision for alternative cheap cred
facilities, the laws declaring a moratorium on rural deb
and cancellation of debts of agriculttural labourers have on
led to driving them once again into the clutches of the vi
lage moneylenders and landlords.

Similarly, the advertised freeing of about 47,000 bonde
labourers has also proved a hoax. In the absence of alterna
tive employments, these people have to seek work unde
these selfsame landlords.

The tall claims of distribution of house-sites to the poo
are highly exaggerated. Even where some distribution ha
taken place, the landless labourers are not provided with
any funds for constructing huts and dwelling places and no
amenities—not even for drinking water—have been provided.

In many places, sites have been given in places far way from their places of work and in marshy lands. Even the Right Communist Party leaders, who have been the most ardent and loudest in showering paens of praise on the 20-point programme and in supporting the Government and the Emergency, have had to complain after their padayatras that the programme has remained a paper programme.

A propaganda barrage had been let loose from the Prime Minister downwards that inflation has been brought down as the greatest achievement of the Emergency. But, the wholesale price index is rising at the rate of 2% per month during the last four months. This was the same rate of inflation in the year preceding the declaration of Internal Emergency. And this despite the bumper harvest of 118 million tonnes of foodgrains and of the commercial crops like cotton, oilseeds, jute, etc. And yet the Government does not think of taking over the wholesale trade in foodgrains and essential commodities, but is planning to import foodgrains, oil, cotton, etc. to meet the situation ! Such is the solicitude to the vested interests!

As a part of the anti-inflationary measures, the attack on workers' earnings, their jobs, conditions of work has intensified. Increased workload and continuous erosion of their wages by manipulating the consumer price index which has led to reduction of D.A. by nearly Rupees 100 per month, colossal increase of unemployment by closures, retrenchment, lay-offs and lockouts, have been going on in jute, cotton textiles, engineering, automobile and all industries. The solemn agreement on bonus with the LIC employees to which the Government itself has been a party has been unceremoniously scrapped by a legislative enactment. The compulsory impounding of DA has been extended. Rupees 1,000 crores of impounded DA which is due to be returned is sought to be withheld by coercing the workers to deposit them in Provident Fund or other forms of investment. And in most cases in the private sector, the workers and employees will not get back their impounded DA because the Govt. did not implement the provisions of the Act to provide the workers with pass

books showing their deposits. The slightest resistance by
working class is met with the severest repression and d
tion under MISA or DIR. The Apex bodies, the schem
"Participative management" on which only trade unions
porting the Government like the INTUC and AITUC
been represented could not prevent the attacks and eve
AITUC leadership had to publicly bemoan that these bo
have proved ineffective. Thus conditions of slave labour
sought to be imposed on the workers.

As for the peasants, the bumper crop did not help the
ameliorate their conditions. On the other hand, prices o
agricultural commodities crashed at the time of harvest w
the poor and medium peasant sell their produce, the pric
manufactured articles went on increasing. The prices of
puts remained more or less stationary. Taxes, water-ra
power-rates, transport charges etc. have gone on mounti

This—the suppression of all democratic and trade un
rights, attacks on the working class and employees; the v
deep crisis which all traditional industries like coir, cash
nut, handlooms etc. are passing through; closure of sm
scale and medium industries due to recession, retrenchm
lay-offs, and lockouts and the consequent galloping une
ployment, terrorisation of all sections of the people incl
ing the judiciary, professionals, teachers students, artis
and writers; increase of corruption under the guise of fig
ing corruption; uprooting of the mass of slumdwellers a
others; complete stifling of all dissent by draconian laws,
ruthless censorship and other threats, and by detention
leaders and workers of Opposition parties and democra
movements—this authoritarian rule is what is called th
"New Era" commencing from the imposition of intern
Emergency on June 26, 1975.

All this is necessitated by the need to solve the cris
created by the basic policies of the Government at the ex
pense of the people. India with its huge population of 600
millions is the second biggest market in the world. But yet
even the limited production by overall utilization of less

than 40% of the industrial capacity cannot be consumed by an impoverished people. To save the economy from crashing, the Govt. of India has embarked upon a big export drive. And the price it is prepared to pay for getting a share of the capitalist markets is the opening of the country's door to foreign monopolists and multinationals to invest in collaborating with Indian monopolists, opening all fields for exploitation by them. The allurements is cheap labour and suppression of all trade union rights and assurance of industrial peace under conditions of slave labour.

That is why the World Bank and the Aid India Consortium countries have all showered encomiums on India and have come forward to give more aid.

In the face of the growing contradictions between imperialism and the undeveloped countries including India, the Government takes anti-imperialist positions on a number of questions and seeks closer trade and economic relations with the USSR and other Socialist countries. But these are utilized not to free the economy from dependence on imperialism. On the other hand, they are used to bargain with the foreign monopolists and multinationals for a junior partnership and sub-contracts in projects in third countries.

On the one hand, the Prime Minister thunders against imperialism and proclaims that India would not be intimidated by these powers. On the other hand, bit by bit, the Govt. accepts every one of their demands. Greater freedom for the private sector, removal of restrictions on private foreign capital and multinationals whose role as the agency through which the hated CIA operates has now been fully exposed, the recommendation of the Aid India Consortium that "exports and massive foreign aid should form the major part of saving, investment and growth for boosting India's flagging industrial growth rate during the coming decade", and above all, the creation of proper climate for investment, to wit, suppression of the working class and creation of slave labour conditions have all been accepted bit by bit. Even the disgusting compulsory sterilization drive is in

fulfilment of the demand for population control by the US and the World Bank for years and its increasing insistence as revealed by the latest communique of the Consortium countries, where they expressed the hope "that India would lay stress on the importance of family planning".

The wrath that these policies are rousing among all sections of our people is sought to be met by intensified repression and still more suppression of all democratic rights and fundamental freedoms. That is why the Government refused to hold elections and is determined to continue the Emergency. And even if ever it decides to hold the elections, it wants to hold them under the conditions of the Emergency, which would make the elections a farce.

And now the Government has come forward with drastic amendments to the Constitution. It did not allow any public discussion or debate on the amendments needed or the amendments proposed by the ruling party. And yet it is rushing these amendments in the coming session of Parliament.

These amendments do not restrict the right to property to big business houses; they do not propose to guarantee the fundamental rights to work; to receive State assistance in cases of unemployment, disability or old age; to receive free medical aid from the State; to receive free education; but they seek to deny whatever fundamental rights have been guaranteed in the Constitution under the precious plea of precedence of Directive Principles over Fundamental Rights, as if these Fundamental Rights come in conflict with the Directive Principles. The rights of courts to give relief to the people against arbitrary acts of the Executive are sought to be done away with. While on the other hand, the Fundamental Rights are sought to be done away with, on the other hand, some so-called fundamental duties of the citizens are sought to be included, non-observance of which will be severely punished. The rights of workers and Government employees to approach courts for relief against arbitrary dismissals are to be seriously undermined. Parliament will be reduced to a farce and all powers will vest with the Executive. In short, these amendments seek to impose an authoritarian policy and make the unhindered exercise of all power by the Executive obtaining after the imposition of Internal Emergency permanent.

The real aim of the Govt. is to do away with even the existing democratic rights and fundamental freedoms, and the Parliamentary system, as they exist today.

A party which received only 43% of the votes polled at the last Parliamentary elections but could secure more than two-thirds of the seats only because of an electoral system which grossly distorts the reflection of the people's will in the legislature, a party whose mandate to rule even under this electoral system has expired on 18th March, 1976, but by abusing the Emergency powers of the Constitution, has perpetuated its rule, jailed 30 members of Parliament and many members of State Assemblies, stifled all dissent, shamelessly proclaims that it represents the will of the people and is in a hurry to make these far-reaching amendments in its mad drive for one-party dictatorship.

These basic policies, if not reversed, will lead to drawing our economy more firmly in the clutches of the decaying and crisis-ridden capitalist market and will increase dependence on imperialists and foreign monopolists. They will condemn our people to still greater poverty, ever mounting unemployment and destitution.

Discontent is mounting among all sections of our people—workers, middle class employees, peasants, teachers, jurists, lawyers and other professionals, artistes, writers, etc. The illusion and hopes created by the high-powered propaganda among the agricultural labourers, harijans, etc. are bound to be shattered by their own bitter experience. Despite all the manoeuvres, like taking into its fold many leaders of the parties like the Congress (O), Jana Sangh, BLD, etc. whom Indira Gandhi characterise as Right reactionaries but who are welcomed into the Congress with open arms once they defect, group fights are increasing in every State.

However, the Govt. cannot be fought and these policies

reversed by parties like the Congress (O), BLD, Jana San
on the baiss of policies within the framework of the existi
economic relations and by the Socialist Party joining th
to form one party or by other means.

They can be successfully fought only by forging Left a
democratic unity on the basis of a platform of alternati
policies. The ten-point programme placed by the CC affor
the basis of such a programme.

The CC of the CPI(M) hopes that the ranks and follo
ers of the Right Communist Party would awaken by t
experience of the past and particularly of the last one ye
of Internal Emergency, to the dangers of the policy pursu
by their leadership and help in the forging of unity of t
Left and democratic forces. It also hopes that the Social
Party and other Left and democratic parties will also ta
their place in forging the unity of the Left and democrat
forces. It appeals to all democrats, in whichever party th
may be to help in forging this unity.

Above all, the most urgent need of the hour is the broa
est mobilization of our people to fight for democratic right
and against the drive to authoritarian rule and one part
dictatorship. To this end, the CC reiterates its demand to

1. Lift the Emergency and stop proceeding with the Co
stitutional amendments.

2. Release of all leaders and workers of political partie
and trade unions, kisan and other democratic movement
who have been jailed.

3. Repeal all draconian laws like the MISA, DIR, the
Press and Objectionable Matters Publication Act, the Act
banning any criticism of the Prime Minister, the Act prohib
iting the publication of speeches of members of Parliament

4. Restore freedom of Press, of assembly and forming
unions and associations.

5. Stop the goonda attacks by the storm-troopers of the
ruling party.

6. Restoration of normalcy and creation of conditions for
holding free and fair elections.

What is at stake today is all the democratic rights and fundamental freedoms, all the democratic values for which the people fought and made immense sacrifices in the prolonged struggle for independence. What is at stake is the right of the people for a better life which would take them out of the scourge of poverty, destitution and unemployment and ensure for the country conditions for an uninterrupted march as a strong and prosperous nation, free from exploitation of its human and material resources by vested interests and foreign capital.

The CC therefore fervently appeals to all parties, groups, organizations and individuals interested in the preservation and expansion of democratic rights to come together and bring about the broadest mobilization of our people in this sacred struggle. It directs all its units, members and sympathisers to strive their hardest, overcoming all obstacles in bringing about such a broad mobilization.

It appeals to all our people to take pledge on August 15, the anniversary of our Independence that they would do everything in their power and would make any sacrifice to defend our hard won freedom and Independence, restore their democratic rights and fundamental freedom and enlarge them so that they can carry on the struggle for a prosperous life and bright future.

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Homage to Comrade Gerald Pereira

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee CPI(M) in its Calcutta session on July 15-20, 19

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of In (Marxist) mourns the death of Comrade Gerald Perei Secretary of the Goa State Committee of the Party.

Joining the Party while practising as a lawyer in Bo bay, Comrade Pereira returned to Goa after its liberati and took up the task of building the Party and mass orga zations there. He organized the powerful Port and Do Workers' Union and then the Mine Workers' Union and la unions of other sections of workers. He was the top m trade union leader of Goa and builder of the Party, CIT Kisan Sabha and youth and cultural movements. That succeeded in this task against the opposition of the Catho Church which is a very powerful force in the area is index of his devotion to the Party and the cause of t working people and determination to overcome all obstac in the way of building the Party and mass organizations. H suffered a heart attack while in Bombay and after his retu to Goa, despite the advice of doctors, he continued to wo and died at his post.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indi (Marxist) dips the Party's Red Banner in homage to Com rade Gerald Pereira and sends its heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family.

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51

Solidarity with African People of South Africa*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its Calcutta session on July 15-20, 1976

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) vehemently condemns the massacre of Black Africans and the continued orgy of violence against them by the racist regime of Vorster in South Africa. More than 150 Africans have been shot dead and about 1500 injured seriously in this orgy, far more barbaric than in Sharpeville sixteen years ago when 69 Africans were massacred.

The racist violence began with the shooting of students and childern in Soweto on June 16 when they peacefully protested against the imposition of the hated Afrikaans as a mandatory language in Black schools. Shooting and killing continued for over a week and many Black townships were burnt down.

Democratic opinion in the whole world has been horrified by this latest act of monstrous violence of the racist regime. The United Nations Security Council has condemned the crime of the Vorster Government.

The white racists of South Africa have heaped indignity after indignity on the African people and are out to suppress their struggle to end racism and become masters in their own land. The U.S. and other imperialists are encouraging and supporting the Vorster Government because South Africa and Rhodesia have a prominent place in their strategy against national liberation movements.

With the imperialist debacle in Angola, with the guerrilla

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struggle in Rhodesia gaining strength, with the resistance
the African people in South Africa itself growing, the da
of the racist regimes are numbered. Neither unbridled v
lence nor the help imperialism gives it can save the Vor
regime from the wrath of the people.

Along with world democratic opinion, the CC of the CPI
extends its greetings to the fighting people of South Afr
and pledges all support to their just struggle for liberati

52

Concern at Growing Racism in Britain*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its Calcutta session on July 15-20, 1976

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its serious concern at the growing racist attacks on Asians and West Indians in Britain.

The imperialist rulers have always used racism as a weapon to divide the working class. Recently, the National Front and Enoch Powell have been staging demonstrations and making extremely provocative speeches. The growing unemployment in Britain which is a result of the crisis of capitalism is being used by them to put the British workers against the immigrants.

As a result of the fascist provocations, attacks on immigrants have already taken place and at least three lives have been lost.

The British Labour Government which during the last election promised that it would give all protection to the Asian and West Indian immigrants, is refusing to take any action while its police remain as mere spectators of the actions of the racists. All this is giving further encouragement to the National Front and the racists led by it.

The CC notes with appreciation that the Indian Workers' Association is striving to unite all the Asian and West Indian immigrants and with the support of workers and other democratic forces in Britain, fight the racists and ensure security of lives and jobs of the immigrants.

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53

CPI(M)'s Greetings to Socialist Republic of Vietnam*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee CPI(M) in its Calcutta session on July 15-20, 19

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ind (Marxist) extends its revolutionary greetings to the valia people of Vietnam, the Government and Workers' Party Vietnam, at the convening of the first session of th National Assembly in June and the decision to set up th Socialist Republic of Vietnam marking the victorious culm nation of the epic struggle for freedom and reunification the Fatherland.

Led by Comrade Ho Chi Minh and the Workers' Party the people of Vietnam and their People's Army defeate first Japanese imperialism, then French imperialism and fi nally, the mightiest of imperialist powers and world gen darme, the USA, in their glorious liberation struggle. Th Central Committee of the CPI(M) once again bows its hea in tribute to Comrade Ho Chi Minh and extends its Re Salute to the Workers' Party of Vietnam.

The US imperialists acted as barbarians in Vietnam. N crime was left uncommitted by them. The most modern an sophisticated weapons were used for the mass killing of th Vietnamese people; cities and towns, with their schools hospitals, people's homes, factories were razed to the ground dams and dykes were destroyed to flood the country; har bours and rivers were mined to prevent help from reaching the fighting people; bacteriological and chemical warfare was resorted to destroy the natural wealth of the land, its

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, August 8, 1976.

paddy fields and forests. It was a genocidal war to wipe out a country and its people, unparalleled in its ferocity even in the black record of imperialism's ravage and plunder.

Fired by the will to win their freedom and reunification of the Fatherland, the patriotic Vietnamese people fought on till final victory with the fraternal material and other support from the Soviet Union, People's China and other Socialist countries and the moral support of the freedom loving forces the entire world over, specially of the United States itself. Their revolutionary heroism, their sacrifice are unparalleled in the history of national liberation struggles. The Central Committee of the CPI(M) pays its homage to the millions who laid down their lives so that their Fatherland can be free.

The victory in Vietnam has shattered the biggest counter-offensive since the Second World War of the ring leader of imperialism spearheaded against the revolutionary movement, dealt a staggering blow at US imperialism and further consolidated the offensive position of the three revolutionary currents of our time—the Socialist world, the national liberation movements and the struggle of the working class against capitalism. The victory in Vietnam has inspired and given tremendous encouragement to the hundreds of millions of people in the world struggling for peace, national independence, democracy and Socialism.

With the total and complete victory against US aggression for national salvation, the Vietnamese revolution has moved into a new stage, the stage of socialist revolution throughout the country. In is an arduous task which the people of Vietnam are undertaking—the task of overcoming the destruction and devastation caused by the US imperialist war of aggression and taking the whole country rapidly towards Socialism.

The people of India who have stood by the Vietnamese people all during their liberation struggle are confident that they will fulfil this task as gloriously as they won their victory in the struggle for freedom and reunification.

At this hour of glory, the fruit of the extremely hard
valiant revolutionary struggle fought for nearly half a c
tury, the Central Committee of the CPI(M) once again
tends its revolutionary greetings to the people, Governm
and Workers' Party of the Socialist Republic of Vietna

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On the Question of Referendum*

Letter written by E.M.S. Namboodiripad to Dr. Syed Muhammad, Union Minister for State for Law

The main part of a letter written by Comrade EMS Namboodiripad to Dr. Syed Muhammad, Union Minister of State for Law is given below:

I was surprised to read your statement in the papers on 27.7.76 to the effect that the Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly does not provide for any referendum and that therefore there is no question of holding such a referendum before the proposed amendments to the Constitution are made.

You are right if the provisions of the Constitution are to be literally read. Nowhere in it is the provision made for a referendum. The procedure for amending the Constitution is only an enactment to that effect by Parliament, in some cases with the concurrence of the state legislatures.

But what is the spirit of the Constitution ? It is to be seen in the very Preamble which says, "We the People of India adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution". The Constituent Assembly is only a representative of "We the People". Does it not follow therefore that any basic amendment to the Constitution should be made in such a way that "We the People" have the fullest opportunity to consider the pros and cons of every proposal made on their behalf ?

Ours is a Party which has for long pleaded for fundamental changes in the Constitution. We are, however, absolutely convinced that the amendments proposed by the ruling

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party are in a direction which is totally opposed to ours. T
proposals that we have made are calculated to strengt
the democratic rights of the people, while the propos
made by the ruling party take them away.

Take for example the fundamental rights that have b
written into the Constitution—rights which are enforcea
through Courts of Law. These rights have found a place
the Constitution because the Indian people for decades fou
for them.

I still remember my college days when I was stirred
the Karachi Session of the Congress (1931) where the re
lution on fundamental rights was adopted. My generati
therefore was happy when the Constitution framed af
independence incorporated many of those rights for wh
we had fought in the days of the freedom struggle.

Our unhappiness and concern arose from the fact that t
very Constitution which embodied these fundamental rig
also provided for abridging and abrogating them under va
ous pretexts. Our fight was against such provisions as en
bled the Executive to abridge and abrogate the fundamen
rights, while the proposals made by the ruling party a
calculated to do away with them altogether.

I do not propose in this letter to go in detail into the va
ous proposals made by Swaran Singh Committee and accept
by the ruling party. They concern every vital feature of th
Constitution—the fundamental rights and their enforceabilit
the electoral system; the responsibility of the executive to th
legislature, the rights of the members of the legislature, et
No person with even a modicum of intelligence will deny th
the Constitution is being radically altered.

You may plead that these alterations are intended t
strengthen democracy, to facilitate the country's progres
towards Socialism and to overcome the resistance of the
vested interests. We totally disagree—not only our Party,
not only other Opposition parties, but a substantial section
of the non-party intelligentsia in the country too.

Is it not therefore necessary that full opportunity is given

to every section of public opinion to express itself, in favour of as well as against, the proposals made by the ruling party? Is it not the right of the people at large to know what you have to say as well as what we have to say? Is that not the spirit of the solemn declaration made in the Preamble of the Constitution, "We the People of India adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution?"

The demand made by our Party as well as by some other organizations for a referendum has the objective of associating the people with formulation of the amendments that are to be made in the Constitution.

I was amazed at your claim that your party secured a "massive majority" in the last parliamentary elections and that this allegedly "massive majority" meant a clear mandate for the type of amendments that are now being proposed. You know as well as I do that your party secured less than 45 per cent of the votes polled in the 1971 elections—the lowest percentage, in fact, in the entire period after the adoption of the Constitution, except for the 1967 elections when your party was trounced in more than half of the country. It is audacious indeed for anyone to claim that less than 45 percent of the votes is a "massive majority".

Furthermore, the central slogan around which the 1971 election was fought was not constitutional amendments but the eradication of poverty (Garibi Hatao). Has not the time come for the party which received a "massive majority" of seats on a minority of votes to test public opinion on how far the programme of "eradicating poverty" has been implemented before the constitutional amendments are sought to be enacted?

Let it not be forgotten that the allegedly "massive majority" was received for a five-year period which has now expired. This Parliament is thus still living on the mercy of the Emergency. There is, therefore, no justification for rushing through such an artificially-rejuvenated Parliament such fundamental changes in the Constitution.

55

Homage to Kazi Nazrul Islam*

Resolution of the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of CPI(M) expresses its profound grief at the death of Kazi Nazrul Islam, one of the foremost poets of India. His songs and poems have endeared him to the Bengali speaking people irrespective of religious faith and inspired the downtrodden and the fighters for freedom. He was a rebel and a patriot who suffered poverty and imprisonment but knew no surrender.

The Polit Bureau recalls with pride the association of the poet with the late Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad for a number of years.

The Polit Bureau pays its respectful homage to the memory of the poet and sends its condolences to the members of his family.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 12, 1976.

56

P.B. Resolution on Elections*

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) notes the statement made by the Minister of State for Law in the Rajya Sabha on August 23 that the election to the Lok Sabha will not be postponed, as is alleged in certain circles.

The CPI(M) along with many other democratic parties opposed the extension of term of the Kerala legislature in September last, of the Lok Sabha in February this year and of all other legislatures for which elections were due. It has also resolutely opposed the proposal of the government that this Parliament whose term was extended in the teeth of opposition from the democratic forces in the country should bring about drastic amendments to the Constitution.

It is however, found that at the very time when the Minister of State for Law was declaring that elections will not be postponed, the government had already finalized the Bill for extending the term of the Kerala legislature for the third time. It was also proposing to introduce a controversial Constitutional Amendment Bill containing the most undemocratic features arming the Executive with extraordianary powers and rushing it through, without giving any opportunity for the people at large to have a free discussion on its provisions.

The Polit Bureau notes that the Minister of State for Law in his Rajya Sabha statement claimed that it was the privilege

*This Document was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 12, 1976. This Document was heavily censored.An authentic version of this Document is given in Appendix (xxx) of this Volume.

of the Prime Minister to fix the date of the election. however, wants to state emphatically that under any stan ard of the democratic Parliamentary system neither the Prim Minister nor anybody else in the Executive has the 'priv lege' to indefinitely postpone election as is now being do in Kerala...

The Polit Bureau expresses its serious concern at th several statements made by spokesmen of the Governme that election can be held under the Emergency. Their just fication for this is that the 1965 mid-term election in Kera and the country-wide election of 1967 were held under th emergency. That emergency, however, was the result of ce tain external developments, while the present emergency h been declared with a view to meeting what the governme considers the internal threat posed by the Opposition.....

The Opposition, therefore should have every opportunit to go to the electorate with full freedom to explain why th threat to democracy in the country is not posed by the Opposition. Furthermore, the very emergency declared in 1962 and continuing till 1969 did not operate with its full rigors as the present emergency is now operating...It will be the height of sophistry to claim that free elections can be held with the present emergency and the various restrictive measures adopted by the Government continuing.

The Polit Bureau cannot but express its strong disapproval of the proposed amendment to the Companies Act enabling the companies to pay donations to political parties to the extent of Rs. 50,000 or 5 per cent of the profit whichever is higher. It has been calculated that at the rate of 5 per cent of the profit, the top 200 industrial giants alone would be entitled to pay donations exceeding Rs. 17 crores. It is obvious that the beneficiary of this new amendment to the Companies Act would be the ....

For elections to be effective enabling the people to assert their will, it is necessary that the following pre-requisites are created :

1) Elections to the Lok Sabha as well as to those State Legislatures whose terms have already expired or will expire in February/March 1977 be held without delay;

2) A minimum period of four months be given to Opposition parties to prepare themselves for the election ;

3) To this end, the Emergency be immediately withdrawn,.....

4) .....

5) .....

6) This proposal to put through the present Parliament the amendments to the Constitution which arm the Executive with unlimited powers be dropped ; and

7) The proposed amendment to the Companies Act providing for the payment of donations to political parties be dropped.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic parties, organizations and individuals to build a powerful movement around these demands.

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The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic parties, organizations and individuals to build a powerful movement around these demands.

57

P.B. Resolution on Talks with Right C.P.*

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) earnestly urges on the members and followers of the Right C.P. to ponder seriously over the fact that their leaders have rejected the CPI(M) proposal for united action on the burning issues affecting the living and working conditions of our common people.

The reasons advanced for this rejection would not deceive any impartial observer. Our attiude on international and national questions is well-known and needs no reiteration. It is also well-known that the Right C.P. holds on a number of issues views different from ours.

Despite these ideological and political differences, however, the CPI(M) thought and still thinks that it is possible for the two parties, along with other democratic forces, to jointly resist what even the Right C.P. characterizes as the "negative features" of the Congress Government's policies. While it would be unrealistic to attempts the forging of any political united front so long as these differences continue, it is practicable in our view to start united actions on such burning issues affecting the lives of the people as bonus, dearness allowance, compulsory deposit, lay-offs, etc. in relation to workers; effective implementation of land reforms in the interests of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, relief from the fall in the prices of several agricultural

*The Document was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 12, 1976. This Document was heavily censored. An authentic version of this Document is given in Appendix (xxxi) of this volume.

products, increasing burdens of taxation, etc in relation to peasants; similar economic problems affecting other sections of the working people...Joint actions by the T.U., Kisan Sabha the other mass organizations in defence of the interests of the working people are, according to us, the need of the hour.

The Polit Bureau considers it regrettable that the leaders of the Right C.P. have rejected our proposals for united actions. It, however, hopes that the members and followers of that party would exert pressure on their leaders to abandon the suicidal policies which they are pursuing. In the name of the millions of industrial and agricultural workers, of middle class employees of peasants and all other sections of the people .... we appeal to them to organize united actions in the defence of the rights of the common people.

58

The Constitution (44th Amendment) Bill*

The Constitution (44th) Amendment Bill was introduced in Parliament on September 1. The word amendment can hardly explain the scope of a Bill which seeks to change 59 provisions of the Constitution at a single stroke. It is a virtual re-enactment of the basic law of the land, being pushed through during the Emergency, by a Parliament with its life-span extended beyond the normal five-year term, and without ascertaining the opinion of the people through any referendum.

The 44th Amendment Bill presents the proposals of the Congress Government for the first time in concrete terms. Till the present Bill was introduced, the people did not know precisely what was sought to be changed and how. The Swaran Singh Committee prepared only a set of guidelines, and the leaders of the ruling party and the government indulged in generalities.

Now, when the concrete proposals are available, even a first look shows that they contain much beyond what the Swaran Singh panel or the subsequent AICC resolution envisaged.

The package of 59 proposals in the 44th Amendment Bill is a confirmation of some of the trends and practices being evolved over the last few years, and provides Constitutional sanction to some of the measures initiated in the interests of the 15-month-old Emergency.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 12, 1976.

The statement of objectives and reasons attached to the Bill mentions the desire to "spell out precisely the high ideals of socialism, secularism and integrity of the nation". No one objects to these ideals. Whether the ideals have been properly spelt out also need not be debated. People are more concerned with what the ideals bring to their lives. Socialism means, in simplest terms, abolition of the system of private ownership of the means of production and distribution, eliminating exploitation of man by man, and ending the domination of the state structure by the exploiting classes, and not an amendment to the Constitution.

The statement also mentions the precedence of the Directive Principles over the Fundamental Rights. So long as the Directive Principles are not justiciable, and constitute only a set of promises and pious intentions, their precedence over Fundamental Rights is not a valid proposition in political or Constitutional theories.

The statement also pays tribute to the concept of supremacy of Parliament. Our views that sovereignty lies with the people and not any organ of the State is well-known. The statement of objectives claims that "Parliament and the State legislatures embody the will of the people and the essence of democracy is that the will of the people should prevail". Whether any legislature truly embody the will of the people in a bourgeois-landlord state structure is a moot question. Apart from that, do dissolutions and suspensions of state legislatures reflect any realization that the will of the people embodied in the state legislatures should prevai ?

The ruling party and its government which seek to basically alter the Constitution, won only 43 per cent of the votes in the general election of 1971 and thus do not represent the real opinion of the majority of the people. Moreover, the proposed amendments were never placed before the people in the 1971 election.

Let us now turn to a summary of the proposed changes.

Directive Principles and Fundamental Rights

1. Precedence of Directive Principles over Fundamental Rig
As regards Article 31C, the present position is that any l
which gives effect to two particular Directive Principles (A
39B and C) on some economic matters cannot be stru
down even if they violate the Fundamental Rights giv
under Articles 14, 19 and 31, i.e. rights to equality, perso
freedoms and property respectively.

It is now suggested that any law seeking to give effect
any of the Directive Principles shall have precedence ov
these rights, and will remain vaild even if they take away
curtail them.

If the Government is genuinely interested in implemen
ing the Directive Principles, at least some of them cou
have been included in the chapter on Fundamental Righ
and made enforceable. This is particularly true about Art
cles 41, 43 and 45 dealing with the rights to work, livin
wages and education. As it is, these rights cannot be en
forced. A law deemed to give effect to Directive Principle
should not be used or allowed to curtail and restrict Funda
mental Rights, particularly the seven freedoms.

2. Further ground for curtailment of Fundamental Right
will be provided by the proposed new Article 31D. Under
this, no law which will ban anti-national activity or anti-
national associations can be declared invalid on the groun
of taking away Fundamental Rights given in Articles 14, 19
and 31. The definition of anti-national activity include efforts
to create internal disturbance or disrupt public services. Such
definitions can be interpreted very flexibly. Making of laws
in relation to anti-national activity or anti-national associa-
tion shall be the exclusive prerogative of Parliament.

3. More Directive Principles. The list of Directive Principles
is already long enough. This list of pious intentions is sought
to be enlarged further. Thus a very broad range of legislative
enactments can now take away or abridge Fundamental Rights
simply through a declaration that these laws seek to give effect
to this or that Directive Principle, (Articles 39, 43 and 48).

4. A new Article, 32A will substantially take away the authority of Supreme Court to consider the Constitutional validity of any State law in connection with cases dealing with enforcement of Fundamental Rights.

Fundamental Duties

5. The list of fundamental duties is different from what was proposed by the Swaran Singh Committee. No definition of the terms used have been offered. Consequently it is not possible to claim a precise understanding of what exactly citizens will be expected to do in order to perform these duties, and what will be their legal import. It is not also clear if persons in Government will be equally bound by these duties in the performance of their tasks, and will be required to adhere to the values mentioned in the Article concerned (Article 51A).

The Executive

6. The President and the Cabinet. A highly significant addition to the Swaran Singh panel proposals is the explicit statement that the President shall be bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers in the exercise of his functions. The President, according to the norms of parliamentary democracy, normally acts on the advice of the Cabinet. It is interesting to note that the Emergency and discretionary powers of the President have not been done away with, which means that such special powers will be used by the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister without any scope for the President to delay or intervene in the decision-making process.

If it is argued that it is an unexceptionable democratic principle essential for proper functioning of the Cabinet form of government, the same principle is not proposed to be extended to the States. There, the Governors will continue to rely more on the directions of the Centre which nominate them, than on the advice of their respective councils of ministers. (Article 74.1).

7. Administrative rules. Contrary to existing practice, no

court shall have the authority to call for the production of any administrative rules made by the Press or by a Governor, 'for more convenient transaction of the business of the Government'. Rules of business of Government will therefore be outside the scope of judicial scrutiny (Articles 77 and 166).

Legislature

8. Extension of term.

Another provision added in the Bill but not to be found in the Swaran Singh proposals, is the extension of the duration of a term of the Lok Sabha and the State legislatures from five years to six. The provision for further extension of the normal duration of a term under Emergency conditions will remain in force. It is not known how a six-year term is more effective or more democratic than a five-year term. If anything, the people will exercise their option to retain or dismiss a government at a longer interval (Articles 83, 172 and 371F). The Government, once elected, will thus be in power for six years. The terms of the President and the Governors will continue to be of five years.

9. Quorum. The matter of quorums for sessions of the Central and State legislatures shall no longer be a concern of the Constitution. Quorums will be determined by the rules of business of the legislature concerned. Thus each legislature will fix its own quorum under rules which are extremely flexible (Articles 100,118,189 and 208). This is another provision in the Bill which was not proposed by the Swaran Singh Committee.

10. Disqualification of members. It has been claimed that the existing provisions relating to disqualification for being chosen as an MP or an MLA gave rise to uncertainty. Till now, any person holding any office of profit under the Government other than offices specially exempted for the purpose by Parliament was among those disqualified. Henceforth, the issue will be looked at the other way. Parliament will by law lay down which particular offices will disqualify their occupants (Articles 102 and 191).

11. The determination of disqualification of a member of legislature and all decisions thereon, including cases of members found guilty of corrupt practice, shall be referred to the President who shall consult the Election Commission. The scope of such decision will include determination of the period of disqulification or reduction of such period. Courts will have no say in these matters. In this case, too, the President will function within the scope of Article 74.1. (See point 6 above.) (Articles 103 and 192).

12. Powers, privileges and immunities of members. A matter of serious concern is the proposed change in relation to powers, privileges and immunities of members of Central and State legislatures. Once the 44th Amendment Bill is passed, these will no longer be defined by Parliament by law, but evolved by the legislatures concerned from time to time. The bourgeois democratic norms applicable for members and committees of the British Parliament which have evolved over centuries will not be applicable as before (Articles 105 and 194). This provision, too, cannot be found in the Swaran Singh proposals.

Judiciary

13. Curtailment of jurisdiction of High Courts. Another proposed amendment will take away the power of High Courts to judge the Constitutional laws. The High Courts will lose this power even in connection with its writ issuing jurisdiction. If any High Court finds that the question of Constitutional validity of a Central law is involved in a case pending before it, the question shall be referred to the Supreme Court. Initiative in this regard may be taken by the Supreme Court itself on request from the Attorney General of India. Supreme Court may, on request from the Attorney General, also take over any such case pending before a High Court, or transfer it from one High Court to another (Articles 131,139, 226A and 228A).

14. A bench of seven judges of the Supreme Court shall determine the Constitutional validity of any Central or State

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law (the latter except in relation to Article 32A, see point 4 above) and decision to invalidate a law shall be taken only by a two-thirds majority. That will mean any three judges may veto the majority opinion of four others that a particular law is invalid. A similar procedure will be followed when High Courts judge the Constitutional validity of State laws (Articles 144 and 228A).

15. Qualification for High Court judges libaralized. The qualification for appointment of judges of High Courts will be liberalised. Distinguished jurists will be eligible for such appointments. Any other person (even if not a distinguished jurist) may be found fit for such an appointment only if he has served in any office under the Government requiring special knowledge of law. This liberalisation is another proposal not included in Swaran Singh recommendations (Article 217).

16. Power of High Courts to issue writs. The power of High Courts to issue writs will be restricted to certain specific cases. High Courts will continue to issue writs relating to enforcement of fundamental rights (without of course, considering the validity of any Central law in this regard) but will not be able to do so 'for any other purpose'. Instead they will issue writs only in cases of contravention of law resulting in harm or injury to a person, or illegality resulting in failure of justice. But such writs will not be issued as long as 'any other remedy or redress' is available. The Executive can always plead that such remedies have not been exhausted.

The power of High Courts to issue interim orders or stay orders on *exparte* applications in cases of urgency have been severely curtailed. (Article 226).

Centre-State Relations

17. Deployment of central forces in States. The Centre will be empowered to send any armed forces or other forces under its authority to deal with the law and order situation in any State, and such forces shall act under the direction of

the Central Government and shall not be controlled by the State Government concerned. Law and order used to be the most important item on the State list over which the States had exclusive Legislative and Executive authority (Article 259). The policing power of the States will now be exercised subject to this new power of the Centre.

All India Services and State Services

18. Denial of second opportunity. The proposal seeks to deny to a government employee the opportunity to make representation, at the second stage of inquiry and proceedings, against the penalty to be imposed on him. The employee may make only one representation before knowing what penalty may be proposed. At present, he has the opportunity to make representation twice, once against the charges made, and once more against the penalties proposed (Article 311).

Tribunals

19. Administrative tribunals will be set up under laws made by Parliament to deal with service matters of government employees (Central and State Governments and public bodies and corporations owned or controlled by the Governments). The tribunals will have exclusive jurisdiction in all disputes and complaints relating to recruitment and conditions of service of such employees.

Tribunals with similar exclusive jurisdiction may be set up under laws made by Parliament or the State legislatures, to deal with disputes, complaints and offences relating to taxation matters, foreign exchange and customs, industrial and labour disputes, land reforms and urban property ceiling cases, election matters except in connection with the election of persons appointed Prime Minister and Speaker, production and distribution of foodgrains (Articles 323A and B).

Proclamation of Emergency

20. Emergency in a part of the country. It will be made possible to proclaim 'external' or 'internal' Emergency in a

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part or parts of the country, or to restrict the scope of an Emergency declared earlier for the whole country to a part or parts of the country by a subsequent proclamation. But even in such cases, the Emergency executive and/or Legislative powers of the Centre may cover all States (Article 352).

Constitutional Emergency in States

21. The operation of an Emergency under Article 356 (breakdown of constitutional machinery) in a State is at present restricted to a period of six months initially subject to approval of Parliament. Parliament may also renew it for further periods of six months up to a limit of three years. The present Bill suggests the extension of the initial period and period of each renewal to one year.

22. It is further suggested that any law made by Parliament for a State during the Emergency shall continue to be in force even after the Emergency is revoked, unless such law is specifically repealed (Article 356).

Amendment Procedure

23. The amendment procedures of federal States are necessarily rigid, and political scientists are agreed that in this regard, the principle of Parliamentary supremacy cannot apply without damaging the federal structure. The Indian Republic identified by constitutional experts as a quasi-federal state or a federal structure, with a unitary bias, had a non-too-rigid procedure for amending the Constitution. Now, to assert the supremacy of Parliament the amending procedure is being made more flexible, and the jurisdiction of courts with regard to the validity of an amendment will be barred except to see if Parliament has followed the prescribed procedure. The contents and purport of the amendment cannot be questioned even if they violate other provisions of the Constitution. Even the Preamble, Directive Principles and Fundamental Rights may be so amended.

In an unprecedented move, this amended provision may also apply with retrospective effect to any amendment made

before the present Bill was introduced. This is another 'improvement' on the Swaran Singh panel recommendations.

Concurrent List

24. Education, administration of justice, forests, population policy and protection of wildlife will be transferred from the exclusive jurisdicition of the States (State Lists) to the concurrent jurisdiction of the Centre and the States (Concurrent List). This will be another significant curtailment of powers of the States.

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Mao Tse-tung : Great Leader of the Chinese People*

CPI(M) Central Committee's Condolence Message

The following message of condolence was cabled to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist):

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) is deeply grieved at the demise of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, supreme leader of the great Chinese revolution. It pays its homage to the great revolutionary and extends heartfelt condolences to the Communist Party and people of China at their irreparable loss. (September 9).

In a statement issued from Alleppey on September 9, Comrade A. K. Gopalan said as leader of the Chinese revolution Comrade Mao had played a very decisive role in liberating the Chinese people from the exploitation of capitalists. Coming close on the death of Comrade Chou En-lai, Comrade Mao's departure from the Chinese scene is really a shock to the people of China.

Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Member, Polit Bureau, Communist Party of India (Marxist), visited the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in New Delhi on September 11 and placed a wreath before the portrait of Comrade Mao Tse-tung on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party.

On receipt of the news of Comrade Mao's death, the Red Flag was flown at half-mast in Party offices. Reports of

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 19, 1976

condolence meetings are coming in from different parts of the country. In the meeting at Coimbatore on September 10, Comrade P. Ramamurti spoke on Comrade Mao Tse-tung's life and contributions.

A message of condolence sent to the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi by Comrade P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, on behalf of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions mentioned that Comrade Mao Tse-tung devoted himself to the task of Socialist construction in China to the last days of his life.

In the death of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, China and its people and the Communist Party of China have lost their supreme leader and the world Communist movement one of its outstanding leaders.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung was the gigantic leader of the most populous country in the world who stood at the helm of its great revolution and the construction of a new powerful Socialist China. More backward at the time of liberation than India was at the time of attaining independence, China in the last 27 years has rapidly advanced its industry and agriculture, made a great leap forward in education and science and technology, built up its defence might and become a nuclear power.

In their march to Socialism, the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and Comrade Mao Tse-tung displayed exemplary self-reliance and carried on the task of Socialist contstruction without long term dependence on foreign aid.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's contribution to the theory and practice of democratic revolutions in colonial and semi-colonial countries is of immense significance. The combination of a strong Communist Party, a united front of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal classes under the leadership of the working class and armed struggle which led to the success of China's revolution was a creative application of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of China and enrichment of the Marxist-Leninist theory and practice of democratic revolution. In a country predominantly of

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peasants, his contribution to the tackling of the peasant problem and the agrarian question had important lessons for Communist Parties placed in similar circumstances. Also full of lessons is the flexibility which the Communist Party of China under his leadership showed in evolving correct tactics in changing situations as during the anti-Japanese patriotic war and the liberation war after the defeat of Japanese fascism.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung made significant contributions to modern Chinese literature as a poet, and had clear views from the working class angle on the role of art and culture in society.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung was born on December 26, 1893, in Hunan province and even at the age of six had begun working in his father's farm. Later, in 1911, while he was a student, he participated in the Republican Revolution that overthrew Manchu power in Central and South China. Four years later, he was contributing articles to "*New Youth*" a magazine founded by Chen Tu-hsiu, who later became the first General Secretary of the Communist Party of China. He was devoting most of his time to student political activities, organizing student strikes and on one occasion even an attack on the provincial parliament dominated by the landlords.

This was also the period of ardent physical culture which stood him in good stead later, Mao himself told Edgar Snow :

> "In the winter holidays we tramped through the fields, up and down mountains, along city walls, and across the streams and rivers. If it rained we took off our shirts and called it a rain bath.When the sun was hot we also doffed shirts and called it a sun bath. In the spring winds we shouted that this was a new sport called 'wind bathing'. We slept in the open when frost was already falling and even in November swam in the cold rivers. All this went on under the title of 'body training'. Perhaps it helped much to build the physique which I was to need so badly later on in my many marches back and forth across South China and on the Long March from Kiangsi to the North-West."

Two years later, in 1917, he became a co-founder of a radical youth group, the New People's Study Society. Next

year he joined the Marxist Study Society established by Li Ta-chao, under whom he was then working as assistant librarian in the Peking University, and Chen Tu-hsiu. In 1919 he was editor of Hunan's student paper, "*Hsiang chiang Review*" which was anti-imperialist, anti-militarist and pro-Russian Revolution. Next year, he organized the Hunan branch of the Socialist Youth Corps, and helped found the Cultural Book Study Society. The same year, guided by the influence of Marxist theory and the Russian Revolution, Comrade Mao Tse-tung began organizing workers politically.

On July 1, 1921, the Communist Party of China was founded and Mao along with Li Ta-chao and Chen Tu-hsiu, was among the 12 founder-members of the Party. He participated in the First Congress of the Party in Shanghai and became Secretary of the Party in Hunan. At the Third Congress in 1923, he was elected to the Central Committee and was head of the Organization Bureau.

The First Congress of the Kuomintang, in 1924, under Dr. Sun Yat-sen's leadership approved the admission of Communists in the Kuomintang and Comrade Mao Tse-tung was elected alternate member of its Central Executive Committee.

Next year he bagan organizing peasant support for a liberation expedition and wrote his celebrated "Analysis of Classes in Chinese Society".

In 1926, in Canton, he became Deputy Director of the Kuomintang Peasant Bureau and Peasant Movement Training Institute and head of the agitation and propaganda department. Next year, he published another of his noted works, a report of an "Investigation into the Peasant Movement in Hunan".

In 1927, after Chiang Kai-shek's betrayal and massacre of Communists, the Party was driven underground. Mao led the peasant uprising in Hunan and when it was defeated he retreated to the mountain stronghold of Chingkangshan. Next came the Nanking uprising which was also defeated and he retreated to the countryside. This was followed by the failure of the Canton (Commune) uprising.

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Comrade Mao Tse-tung was already organizing a worker-peasant revolutionary army, and in 1928, he joined forces with Chu Teh in Chingkangshan, Hunan, and formed the first Red Army of China and the local Soviet. Chou En-lai joined them four years later.

During 1929, the Red Army conquered rural territories around Juichin, Kiangsi, where a Soviet Government was proclaimed. The Red Army, led by Mao, captured Changsha, capital of Hunan, and then withdrew. A second assault on Changsha proved costly. It was in Changsha that Mao's wife, Hang K'ai-hui and his sister were executed. (His younger brother Mao Tse-min was executed in 1942. Another brother, Mao Tse-t'an was killed in action in 1935.)

In September 1931 Japanese imperialism invaded China.

The All-China Congress of Chinese Soviets convened in the deep hinterland of Juichin in November 1931 and elected Mao chairman of the first All China Workers' and Peasants' Democratic Government. The Second Congress re-elected him to the same post.

During 1930-34, Chiang Kai-shek organized five major encirclement campaigns to annihilate the Red Army and the Soviet areas. Chiang had to call off the first four campaigns after failure. After facing the fifth campaign, the Party's Polit Bureau held its historic enlarged meeting in Tsunyi, Kweichow, in January 1935. Here Comrade Mao Tse-tung was elected effective leader of the Party and the army and the Long March of 6000 miles to North-West China was decided on and undertaken. As Mao described to Edgar Snow :

> "Through many, many difficulties, across the longest and deepest and most dangerous rivers of China, across some of its highest and most hazardous mountain passes, through cold and through intense heat, through wind and snow and rainstorm, pursued by half the White armies of China, through all these natural barriers, and fighting its way past the local troops of Kwangtung, Hunan, Kwangsi, Kweichow, Yunnan, Sikang, Szechuan, Kansu, and Shensi, the Red Army at last reached

> northern Shensi in October 1935, and enlarged its base in China's great North-West".

It was a feat of great skill, courage, determination and almost super-human endurance and revolutionary ardour.

Characterising the stage of the Chinese revolution as "new-democratic", Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote, "It is evident, then, that the enemies, of the Chinese revolution are very powerful. ...In the face of such enemies, the Chinese revolution cannot be other than protracted and ruthless...In the face of such enemies, the principal means or form of the Chinese revolution must be armed struggle, not peaceful struggle...In the face of such enemies, there arises the question of revolutionary base areas. Since China's key cities have long been occupied by the powerful imperialists and their reactionary Chinese allies, it is imperative for the revolutionary ranks to turn the backward villages into advanced, consolidated base areas, into great military, political, economic and cultural bastions of the revolution from which to fight their vicious enemies who are using the cities for attacks on the rural districts, and in this way gradually to achieve complete victory of the revolution through protracted fighting; ...However, stressing armed struggle does not mean abandoning other forms of struggle; on the contrary, armed struggle cannot succeed unless co-ordinated with other forms of struggle. And stressing the work in the rural base areas does not mean abandoning our work in the cities and in the other vast rural areas which are still under the enemy's rule; on the contrary, without the work in the cities and in these other rural areas, our own rural base areas would be isolated and the revolution would suffer defeat. Moreover, the final objective of the revolution is the capture of the cities, the enemy's main bases, and this objective cannot be achieved without adequate work in the cities." *(The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party.)*

By 1936, Japan had already entered Inner Mongolia and the danger of a massive aggression by fascists was imminent. The menace from Japanese fascism was so formidable that

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it was necessary to unite all the forces of China against it. Though Chiang Kai-shek was even then preparing his sixth annihilation campaign against the Red Army, the Communist Party offered to end the civil war and form a united front to fight Japanese aggression. Chiang rejected the offer but after the Sian incident, in which his own deputy commander-in-chief, Chang Hsueh-liang, arrested him demanding that he agreed to a national united front, Chiang was forced to open negotiations with the Communist Party and conduct the war against the Japanese aggressors.

But the Communist Party was fully conscious of the character of the Chiang regime and when after the surrender of Japanese imperialism, the Party's talks with the Kuomintang for a Coalition Government failed, the liberation war began in June 1946. In the Central Committee meeting of the CPC in December 1947, Comrade Mao made a report entitled "The Present Situation and our Tasks" in which he correctly analyzed the current situation of the revolutionary war and proposed the military, political and economic tasks of the Chinese Communist Party essential to the winning of the final victory.

Three years later after the liberation war started in March 1949, the Central Committee of the Party led by Mao made their triumphant entry into Peking after the final victory of the liberation war. On October 1, 1949, the People's Republic of China came into existence with Comrade Mao Tse-tung as its Chairman. Within a short period the tasks of the democratic revolution were completed and China embarked on the road to Socialism. The Chinese Revolution following the Great October Revolution and the victory over fascism in the Second World War decisively changed the balance of relations in the world in favour of progressive forces.

When the US imperialists attacked Korea in 1950, the newly established People's Republic of China led by Comrade Mao came to the aid of the Korean people in repulsing the attack.

Similarly, the support and material aid from the Chinese

people and Government led by Comrade Mao to the epoch-making struggles against US imperialism in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea was of great historical significance.

In 1959, Comrade Mao Tse-tung stepped down from the Chairmanship of the People's Republic but continued as Chairman of the Party.

At the time of his death, Comrade Mao Tse-tung was Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Chairman of the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the Party and Honorary Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Homage to Comrade Mao Tse-tung

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) pays its revolutionary homage to Comrade Mao Tse-tung. The gigantic leader of the most populous country in the world and the leader of the Communist Party of China for more than half a century, Comrade Mao Tse-tung stood at the helm and steered the course of the Great Chinese Revolution which, following the Great October Revolution and the victory over fascism, changed the course of world history.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung contributed to the theory and practice of democratic revolutions in colonial and semi-colonial countries, by creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of China and charting the path of China's New Democratic Revolution. Comrade Mao's genius lay in working out the correct strategy for successful national liberation revolution—the combination of the Communist Party, the united front of all anti-imperialist forces under the leadership of the working class and peasant partisan warfare. It was under his leadership that the Communist Party of China had to fight and defeat both Right and Left opportunist deviations and work out correct strategy. Starting with small liberation bases, the liberated areas were

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expanded and, backed by the powerful Soviet rear, the whole country was finally liberated and the People's Republic of China was proclaimed on October 1, 1949.

The flexibility which the Communist Party of China under Mao Tse-tung's leadership showed in meeting the sudden twists and turns in the situation is a unique experience for all the Communist Parties to learn. Even while Chiang Kai-shek and his reactionary regime were preparing the biggest annihilation campaign against the liberated areas, the Communist Party of China under Comrade Mao's leadership correctly saw the formidable menace of Japanese fascism, the need to unite the entire Chinese people to defeat the Japanese aggressors and gave a call to form a united front to fight the war against Japanese fascism, even though it meant making concessions to the Kuomintang regime; Chiang Kai-shek rejected the offer, but CPC persisted in its efforts because that was the only correct course for China at that stage and ultimately succeeded in getting Chiang to end the civil war, form the united front and conduct the war against Japan. It was this correct line of the Communist Party of China that upset all the calculations of the Japanese fascists who had banked on the Communists never joining hands with Chiang Kai-shek's regime. Even while pursuing the united front tactics, Comrade Mao and the CPC never forgot the class character of the Chiang regime, and when, at the end of the war, Chiang unleashed the civil war again, the Communist Party was ready to meet it and defeat the regime.

Comrade Mao will for ever be remembered for the enormous task which, under his leadership, the Communist Party and people of China accomplished—the unification of China where no centralized state had existed before, and lifting that country from abysmal backwardness to its present position of building Socialism, modernising its industry and agriculture and constantly improving the living standards of the people.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

is aware that no revolution is exactly the same as another, but that every revolution has lessons for others. The Chinese revolution has extremely valuable lessons for all Communist Parties.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) once again pays its revolutionary homage to Comrade Mao Tse-tung and conveys its heartfelt condolence to the people and the Communist Party of China at their irreparable loss.

[Polit Bureau's Homage was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of November 7, 1976.]

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Polit Bureau Statement on Berlin Conference of 29 Communist Parties of Europe*

CPI(M)'s View of The World Situation

The Berlin Conference of the 29 Communist Parties of Europe took place at a time when the three great forces of liberation of our times—the Socialist World, the working class movement in the advanced capitalist countries and the national liberation movement—had scored further great victories, aided by the vital struggle for world peace.

The historic victory of the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea against US imperialism had decisively shifted the balance of world forces in South-East Asia and the world in favour of the people—of the forces of national liberation, democracy and Socialism. The national liberation movement had registered further successes in the continents of Africa and Latin America.

The world capitalist system is in the midst of the most profound crisis—a crisis which engulfs all spheres of capitalist society—economic, political and ideological. In contrast, the world socialist system is steadily advancing, making a profound impact on the minds of the people all over the world.

These have sharpened all the social contradictions of our epoch—contradictions between the socialist and imperialist worlds, contradiction between capitalism and the working class in the advanced capitalist countries, inter-imperialist contradictions and the contradictions between imperialism and the governments and peoples of the former colonial countries.

The governments of the former colonial countries have

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 19, 1976.

been emboldened to take up anti-imperialist stand on a variety of questions and raise their voices against the attempts of imperialism to impose neo-colonialism on these countries.

In Europe itself, fascist regimes in Portugal and Greece have been overthrown. In Spain, the struggle for a parliamentary democratic republic is making great advance. The Communist Party of Spain, outlawed for over 40 years and operating under conditions of fascist terror and repression, has been playing a decisive role in this great struggle for democracy. The strike struggles of the working class against the domination of monopolies has registered a great advance. The French and Italian Communist Parties by applying correct united front tactics in unleashing and leading mass and class struggles had increased their strength and made the social democratic parties in these countries give up their anti-Communism. Electoral united fronts between the Communist and Socialist parties on the basis of a common programme against the domination of monopoly capital have been forged in these countries. All these have led to a great accession of electoral strength of the Communist Parties in these countries.

In Japan also, the Communist Party has been leading powerful working class struggles, mobilizing the people for the removal of American military bases from the soil of Japan and has made a great advance.

The net balance sheet is, notwithstanding some reverses, a great advance for the forces of the people, a tremendous growth of the Communist Parties and their influence, a further weakening of imperialism leading to a further shift in the balance of forces against imperialism and in favour of the people.

The Berlin Conference noted this tremendous accession of strength to the revolutionary forces of our times.

The Berlin Conference confined itself to the limited questions relating to the struggle for peace, security, co-operation and social progress in Europe and the document that emerged from the Conference limits itself to these. By reaching agreement on these questions, the Conference belied the

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imperialist propaganda that the Communist movement is in complete disarray.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) wants to express its opinion on the Conference document.

It welcomes the call for support to :

—the demand for a just settlement of the West Asian conflict, guaranteeing the withdrawal of Israeli troops from areas occupied by it since 1967, and national independence, security, territorial integrity of all states in this area and ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to their own national state;

—the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea in their struggle to repair the damages suffered by them in their war against aggression and for peaceful and democratic development;

—the government and people of Angola in their struggle for consolidation of their independence and development along progressive lines;

—the demand for the release of all Chilean patriots imprisoned by the fascist junta and struggle for restoration of human rights and democratic rights of the Chilean people;

—the demand for an end to terror against Communists and democrats in Uruguay, Paraguay, Guatemala and a number of Latin American countries;

—the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in its struggle for peaceful and democratic unification of Korea without any outside interference;

—the anti-imperialist struggles of the African peoples, the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe against colonialism and racism;

—the struggles of the people of Cyprus for territorial integrity;

—the demand for nuclear free zones.

Detente & Helsinki Conference

The CPI(M) considers that detente has been forced upon the unwilling forces of imperialism—above all US imperialism—

by the change in the balance of forces on a world scale, by the intense growth of the peace sentiments among the peoples of Europe on whose soil two devastating world wars had been fought and above all, by the growth of the industrial and military strength of the socialist world and particularly of the USSR—both in conventional and nuclear arms.

The Final Act agreed to at the Helsinki Conference was the result of the further change in the balance of forces against imperialism and the greater isolation of US imperialism.

As such, both these are significant developments in the present-day world and reflect the advance of the forces of peace, freedom, democracy and Socialism.

The Final Act of the Helsinki Conference proclaims the principles of sovereign equality of states and their sovereign rights including the right to freely choose and develop their political, social, economic and cultural systems; refraining from the threat or use of force; inviolability of frontiers; territorial sovereignty of states; peaceful settlement of disputes; non-interference in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; equal rights and self-determination of peoples; co-operation among states and fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law.

The acceptance of these principles formally by the imperialists is an advance. The acceptance of the principles of inviolability of frontiers created in post-war Europe, that is, the Oder-Neisse as the western frontier of Poland, the existing borders of Czechoslovakia and the recognition of the state of the German Democratic Republic, is another important strategic gain.

This gives a fresh weapon to the forces of peace, freedom, democracy and Socialism to expose the imperialist warmongers and restrain their hands. This requires the concrete exposure of their aggressive actions in violation of these principles they have agreed to and rousing of popular opinion to force them to implement them.

But the Berlin Conference makes exaggerated statements

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about detente. It states, "All this has created conditions for the development of new relations and co-operation between states, for overcoming the division of the Continent into opposing military states and for disarmament". It further states that the Helsinki Conference "has opened up new prospects for the further consolidation of security, for the fruitful development of relations and of co-operation between all European countries".

As regards imperialism, the document is content with stating that "Imperialist pressure and interference in the internal affairs represent a direct source of danger to peace, security, etc." and along with the piling up of armaments "are obstacles in the realization of the aspirations of the European peoples".

These are understatements and not concrete exposures of imperialism which has been all the time violating the principles proclaimed in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference.

For, despite the proclamation of this Final Act, American imperialism has not ceased to be the gendarme of world reaction. Its fiendish war of aggression in Vietnam, its continued military presence in South Korea and preventing the peaceful unification of Korea, its support to the reactionaries in the national liberation struggles of Angola, Mozambique and other countries, its support to the white racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia, its disruption of the unity of the Arab States and incitement of the Syrian Government to wage war against the Palestinians, its open interference in the recent Italian elections as warning to the people of Italy against voting for the Communist Party of Italy—these are some of the open and shameful violations of the principle agreed to in Helsinki. Above all, it stubbornly refuses to make any progress in the direction of disarmament and piles up armaments, particularly, nuclear weapons and spends billions of dollars in fabricating new weapons of mass destruction.

In these circumstances, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) is unable to understand why in a Conference of European

Communist Parties which specifically discusses the problems of peace and security any mention of US imperialism and its machinations in open violation of the Helsinki declaration is scrupulously avoided.

The CPI(M) holds that while it is necessary to work for the dissolution of the NATO and the Warsaw military pacts, it is wrong to equate the two. The Warsaw Pact came into existence as a defensive measure against the NATO military alliance forged by the US imperialists with other European imperialists to unleash aggression against the USSR and other socialist countries of Europe. While the USSR and other socialist countries are willing to and work for the dissolution of the alliances, it is the stubborn refusal of the USA and its allies that is responsible for their continued existence.

The violation of the principles of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference by the imperialists and the American imperialists in particular, the stubborn resistance to take any steps towards the dissolution of the NATO and Warsaw military blocks by the American imperialists and their allies should be concretely and thoroughly exposed. American imperialism and its allies should be pilloried for their violations and people must be rallied against them. Otherwise they cannot be forced to implement these principles nor can they be forced to agree to any concrete steps aimed at the dissolution of the aggressive NATO and the defensive Warsaw military alliances.

In the course of the growth and the strengthening of the popular forces and Communist Parties serious differences on some complex tactical and theoretical questions of the world Communist movement have arisen between its different contingents. Some of the differences have found expression in the speeches made on behalf of the delegations of the Parties represented in the Berlin Conference and also in discussions by Communist Parties of some other countries. These questions relate to Marxism-Leninism, dictatorship of the proletariat, proletarian internationalism, transition to Socialism, and attitude to social democratic parties.

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The CPI(M) has been always of the view that it is the right and duty of every Communist Party to assess the situation in its country and work out its political and tactical line. The Polit Bureau is of the opinion that further study and discussion of the theoretical positions taken by these various Parties should be pursued.

On Proletarian Internationalism

But at the same time, it considers it urgent and necessary to reiterate our Party's position on the aforesaid key issues.

Ever since the Communist Manifesto gave the slogan "Workers of the World, Unite", the principle of proletarian internationalism has continued to guide the Communist movement. The slogan was addressed to the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class in modern society, capable of an international world outlook. It was and is fighting a common enemy—capital; its aim and object are common—overthrow of capitalist rule and building of Socialism and going over to Communism; its struggle is one and indivisible, though being fought in different national theatres. It is the only class capable of overcoming the barriers of narrow national and local outlook, realizing the unity of its struggle on the international plane and directing its strategy and tactics in the struggle in each country as a component part of the worldwide struggle against the common enemy. All other movements, however democratic, are not capable of this consistent internationalist outlook.

Communist Parties freely adapt themselves to the varying conditions of every country, yet they retain the basic features of this struggle against the common enemy. They help each other in the common struggle. It is this international outlook that has enabled the proletarian vanguard to mobilize support to the democratic movements all over the world—the national liberation movements, the popular democratic movement in newly liberated countries and working class and other progressive movements in advanced capitalist countries, for they are objectively directed against the

common enemy—imperialism. In discharging their proletarian internationalism, many parties of imperialist countries had to mobilize the working class and people against the governments of their own countries and in support of the national liberation struggles.

After the first successful Socialist revolution in Russia, it became the duty of every Communist Party to mobilize the working class of its country against the imperialist onslaught against the first socialist country. At the same time, it became the internationalist duty of the working class of the Soviet Union to do the utmost possible for the development, awakening and support of the revolution and the struggle against imperialism in all countries.

In our times, after the emergence of a number of socialist countries and the coming into existence of a world Socialist system, proletarian internationalism on the part of every Communist Party in the other countries demands the defence of the socialist countries by rallying their working class and the people, by exposing the imperialist conspiracies by meeting the calumnies and other ideological attacks against the Socialist system and prove its superiority over the capitalist system. This has to be done notwithstanding the many shortcomings and Right and Left opportunist mistakes of the leaders of one or another of the socialist countries.

It is equally the duty of the ruling Communist Parties of the socialist countries to follow a policy that would help the struggles of the working class and the peoples of the non-socialist countries against their own exploiters and oppressors. It is utterly wrong for the big parties of some of the socialist countries to pursue policies which subordinate the class struggle in the countries with whose governments their governments have friendly relations, to the narrow immediate needs of the foreign policy of their governments.

Failure on either side will mean deviation from proletarian internationalism and do immense harm to the world revolutionary movement and the struggle against imperialism.

There cannot be an international organization like the

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Communist International, which has outlived its purpose and been wound up long ago.

Nor can there be an international centre or leading Party which can lay down the line for other Communist Parties in the name of proletarian internationalism. Each Party is the best judge of the situation in its country and works out policies and line appropriate to the situation.

But exchange of opinions and experience between brother parties and mutual help is essential for discharging the tasks of proletarian internationalism.

In the conditions prevailing at present in the international Communist movement, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) considers that an international conference of Communist Parties of the world is not a practical proposition. However, it is of the opinion that it is absolutely necessary to resolve the serious differences on theoretical-ideological questions prevalent in the international Communist movement. This requires patient bilateral and multilateral discussions between brother parties, free from mutual recriminations and with a view to resolving these differences. International conferences of Communist Parties where free-style airing of views takes place in the open will not help the process of resolving unity in the world Communist movement, but would do immense harm.

On Social Democracy

The Berlin Conference welcomed "the successes achieved in a number of countries and at international levels in developing co-operation between Communist and Socialist or social-democratic parties". It considered that "the basic interests of the working class and all working people requires the overcoming of the obstacles which stand in the way of co-operation and which complicate the struggles of the mass of the working people against monopoly capital and against the reactionary and conservative forces".

It is true that Communist Parties of Italy, France and Spain and certain other Scandinavian countries have succeeded

in building united front with the socialist parties in these countries. These socialist parties have for the present abjured their anti-Communism and are fighting monopoly capital in close co-operation with the Communist Parties for a democratic advance. This is a big welcome development.

Several other social-democratic parties are rabidly anti-Communist, particularly the Socialist Party of Portugal, the Social Democratic Party of West Germany and the Labour Party of Great Britain. These parties are ruling parties which not only are anti-Communist and take measures against Communists but also pursue policies which help the monopolists transfer the burdens of the crisis on the shoulders of the working class and the common people. The struggle for unity in action between the masses following the Communist and Socialist Parties, the struggle for united front between these parties against monopoly capital must be combined with unmasking of the policies and attacking their ideological positions which really serve the interests of monopoly capital.

Transition to Socialism

Every Communist Party should strive to bring about social transformation by peaceful methods. For, that entails the least sufferings for the people. Hence it is the duty and responsibility of Communist Parties in the countries under capitalist rule to strive for the preservation and expansion of the democratic rights and utilize them to the fullest extent for bringing about social transformations peacefully. But how this transformation will be brought about does not depend upon the desire and striving to bring it about by peaceful means. It mainly depends on the behaviour of the ruling classes.

Historical experience teaches that the exploiting ruling classes constituting the minority of the people do not respect the will of the majority and suppress it by use of terror and bestial violence. When their rule is threatened by the exploited majority, they do not hesitate to do away with

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the bourgeois parliamentary system and resort to naked dictatorship and rule by terror.

Despite the balance of forces turning in favour of the people and against imperialism and monopolists, the nature of the latter has not changed. On the other hand, they are intensifying the arms build-up, inventing new weapons of mass terror and destruction. They continue to intervene in all revolutionary struggles butchering the revolutionary fighters and resort to other forms of subversion.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

All anti-Communists try to confuse and befog the people by the utterly false propaganda that Communism means dictatorship of a small minority over the majority of the people, that Communists want to deprive the people of their democratic rights and so on. The reality is quite the contrary.

Everyone knows that under capitalism there are no real liberties and democratic rights for the vast majority of the people. This is because the exploiting minority of capitalists and landlords owns all the means of production, all the printing plants, paper supplies and all the mass media. Hence democracy under capitalism is democracy of the exploiting minority, and restriction and denial of democracy to the exploited majority. It is, therefore, the dictatorship of the exploiting minority directed against the exploited majority. The bourgeois seeks to conceal this reality by talking of democracy in general, without raising the question of its class content viz., "democracy for whom, for which class ?"

The Marxist-Leninist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat is counter-posed to this reality of the dictatorship of the exploiting minority in the bourgeois state. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not directed against the vast majority of the working people. On the other hand, it is a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non proletarian strata of the working people—the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia—or

the majority of these. It is an alliance against capital, an alliance aimed at the complete overthrow of capital, at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and of any attempt on its part at restoration of its class rule, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of Socialism.

It is only under such a state that the real participation of the workers and peasant masses in governing the country is possible. Hence dictatorship of the proletariat is proletarian democracy. It guarantees the widest democracy of the majority exploited under capitalist rule. It is based on the restriction and denial of rights to the exploiting minority and hence is a dictatorship directed against this exploiting minority.

It is also an established fact that in modern society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the only two decisive classes and they stand irreconciliably opposed to each other. Hence, in this special form of alliance between the proletariat and other strata of labouring masses, it is obvious that the proletariat must play the leading role.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) considers it the bounden duty of all Communists to defend and uphold this scientific concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat against all attempts of the bourgeoisie and its ideologues to depict it as the despotism of a minority against the majority of the people, as a denial of democracy for the common people. They must unmask the reality of the despotism of the minority of the exploiters against the majority of the people under bourgeois rule under the guise of democracy. For this purpose, Communists must expose the utter falsity of the non-class concept of democracy. "Pure democracy" or "democracy in general" standing above and divorced from classes is a myth.

Marxism-Leninism

Based on the law of development of society, discovered by Marx and Engels and developed by Lenin, Marxism-Leninism is the science—theory and tactics—of the Social Revolution.

Far from being any dogma, Marxism-Leninism enjoins

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upon all Communist Parties the duty to take into consideration, in the context of the world correlation of forces, the correlation of forces in their own countries and the specific features present therein at all times in applying these laws to the revolutionary struggles of their countries.

Despite the attempts of bourgeois ideologues that Marxism-Leninism has become outmoded, its all conquering nature has been and is being proved by the course of historical development. Guided by its beacon light, the establishment of Socialism in countries with a population of one third of humanity, the advance of the working class movement, the triumph of the national liberation movement and the crisis of capitalism—all these go to prove its validity.

The CPI(M) considers it the duty of all Communists to defend this all conquering proletarian world outlook and science of social revolution against both Right and Left opportunism.

Our Party has tried to defend its positions against both Right and Left revisionist onslaughts. In our own country, the breach with the revisionists came when they openly repudiated the Marxist-Leninist concept of working class leadership in the democratic revolution and went on the inclined path of class collaboration.

Our understanding of the world situation is : it is turning in favour of the forces of freedom, democracy and independence, the socialist world is becoming the decisive factor in shaping the historical course of development; the final liquidation of the colonial order is on the agenda; this is an era of the final collapse of capitalism on a world scale and transition to Socialism; American imperialism is the gendarme of world reaction; after wining independence, as social contradictions grow, the big bourgeoisie inclines more and more to compromising with domestic reaction and collaboration with imperialism; the non-big bourgeoisie is objectively interested in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, and therefore retains the capacity to participate in the revolutionary

struggle against imperialism and feudalism, but it is unstable; the alliance of the working class and the peasantry is the most important force in defending national independence, accomplishing far-reaching democratic transformations and ensuring social progress; this alliance is called upon to be the basis of a broad national front; the working class must play the leading role in this alliance; the extent to which the non-big bourgeoisie participates in this revolutionary struggle depends in no small degree upon the strength and stability of this alliance between the working class and the peasantry.

Our Party has been guided in its activities by this understanding.

The Berlin Conference solemnly declares that all Communist Parties are equal and sovereign. Our Party has always acted on this basis. While it is prepared to and must learn the lessons from the experience of those parties that have successfully completed their revolutions and other brother parties, it judges the situation inside our country on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and evolves its policies and line. It has not allowed itself to be dictated to by any other party.

It must be pointed out that such declarations are not new and have been made earlier. But certain big ruling parties have, nevertheless, intervened in the internal affairs of other parties. Such interference and subordination of the needs of the class struggles in these countries to the narrow and immediate needs of the foreign policy of the Governments of these Socialist countries have done immense harm to the revolutionary movement and the unity of the international Communist movement.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) is deeply concerned at the differences existing in the world Communist movement which are exploited by imperialism.

Our Party will work for the reforging of unity by firmly basing itself on Marxism-Leninism and defending it against all deviations. It hopes that the historical course of

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development will soon lead to the unity of the international Communist movement which will make it possible to utilize fully all the opportunities presented in the present correlation of class forces for a big advance of the revolutionary movement.

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Polit Bureau Condemns U.S. Threat to bar Vietnam's Entry into U.N.*

Statement issued on September 15, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement of September 15, 1976 on the U.S. threat to deny Vietnam its rightful place in the U.N.:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemns the attempts of U.S. imperialism to deny the Socialist Republic of Vietnam its rightful place in the United Nations.

Vietnam achieved its freedom and reunification after more than three decades of the most heroically fought liberation struggle in the history of the world so far inflicting a humiliating defeat on U.S. imperialism. The acclaim with which the representatives of 86 countries received the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the Colombo Non-Aligned Summit was world recognition of the heroic struggle and the new reunited state that had come into existence.

But the U.S. imperialists still smarting under their ignominious defeat refuse to accept this verdict on the specious plea that Vietnam has to still account for American personnel missing during USA's war of aggression against that country.

Clause 8(b) of the Paris agreement deals with the question of missing U.S. personnel. The Vietnam authorities have already submitted a list of such personnel. Moreover, a meeting of the two sides had been agreed upon in Paris to sort out whatever differences exist on the question.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 26, 1976.

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But the U.S. imperialists are more interested in avoiding their responsibility to implement Clause 21 of the agreement to give reparations to Vietnam.

This and the needs of the U.S. Presidential election in November next are behind the U.S. decision to veto the admission into the U.N. of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, though later, on the basis of a French proposal, the Security Council has now postponed the decision to November.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) calls on the people and Government of India to condemn this attitude of the U.S. imperialists and exert every effort to see that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam takes its rightful place in the world assembly.

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Withdraw Constitution Amendment Bill*

Demand made by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in the Statement issued on October 22, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on October 22, 1976:

The Polit Bureau notes that the joint meetings of PCC, the Congress legislature party and other Congress leaders in the States of Punjab, U.P. and Haryana have put forward the demand for a new Constituent Assembly to redraft the Constitution of India. A similar meeting in Bihar too, has demanded that more time should be given for discussions on the proposed amendments to the Constitution.

The suggestions have come just on the eve of the session of Parliament specially convened to pass the 44th Amendment Bill. They have come in the background of the apprehensions entertained by the ruling party that the proposed 44th Amendment, if passed by Parliament, will be challenged in the Supreme Court and may be struck down.

Even within the short time when discussions were allowed on the proposed 44th Amendment to the Constitution with all manner of restrictions, it was clear that not only our Party, and other Opposition parties but wide sections of lawyers, jurists, progressive intellectuals and popular opinion in general were totally opposed to the anti-democratic content of the 44th Amendment Bill and the indecent haste with which the ruling party tried to push this Amendment through a Parliament which has outlived its mandate.

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The proposals made by the three meetings of Congressmen referred to above cannot meet the situation. They are capable of being misused to carry out subversion of democracy.

The U.P. Congressmen for instance demand that the present Parliament itself be converted into a Constituent Assembly with the co-option of representatives from State legislatures. The Punjab Congressmen do not specify the composition or mode of constituting the Constituent Assembly. Their proposals can be taken to be the same as the one suggested in U.P.

It may be recalled that the Constituent Assembly which framed the Constitution consisted of members indirectly elected by the then existing legislatures in provinces who represented no more than 14 per cent of the people as well as nominees of the rulers of the Princely States. As such, vast bulk of the working people had no say in the constitution of the Assembly.

Nevertheless, meeting in the background of the struggle for freedom which had raised the slogans of democratic rights, and fundamental freedoms, federal structure, etc. the Assembly had to incorporate some of these demands. At the same time, the character of the Constituent Assembly resulted in the incorporation of certain anti-democratic features which can nullify all the democratic provisions such as the fundamental rights incorporated in Part III; the answerability of the Executive to the Legislature which in its turn, is liable for renewal at least every five years; clear division of the functions beween the three arms of State power (Executive, Legislature and Judiciary), the federal character of the Indian Union with autonomy for the States, etc. Every one of them is liable to be violated and in fact, has been violated.

The CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties have repeatedly demanded fundamental changes in the Constitution deleting the undemocratic provisions and enlarging the democratic rights of the people. While adhering to that view, they have joined with the rest of the Opposition and

non-party jurists, academicians and progressive intelligentsia in opposing the anti-democratic content and the procedure adopted in pushing the amendments proposed by the Congress Government.

The Polit Bureau, however, wants to point out to all honest Congressmen that the Constituent Assembly which is being proposed should be a genuine Constituent Assembly and not unrepresentative of the Indian people. It would be highly undemocratic if the present Parliament itself is to be converted into a Constituent Assembly even with the addition of representatives of the State legislatures.

Let it be recalled that the present Parliament and State legislatures are dominated by a party which secured in 1971 and 1972 elections the overwhelming majority of seats on a minority of votes and their mandates have expired or are about to expire. Furthermore, those elections were not fought on the basis of concrete proposals regarding amendments to the Constitution.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) demands :

(i) that the Constitution (44th Amendment) Bill should be withdrawn;

(ii) the new Constituent Assembly should consist of members directly elected by the people;

(iii) the system of proportional representation should be adopted for the election of members of the Constituent Assembly;

(iv) a minimum period of six months should be given for free discussion on the various aspects of the Constitution, the proposals for amending it made by the ruling party, by Opposition parties and others;

(v) to make the above discussion genuinely free, the Emergency should be lifted, the pre-censorship withdrawn, political prisoners released, the MISA, the DIR and the Press Objectionable Matters Act and other repressive legislations repealed and such other measures taken as to give the Opposition as much freedom to propagate their views as the ruling party has to propagate its views; and

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(vi) an all parties' committee should be formed to supervise the election and empowered to frame such rules as would preclude the possibility of official machinery and other methods of violence being used in favour of the ruling party.

If the above proposals are not accepted, people will have every right to conclude that the proposal of a so-called Constituent Assembly is a manoeuvre by the leaders of the ruling party to evade elections and perpetuate themselves in power and get the same anti-democratic 44th Amendment Bill passed through other means.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic parties, organizations and individuals including honest Congressmen to raise their voice and rally the people in support of these demands.

The Polit Bureau hopes that the Right Communist Party will at least now reconsider their stand and support these democratic demands.

63

On Extension of Life of the Present Lok Sabha*

Statement dated November 2, 1976 issued by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M)

The worst apprehensions of democratic opinion in the country have been proved true with the ruling party deciding to prolong the life of the present Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for another year under the Emergency provisions. The terms of the Lok Sabha and of the Kerala Assembly have already been extended by a year while the Tamil Nadu Assembly has been dissolved and the State kept under President's rule

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in an earlier statement had warned that the proposal for a Constituent Assembly which was mooted would, in fact, turn out to be a manoeuvre to postpone elections.

The reasons advanced by Ministerial spokesmen for this extension are ridiculous to say the least.

Innumerable statements have been made by the Home Minister and other spokesmen about the miraculous achievements of the Emergency in the matter of law and order, discipline, economic advance, etc. They have also claimed that many of those who had been arrested and detained have already been released and more are being released.

This is a situation which demands that the Emergency be lifted and normalcy restored and the elections already postponed for a year be held to elicit the views of the people of

*A censored version of this statement was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, November 14, 1976.

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this country on vital issues which affect them. Instead, the ruling party is using its majority in Parliament to abuse Emergency powers and extend the life of the Lok Sabha to perpetuate the present abnormal situation and intensify the attacks on the people. In the name of supremacy of Parliament, the verdict of the people is being ignored and referring important issues to their verdict is being avoided. The entire post-Emergency period has more than amply shown that it is the monopolists, foreign and Indian, the landlords and the other vested interests who have thrived at the expense of the common people. It is to continue this that the elections are being postponed again. There are no national interests that demand nor does the economic situation require any postponment of the elections.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) demands that the proposed Bill to extend the life of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies be not moved, that normalcy and democratic rights be restored, all detenus be released. Press censorship and the Press Objectionable Matters Act be withdrawn and free and fair elections be held in time.

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Polit Bureau on Proposed Merger of Four Parties*

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) notes that the efforts at forming what is called a single viable Opposition party have reached an advanced stage. The Congress (O), the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Jana Sangh and the Socialist Party together with a section of the "Left Congressmen", who were recently expelled from the ruling Congress party for their views against the policies of the Establishment and for striving for adoption of radical policies, are reported to have decided in favour of merging their respective parties and groups into a single political party.

The CPI(M) has never subscribed and does not subscribe today to the formation of a single party by the amalgamation of disparate parties, groups and elements differing in policies, programme and outlook in order to confront the ruling Congress. It is neither principled nor will it be enduring. Such a party cannot provide the alternative needed by the people. At best it is an election manoeuvre that would bring no good to the people.

The CPI(M) has taken a principled stand and striven to build a united front of all those who are willing to fight the Congress on the basis of a platform which is anti-imperialist and broadly Leftist and democratic. While doing so, the Party has pursued and still pursues the policy of co-operating with any Opposition party, individuals and those sections of Congressmen who are prepared to join the Left and

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democratic forces on specific issues which affect the day-to-day life of the people. That was why the Party had refused to have anything to do with the so-called Grand Alliance formed in the year 1970-71 and described it as another reactionary combination.

On the other hand, the Party held discussions with the Socialist and other Left parties for evolving a minimum common programme. At the same time, the Party went with others for movements and struggles on various issues affecting the people in various States. These efforts made by our Party and the united struggles resulting therefrom culminated in the historic 20 days all India railway strike which was supported by a one-day general strike of the entire working class of India.

The CPI(M) considered it unfortunate that in spite of this inspiring experience gained through the united efforts of all the Left and democratic forces, some of the parties which stood in support of the Railwaymen's strike gave up that policy of united action. The Right Communist Party went back to its time-old policy of alliance with the ruling Congress party, even to the extent of extending its wholehearted support to the imposition of national Emergency. The Socialist Party, on the other hand, abandoned the line of Left and democratic unity and went back to its old line of building the "Grand Alliance" dominated by the political parties of Right Opposition including Jana Sangh.

It was well-known that the leaders of Congress (O) and the BLD—not to speak of the Jana Sangh with its Hindu communalist ideology—are basically opposed to everything that the Socialist Party and the recently expelled Congressmen, popularly called Young Turks in the Congress party, have stood for. Even today, when the leaders of the ruling Congress party demagogically proclaim socialism and secularism and speak in terms of anti-imperialism and radical socio-economic reforms, the top leaders of the proposed new Opposition party are extremely allergic to every concept that is radical, Left and socialist. Many of the top

leaders of these Right opposition parties are well-known for their conservative and Rightist outlook, and carry such an image among the people. It is such an attitude which strengthened the ruling Congress party in the past and will do so in the future.

The leaders of the Socialist party and the recently expelled radical minded Congressmen would be acting against their declared policies and cherished ideals and will liquidate themselves if they merge themselves into this proposed new opposition party. The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) is of the considered opinion that such a step on the part of Socialists and Left-oriented Congress rebels would only weaken the struggle of the progressive forces for forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces while strengthening the forces of Right reaction. The P. B. therefore, appeals to the leaders of the S.P. and dissident Congress radicals to seriously ponder over whether their merger with the Right opposition parties would not prove highly detrimental to the growing shift of the forces in our country in the direction of Left democratic and socialist orientation. In reality, the so-called national alternative that is being sought to be projected by the merger of these parties is bound to have a Rightist complexion. The platform evolved for the formation of this party has nothing to say against imperialism, Indian monopolists, their collaboration with multinationals and their penetration into the country's economy and its political and social life, and also against other vested interests in the country. All vague talk of egalitarianism, social justice, fight against corruption and for a clean administration, without spelling out concrete measures and steps to their achievement have always been the stock-in-trade of parties which in reality stood for the maintenance of status quo in economic and social relations, but have to reckon with the radical sentiments of the people. All this will enable the ruling Congress to pose itself before the people as a relatively more progressive and radical party.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) considers it equally

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deplorable that the leaders of the Right Communist Party persist in their policy of collaboration with the ruling Congress party, even though life and experience is compelling them more and more to speak in terms of growing negative features of the Congress policies as against the positive. It is all the more regrettable that the Right C.P. leaders are lending total support to the Government at the very time when increasing number of Congressmen themselves are getting restive at the growing authoritarian trends inside the ruling Congress party.

The P.B. appeals to the members and leaders of the Right C.P. to have a thorough re-examination of the entire situation with a view to adopting new policies which assist in the bringing about the unity of Left and democratic forces, including the forward looking among the Congress party. The P.B. desires to place before the Right C.P. on the one hand, and the S.P. and the dissident Congress lefts on the other, the perspective of bringing about a new realignment of political forces in the country—the Left parties which should comprise the CPI(M), the Right C.P., the S.P. and other Left parties and groups including the Left-minded Congressmen who are recently expelled by the Congress party. This new realignment of political forces can well become the focus around which democratic elements in all the parties including the ruling Congress and large sections of non-party democrats can be rallied. This alone is the surest way of providing a real alternative in the interest of the people to the ruling party for advancing the cause of democracy and radical socio-economic reforms in the country.

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Release Luis Corvalan : Polit Bureau of CPI(M) Demands in a Resolution*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) renews its demand for the release of Comrade Luis Corvalan, general secretary of the Communist Party of Chile, and the thousands of Chilean patriots who have been imprisoned after the CIA inspired fascist coup in Chile three years ago.

During these three years, Chile has been converted into a vast prison by the Pinochet junta. Brutal repression and mass killings still go on. After the killing of Allende and thousands of others during the bloody coup, the junta has made more than 90,000 arrests. About 2,500 Chileans have vanished without trace after their arrests. Two of the Chilean leaders in exile, General Carlos Prats and Orlando Letelier, have been assassinated. The military junta, afraid that the terror it has organized will be revealed to the world, has prevented the special working group of the U.N. Human Rights Commission from visiting Chile.

But the military fascist junta has not succeeded in breaking the people's fighting spirit. The resistance of the democratic forces is mounting in the country and ever-broader segments of society are joining the resistance.

The Polit Bureau extends its full support to the Chilean people and demands an end to the terror of the Pinochet junta.

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Restore Normal Conditions for Free and Fair Elections*

Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi suddenly declared Lok Sabha Elections in a Radio speech on January 18, 1977

The Prime Minister, in a radio speech on January 18, 1977 announced that the present Lok Sabha will be dissolved soon and fresh election held in March. The dissolution order came the following day. The Prime Minister's announcement was silent on elections to those State legislatures which have had their terms extended, or those which have been dissolved earlier, or those of which the terms will be over by March.

The Prime Minister said the curbs imposed by the Emergency are being relaxed, but had nothing to say on lifting the Emergencies—external and internal. So, the Emergency stays, and the election will be held under its shadow.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in a resolution 'On Elections' in September 1976 said :

"The Polit Bureau expresses its serious concern at the several statements made by the spokesmen of the government that election can be held under the Emergency. Their justification for this is that the 1965 mid-term election in Kerala and the country-wide elections of 1967 were held under the Emergency. That Emergency, however, was the result of certain external developments, while the present Emergency has been declared with a view to meeting what the government considers the internal threat posed by the Opposition...The Opposition, therefore, should have every opportunity to go to the electorate with full freedom to

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explain why the threat to democracy in the country is not posed by the Opposition... It will be the height of sophistry to claim that free elections can be held with the present Emergency and the various restrictive measures adopted by the government continuing."

The CPI(M) has been consistently demanding that free and fair elections to the Lok Sabha and the concerned State legislatures be held without delay. In the resolution cited above, the P.B. had demanded that a minimum period of four months be given to the Opposition parties to prepare themselves for the elections. The time now being allowed is around two months, which is wholly inadequate. The election, though otherwise a belated one, looks like a snap poll in this respect, which is much to the advantage of the ruling party.

The CPI(M) has always demanded normalization of conditions for free and fair elections. The pre-requisites thereof, as stated in numerous resolutions of the Central Committee and the Polit Bureau, including the latest Polit Bureau resolution of January 1977, are :

(i) lifting of the Emergency,

(ii) release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of warrants and cases,

(iii) abrogation of MISA, DIR and other repressive laws,

(iv) cancellation of all anti-democratic measures adopted during the Emergency, the most notorious of which are amendments to the Representation of Peoples Act, the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act and all the Constitution amendments passed during the Emergency,

(v) withdrawal of pre-censorship regulations on the Press.

Leaders of political parties are being released. This, however, is not enough. All the workers of different political parties including the ruling party now in detention should be released forthwith. We should also be able to hope that pre-censorship of our journal and others shall be withdrawn immediately.

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On Ensuing Elections to the Lok Sabha*

Call given by the Central Committee of CPI(M) :
***Defeat drive to one-party dictatorship**
***Muster maximum votes against Emergency rule**
***Project Left and democratic alternative**

The Government of India has announced the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and fresh elections in the middle of March 1977. This decision for a snap election has sprung a surprise on the people as well as on the Opposition parties. It is neither fair nor honest, as it comes after the extension of Lok Sabha by one year in the month of November 1976, in the teeth of opposition by all the Opposition parties, after repeated statements by spokesmen of the Government rejecting the Opposition demand for holding the long-due elections to the Lok Sabha and several other State Legislatures.

The Congress Government, during the last five years, had set up a reign of repression and terror and in the last 19 months utilizing the Emergency, it has institutionalized the Emergency, powers by the adoption of the 42nd Constitution Amendment, and by enacting several anti-democratic laws such as the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act and the amendment to the People's Representation Act.

All these measures have resulted in subverting the country's Constitution, undermining parliamentary democracy, in the annulment of the fundamental rights and liberties of the citizen enshrined in the Constitution, and the establishment of an authoritarian one-party dictatorship. The leaders of the ruling Congress party and Government are intent upon imparting legitimacy to this repressive rule of theirs through securing an electoral verdict in their favour in

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this snap election, and thus parade before the world a democratic facade.

This is a new extraordinary political situation in the country, created by the Congress Government, a situation which was never faced by the people and the political parties of the Opposition during the last five general elections since the adoption of the Constitution some 27 years ago.

This grave political situation, threatening the very fabric of democracy and freedom of the people, is no doubt, created by the ruling Congress party which has been pursuing the bankrupt path of capitalist development in alliance with landlordism and in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital.

This is a situation born out of a deep economic crisis, when the ruling representatives of the monopolists and landlords are opting for the unashamed rule of terror and violence against the common people in order to shift the burdens of the crisis, on to the shoulders of workers, peasants, middle class employees and small and medium industrialists.

The Government took several steps to serve the interests of the monopolists and inflicted still more misery and unemployment on the people. The denial of bonus to the working class and of fair prices to the vast mass of peasant producers in particular have added immensely to their misery. Prices of essential commodities have continued to rise. The government is, at the same time, making concession after concession to the multinationals to woo foreign capital in a massive way.

The CPI(M) is of the view that this snap election is a challenge to all the people and the Opposition political parties and in particular to the Left and democratic parties. The CPI(M) is also fully aware that this election is taking place at a time when the ruling party has been suppressing the Opposition parties for long and had succeeded in disrupting the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country—the Socialist Party and the dissident Congress progressives merging themselves in the newly formed Janata Party along with the Right opposition parties, and the Right Communist

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Party hanging on to the coat-tails of the ruling Congress party.

The CPI(M) considers it its bounden duty to mobilize all the popular forces that can and must be mobilized to register their strong protest and irreconcilable opposition to the ruling party's drive to one-party dictatorship and authoritarian rule. It is quite aware of the fact that this drive of the Congress party to set up a dictatorial and authoritarian regime carries with it the dangers of further tightening the grip of the monopolists and landlords on our socio-economic life and of further strengthening the hold of multinational foreign monopolists on our country's economy and politics.

The broadest unity of Left, democratic and progressive forces, with the clearly defined objective of fighting against landlordism, monopoly capitalism and foreign imperialism alone can successfully defeat this drive to one-party dictatorship and authoritarian rule, and can provide a real effective alternative to the Congress regime. The CPI(M) is eager to utilize the extremely limited opportunities that the present snap election offers to do all the necessary groundwork that will pave the way for bringing about such a broad Left, democratic and progressive unity of the popular forces.

The CPI(M) is clearly of the view that the newly formed Janata Party cannot offer a viable alternative to the ruling Congress party, no matter what its leaders claim and profess. It is well-known that most of the parties that comprise the Janata Party such as the former Swatantra, BKD, Congress (O) and Jana Sangh were voicing their opposition to the ruling Congress from an extreme Rightist point of view, *essentially* representing the same vested interests which the ruling Congress party represents. As such, the CPI(M) can neither conceive of any political united front with the Janata Party nor of any electoral front with it with a common programme.

However, the Central Committee of the CPI(M) is aware that all the parties that have merged into the newly formed

Janata Party have openly expressed themselves in favour of ending the Emergency rule, annulling the 42nd Constitution amendment, restoring the fundamental rights of the citizens enshrined in the Constitution, halting the drive to one-party dictatorship of the ruling Congress, in defence of parliamentary democracy, opposing the recently enacted draconian laws such as the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act, Press Censorship, etc., and the ending of the Emergency.

The CPI(M) while entertaining no illusions about the Janata Party and its programmatic pronouncements, and while consistently striving to forge the unity of Left and democratic forces, does take into serious account the present stand of the Janata Party on the issue of Emergency rule, on the 42nd Constitution Amendment, on the Congress party's drive to authoritarian rule, etc.

It is in this situation that the CPI(M) is entering the polls with a view to mustering the maximum number of votes in protest against the Emergency rule of the Congress and the authoritarian regime of the Congress party and to inflict a defeat on the Congress.

The CPI(M) will strive its utmost to prevent the division of Opposition parties' votes—a division which enables the Congress to secure seats, utterly disproportionate to the votes it secures. In furtherance of this aim and in the interests of inflicting a defeat on the ruling Congress party, the CPI(M) is desirous of avoiding mutual contests with the Janata Party. It seeks seat adjustments with all Opposition parties and groups which are ready to fight the Emergency and inflict a defeat on the ruling Congress party and its candidates.

The CC calls upon the State units of the CPI(M) to study the concrete conditions and the positions of different opposition parties, groups and individuals in different States, and work out election tactics according to the guidelines enunciated by the CC. It cautions the State units to be vigilant against supporting such Opposition candidates who have lost their credibility among the people, which support compromises the position of the CPI(M) among the public.

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The CPI(M) is, at the same time, interested in securing as many seats as possible in the Lok Sabha for its own candidates, its allies and other progressive independents to project the Left and democratic alternative and give a consistent fight to the Congress.

It is extremely distressing to note that the Right C.P. leaders, by lending full support to the Emergency rule and the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, enabled the Congress rulers to institutionalize the Emergency powers and now are ganging up with the ruling Congress party to fight the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and some other States. The CC of the CPI(M) calls upon the Right C.P. and its leaders to abandon their suicidal policy of alliance with the ruling Congress, and join the forces of Left and democratic Opposition to fight against the Emergency rule and drive of the Congress party towards one-party dictatorship.

The CC appeals to all the voters and the entire people to alert themselves about the impending danger to all democratic rights and civil liberties and parliamentary democratic institutions at the hands of the Congress rulers, and vote *enmasse* to inflict a crushing defeat on the Congress party.

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CPI(M)'s Manifesto of Lok Sabha Elections—1977*

After prolonging the existence of the Lok Sabha and getting through the reactionary Constitutional Amendments, the Congress Government has suddenly dissolved the Lok Sabha and ordered a snap election giving very little time to the Opposition parties.

The election will be held under the Emergency which has shorn people of all their rights. The Congress party and its Government dare not lift this attack on people's rights and allow them the free right to exercise their vote.

The so-called "relaxation" is only a show-piece to deceive the Indian people and the world. The release of political prisoners, of leaders of Opposition parties, does not change the truth that the leaders and political parties will not be allowed to function normally and tell the whole truth about the anti-people policies of the Congress, the truth of repression and deprivation of the people suppressed through the censored and controlled Press. They cannot denounce the Emergency and the forcible sterilization drive without inviting reprisals. Besides, hundreds of political prisoners continue to be under detention and many warrants of arrest continue in existence.

The MISA still stands there as a threat to be used against the cadre of any political party whose activities endanger or affect Congress chances or carry the truth to the people. The

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courts are deprived of the power to protect them. The guidelines to the Press, the Objectionable Matters Act—the notorious Press Act—see to it that comments unfavourable to the Congress and the Prime Minister are not printed except at the risk of forfeiture of the Press and arrest of the editor. The SAMACHAR, that unashamedly controlled news-agency which has shown recently that it can fabricate any lie, circulate any slander about other parties and boost beyond measure the Congress and its Government, is ready at hand to suppress all news about Opposition activities, the response of the masses and distort news to the disadvantage of the rivals of the Congress.

Never before was a parliamentary election held under more restrictions, and repressive conditions. But then never before was an election held under conditions of one-party dictatorship. The Congress party controls all the levers and will be able to manipulate the results, keeping in view the need to cheat democratic opinion. The length to which it can go to secure a fake verdict in its favour was demonstrated in 1972 in the West Bengal Assembly elections when hoodlums and police bayonets were used to keep the people away from the polling booths and rig the elections. To secure a genuine verdict of the people, to enable the people to speak, act and vote without fear, the CPI(M) demands unconditional lifting of the Emergency, release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of all warrants, repeal of all repressive legislations like MISA, Press Objectionable Matters Act, 42nd Constitution Amendment, etc., end of the regime of terror in West Bengal. Without this the basic policies of the Congress—the Emergency and one party rule—cannot be explained to the people and opposed.

Congress Policies

No previous regime has committed so many crimes against the common people as the Indira Gandhi Government during the last six years. The policies of exploitation and repression culminated in the final infamy of the rule of Emergency

and the reactionary Constitutional Amendments, depriving the people of all rights and liberties. The gathering drive for one-party dictatorship has completed its most important phase—getting a Constitutional sanction for the supremacy of the Executive over every organ of the State and the people themselves.

At one blow, by banning meetings, strikes, demonstrations and agitation, the workers, employees, agricultural workers, peasants, teachers, students and professors were rendered helpless in their daily struggle before the landlords, monopolists, capitalists, the Government and the other authorities. The nation was converted into a nation of suppressed people.

Tens of thousands of people were wantonly arrested and maltreated in jails. They were kept in solitary confinement, denied adequate medical treatment and some of them driven to death. Denied family allowances, their family members were made to starve and undergo the pangs of daily hunger.

All these infamies against the people were executed in the name of fighting the forces of reaction.

The Constitution Amendment Act

The 42nd Amendment Act has subverted the basic features of the Constitution by denigrating the importance of Fundamental Rights in the name of giving priority to the enforcement of Directive Principles which were never sought to be implemented, it attacks all basic rights except the right to property, while incorporating the word socialism in the preamble; it denigrates the role of the Judiciary and transforms the judicial personnel into the mercenaries of the Executive—"committed judiciary".

It subverts the federal structure of the Constitution by concentrating enormous power in the hands of the Central Government, including the power to send the Centre's armed forces and police to the States without their permission and the formation of an all-India judicial service. Instead of widening States' autonomy which alone can strengthen India's

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unity, the 42nd Amendment Act transforms the States into the Provinces of the British period.

In this process the supremacy of Parliament over the Executive has also vanished. Though normally everything is done in the name of Parliament, it has been made into the rubber stamp of the Government. In this situation the Executive is able to push through any anti-democratic measure. Members of Parliament including members of the ruling party are arrested under the MISA. The question hour is abolished or reduced to a farce. There is no immunity for speeches of Parliament members, they are either censored or not published in the Press. The secret and behind-the-scene confabulations of the Consultative Committees are replacing the broad forum of Parliament from where Government policies could be criticised and exposed and Government was forced to render account to the people and the people were educated.

The Ministry and the bureaucracy run the show. Parliament has become a decoration to be shown to the outside world.

The electors and people must denounce this conspiracy against the people, this design to transform them into abject slaves, and demand withdrawal of the Emergency as well as the new Constitutional amendments. They must, therefore, vote against the Congress, defeat its drive for one-party dictatorship and see that all votes are mobilised against the subversion of the Constitution and for those who stand for restoring the fundamental rights to the people.

Economic Conditions

The six years since the last elections, and especially the years of Emergency, have been years of misery and destitution for the people, of excruciating economic burdens to inflate the profits of the foreign and Indian monopolists and the gains of the landlords.

Two years before the clamping of the Emergency the people were the victims of the worst type of inflation, with

prices rising by 30 per cent in a year. The agricultural and industrial workers, the employees, teachers—all were fleeced; their debts increased. Real wages of agricultural workers, industrial workers went down and their standard of living already miserable was further reduced. The mass of peasants were doubly robbed. While they had to pay high prices for necessities and agricultural inputs, they could not get a remunerative price for their produce.

The conditions of the people have seriously deteriorated. Even according to Government's figures, the number of those living below the poverty line has increased to 70 per cent of the population.

When the Government decided to move against inflation it again hit the people and the common man. It impounded the DA and wage increases of the workers and the employees, imposed a cut in DA, allowing the monopolists to garner their profits. It drastically reduced bonus and passed hasty legislation to defraud the workers. It refused to implement the minimum wage legislation for agricultural workers and allowed the real wage to go down still further.

The Government declared it would utilize the Emergency to control prices and went on advertising that prices were controlled and the gains of Emergency were being consolidated.

Today prices of all necessaries of life—foodgrains, oil, sugar, kerosene, milk, medicines, cloth—are beyond the means of the common man—be he agricultural worker, peasant, industrial worker or an employee.

Never before since Independence was the common man, every family, so much haunted by high prices, the robbery of the market as during the present regime.

Never before were the hard-earned earnings of the toilers illegally confiscated through high prices as during recent years.

During the last six years of Indira Gandhi's regime, the country has seen unemployment mount massively every year. The annual plan, the Five-Year Plan, the pre-Emergency years,

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and the Emergency period all have contributed to this rising unemployment, to this denial of jobs to millions of young men and women.

Today registered unemployment has reached the colossal figure of one crore from 45 lakhs ten years ago. In one year alone, 1974-75, registered unemployment grew by 10 lakhs. Rural unemployment is estimated to be two crores. Total number of people suffering from lack of full employment number five crores.

The people must starve even with a bumper harvest when Government's and traders' godowns are bursting with grain and there is no space to store them.

The people are just too poor, without any purchasing power, to buy and consume the grain, sugar, fruits, vegetables, fish, cloth produced in the country.

This is how the Congress party has mismanaged the economy—all because it wants to serve the interests of the monopolists and landlords.

The Socialist countries of the world—the USSR, People's China, and others—had shown the way how to eliminate unemployment by abolishing exploitation and private property in the means of production.

But the Congress party pursues the capitalist path inflicting on the millions avoidable unemployment, poverty and misery.

Government Attacks Jobs

To protect the profits of the monopolists, to be able to sell abroad cheap at the expense of the workers and people of India, the Government is taking a direct hand in attacking the jobs of the people.

The nationalised coal industry which has set high targets for export of coal has embarked upon the task of reducing the "redundant" personnel and by increased workload increased the production per man by 15 per cent.

The Government is offering Rs. 400 crores to the cotton textile, jute and engineering industries to modernise industries,

i.e., to reduce the number of workers by thousands by introducing sophisticated machinery.

The jute industry has already thrown out a lakh of workers with the connivance of Government and increased workload. The National Textile Corporation, a Government concern, is working out a crash programme of Rs. 200 crores for modernising and intends to throw out 10 per cent of the workers already axed.

Recession Worsens Misery

Inflation and high prices of 1973 were followed by the grim recession of the present period in which hundreds of factories have closed down depriving tens of thousands of their jobs, industrial capacity remains unutilized and stocks of commodities continue to accumulate.

Steel, coal, cement, engineering goods, cloth, paper—all have shown large piles of accumulated stocks, unsold and unsalable.

The huge stock of grains continues to remain with very small withdrawals though people are starving. The woollen and cotton clothes and cloth continue to rot in godowns though people are dying of cold.

The Government has further fleeced the workers and employees by extending the impounding of the DA Act and DA cut and putting wage-rise in cold storage. They are planning a general offensive for wage reduction in the name of a National Wage Policy. Immediately they are cheating the employees and workers by introducing a manipulated consumers' living index by introducing a new wholesale price index series.

The successive good harvest of the last two years for which the Congress Government has taken credit have reduced the mass of poor peasants to absolute penury and starvation. With abundant grain available in the market, the procurement operations were manipulated to the ruin of small holders. They could not get the procurement price while the prices of commodities purchased by them continued to rise. The jute grower was systematically ruined with the help of

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the official purchasing agency to make Indian jute goods "competitive" on the foreign market and reap fat profits for the jute barons. The peasantry was ruined with denial of remunerative prices for their inputs and their consumption goods, and heavily enhanced irrigation and electricity rates and land taxes. The mass of agricultural workers denied even the minimum farcical wage under legislation.

The educated middle class, the teachers, professors, doctors, lawyers—all are the victims of high prices, Government taxation and arbitrary attacks at the hands of a corrupt bureaucracy and officials.

To add to their woes, the Congress Government has put enormous tax burdens on the people. Every article of daily consumption is taxed heavily. Tax forms 30 to 40, 50 per cent of the price of an article. Tea, sugar, oil, kerosene, tobacco, cloth, medicine, foodgrains—for purchasing every necessity people have to pay hundreds of crores to the Congress Government.

Colossal Concessions to Monopolists

While the Congress Government has piled up huge burdens on the people, it has given colossal concessions to the monopolists. More than 300 crores of rupees raised from the toilers are given away as gift to the monopolists to promote exports, to subsidise them to sell them cheap abroad without loss to the monopolists. While the workers and the common people are fleeced, hundreds of crores worth tax concessions, export incentives have been offered to them.

Other Sections of the People

Our students have also been victims of the anti-democratic policies of the Congress rule. Large numbers of miliant students in many places are refused admission to educational institutions; the right to form students' unions and democratically function them has been denied; and the new pattern of education, by cutting down the percentage of passes, prevents students from getting higher education.

Our youth have been among the worst victims of the colossal unemployment generated by Congress policies.

Women are still finding it difficult to get education and are still discriminated against in the matter of job opportunities, wages, etc. The law of equal pay for equal work is mostly unimplemented and has resulted in some places in victimisation of women workers.

Discrimination against communal minorities in the matter of entrance into Government services, educational facilities, language etc, continues.

Like all other spheres of life art and culture have also come under attack from the ruling party and government. Artists and writers who are democratic and progressive are hindered from expressing themselves. Only those who conform to the requirements of the ruling classes are given all encouragement. The ruling party which claims to be secular, scientific and an adherent of modern thought is itself encouraging all sorts of obscurantism and decadence.

Danger to National Freedom

The Congress party proclaims itself as the champion of national freedom and slanders others for compromising it.

In reality the economic policies pursued by the Congress party and its Government are compromising the independence of our economy and making it more and more dependent on the goodwill and help of the imperialists.

Notwithstanding valuable help from the Socialist countries, trade agreements, building of certain strategic industries and projects, the trend of official policies has been to rely more and more on the Western capitalist world.

The CPI(M) warns against this dangerous development which has got very much accentuated under recession and the collapse of the home market.

The new rush for exporting everything is rendered necessary by the heavy debt obligations. India's foreign debt now stands at over Rs. 10,000 crores and the annual debt servicing charges are over Rs.700 crores.

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The Government agencies and private business are begging for sub-contracts in foreign countries, as sub-agents of the multinationals in foreign countries. Over 4500 collaboration agreements have already been made and hectic steps are being taken for arranging collaboration agreements in the country between Indian capital and multinationals. The persistent demand of the American dominated World Bank that India should give free access to foreign capital is being conceded.

The economy under the Emergency can no longer boast of self-reliance or zero aid. The Fifth Five-Year Plan is so dependent on the World Bank that the Finance Minister had to appeal to McNamara with folded hands to continue the aid.

The CPI(M) warns against these dangerous anti-national policies—all the more dangerous because they are sold under the cover of defending national freedom.

This anti-national, anti-people policy must be defeated to save the people and the country.

The Debacle of the 20-Point Programme

Like the rest of the promises of the Congress, this programme also stands unfulfilled and betrayed.

Out of the 63 millions of acres of land which, even according to official estimates some years ago, should have been available as surplus, according to the latest official figures only 29 lakhs are said to have been declared as surplus.

Of those only 17 lakh acres are said to have been acquired by the Government. Of these only 10 lakh acres are claimed to have been distributed to 6 lakh landless agricultural workers. This includes barren land, land submerged under tanks, land allotted but not given possession of.

The house-sites distribution programme boasts that 70 lakhs have been given land out of an eligible 11 million. This figure also includes sites on which houses cannot be built, sites which get flooded during the rains or are submerged under tanks. And of these only 10 lakhs are

developed, the rest, it is presumed, continue to remain unoccupied.

The debt cancellation measures ushered with fanfare have boomeranged on the authorities and last year the AICC cautioned against 'hasty' steps. New Acts are announced but the money-lender continues to be as strong as ever in the countryside, the peasant not daring to go against him and claim relief under the Act. The minimum wages for agricultural labourers have been observed in their breach—the workers being denied all protection because of the pressure of the landlord.

The release of bonded labour has remained farcical and out of lakhs and lakhs of bonded labourers only 80 thousand have been identified according to official figures. The releases may not be more than 40,000. In the absence of alternate employment and credit facilities, many of them are being forced back into bondage.

The promise of supplying cheap cloth to the people has ended up in smoke. Cloth prices have been raised again. Already controlled cloth was beyond the means of the rural masses. The bumper harvest has made no difference. The Government has relieved mill after mill of the obligation to produce controlled cloth.

Notwithstanding advertised intentions of protecting the untouchables, wherever they fight for their rights, whether as agricultural labourers or as an oppressed caste—they are repressed, jailed, tortured or killed by the landlords.

There has been no relaxation of these atrocities under the Emergency—only suppression of news about them.

Sterilization Drive

No previous Government dared to insult and humiliate the Indian people as the present Government when it initiated the drive for forcible sterilisation under the pressure of the World Bank.

With the rising anger of the people, the authorities began to pretend that Government did not stand for compulsion.

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But this was mere eye-wash. Force was initially contemplated and sanctioned by representatives of the Government including the Family Planning Minister. The Prime Minister also made dubious statements in the beginning.

Never before were the Indian people, the poorer sections treated like cattle in this fashion. Never was there greater humiliation imposed on the citizens of India after independence.

Thousands left some cities in fear. But there was mass resistance with the police in places, the people sacrificed their lives and upheld the banner of the people.

The atrocities fell heavily on the tribals, Harijans and other poorer sections—the discrimination being quite open.

Side by side with this the worst type of economic compulsion, threats of starvation and loss of jobs were held out against Government and municipal employees, teachers and common citizens. The former were asked to get results for sterilisation or face loss of their jobs and other facilities.

Denial of hospital treatment, of ration cards, of maternity leave, threat of demotion and loss of job and finally denial of land to the landless unless sterilization was undergone, such have been the monstrous actions of the authorities.

The CPI(M) denounces these repressive actions and declares that a party capable of these heinous acts has no right to claim the confidence of the people.

Anti-Communism

Like the authoritarian parties in other parts of the world the Congress has recently launched a heinous anti-Communist drive by slandering the Communist movement in the country.

Though the edge of the attack is at present directed against the Right Communist Party, the most faithful ally of the Congress, its real purpose is to slander Communism and the Communist movement. All authoritarian and fascist ideologies and trends consider Communism to be their main enemy and it is not strange that the Congress leaders should follow the same course. Its drive for one-party dictatorship, its

authoritarian need to silence the voice of democratic opinion demands such an offensive.

The CPI(M) warns that this is a deliberate and calculated attempt on the part of the ruling party to drive a wedge between the Communist movement and the democratic forces for the benefit of the one-party dictatorship of the Congress.

Foreign Policy

At the Colombo non-aligned conference and many other international conferences, the Government of India befriends the non-aligned nations, and supports their demand against the imperialists. It supports the demand for a new economic world order, for equality of exchange between advanced and Third World countries, for better prices for the commodities exported by the under-developed countries.

It also supports the people's desire for world peace and detente, gives support to national liberation struggles and enters into friendly economic and trade agreements with the Socialist countries.

Notwithstanding these valuable agreements, the trend of Indian economy is towards greater dependence on the capitalist market, on aid and loans from imperialist countries.

Friendship with the Socialist countries, and economic agreements with them, declared support to the national liberation struggles—all are used as weapons to drive a favourable bargain with imperialism, to knock out new concessions and ease its immediate conflicts. This serves the immediate interests of the big bourgeoisie but sacrifices long-term interests of the people and the nation.

The CPI(M) demands a consistent policy of anti-imperialist struggle, of opposing all designs of imperialism, and of freeing the economy from its reliance on the capitalist world. It stands for deeper and closer relations, economic and political with the Socialist world. It stands for friendly relations with all our neighbours and peoples and countries.

The CPI(M) is happy to note that India has exchanged

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Ambassadors with People's China. The CPI(M) has been demanding normalisation of relations between the two countries even when these relations were strained to the utmost. The Party stands for speedy development of friendly relations with People's China.

Defeat Congress Policies

The suppression of democracy in the country has now been extended to suppression of democracy inside the Congress party. The party is under the authoritarian control of a few leaders. Emerging during recent times and in the elections are the forces of the Youth Congress, intensely anti-democratic and authoritarian. To give a fresh mandate to the Congress is to instal this new force in power.

The CPI(M) calls upon all sections of the people, all democratic and Left forces, the Opposition parties and the toiling masses to realise the perilous situation facing the country.

The election has brought to the forefront the question of defeating the economic and political policies pursued by the Congress Government—the policies which impose misery and unemployment on our people, which compromise our economy, independence and enable the foreign monopolists to exploit cheap labour and above all the policy of imposing one-party dictatorship on the people depriving them of all rights.

The Congress party wants the world to believe that the Indian people are willing to accept the dictatorship of the Congress party.

Left and Democratic Alternative

This untruth has to be unmasked by voting everywhere against the Congress policies on all fronts. It is the task of the Left and democratic forces to put before the people a comprehensive programme to defend the people and their liberties.

The CPI(M) puts forward the following programme and calls upon all Left and democratic parties and forces to rally round it and vote against Congress policies:

1. Withdrawal of the Emergency, release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of warrants, repeal of the 42nd Constitution Amendment and other repressive laws like MISA and the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act;

2. Take-over of foreign capital, ban on entry of multinationals and investment of private foreign capital;

3. Moratorium on foreign debt payments;

4. Nationalisation of monopoly houses, nationalisation of sugar, textile, jute, cement and drug industries; adequate financial and other assistance to small and medium industries;

5. Take-over of foreign trade;

6. Ending of corruption and bureaucratism in the public sector undertakings;

7. Restoration of democratic and trade union rights and collective bargaining through trade unions whose representative character must be decided by secret ballot of the workers; need-based minimum wage and full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living; withdrawal of the Bonus Act; measures against victimisation;

8. Abolition of landlordism by taking over the entire land of the landlords and their distribution gratis to the landless labourers and poor peasants; minimum wage of Rs. eight per day to agricultural labourers;

Cancellation of debts of peasants, landless labourers and rural poor and provision of adequate and cheap credit to them; supply of inputs and essential articles at cheap rates to them; remunerative prices for their produce to be ensured through Government purchase; lowering of taxes and other levies on the peasants, firm measures against social oppression of Harijans;

9. Bringing down of prices by drastically reducing taxes and levies on essential articles; state take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential articles and their distribution under supervision of People's Committees; compulsory procurement of all the marketable surplus of foodgrains of all landlords;

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10. Right to work to be made a fundamental constitutional right, and provision to be made for unemployment relief;

11. Compulsory free education up to the age of 14 and eradication of illiteracy;

12. A foreign policy of consistent anti-imperialism and close co-operation with Socialist countries.

The CPI(M) will strive its utmost to prevent the division of Opposition parties' votes—a division which enables the Congress to secure seats utterly disproportionate to the votes it secures. In furtherance of this aim and in the interests of inflicting a defeat on the ruling party, the CPI(M) is desirous of avoiding mutual contests with the Janata Party. It seeks seat adjustments with all Opposition parties and groups which are ready to fight the Emergency and inflict a defeat on the ruling Congress party and its candidates.

The CPI(M), at the same time, calls upon the people to vote for its candidates and its allies as the most consistent fighters for democracy and social transformation. The programme which it has offered constitutes the only Left and democratic alternative to the policies of the Congress, opening the way to national salvation.

It is extremely distressing to note that the Right C.P. leaders, by lending full support to the Emergency rule and the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, enabled the Congress rulers to institutionalise the Emergency powers and now are ganging up with the ruling Congress party to fight the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and some other States. The CC of the CPI(M) calls upon the Right C.P. and its leaders to abandon their suicidal policy of alliance with the ruling Congress and join the forces of Left and democratic opposition to fight against the Emergency rule and the drive of the Congress party towards one-party dictatorship.

The CC appeals to all the voters and the entire people to alert themselves about the impending danger to all democratic rights and civil liberties and parliamentary democratic

situations at the hands of the Congress rulers, and vote *enmasse* to inflict a crushing defeat on the Congress party.

The CC calls upon all its units, its members and followers to throw themselves wholeheartedly in this battle against dictatorship and discharge their responsibility to the people.

Vote CPI(M)
Vote Against Emergency

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Polit Bureau's Homage to Kamal Jumblatt*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement in New Delhi on March 19, 1977:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) pays its homage to Kamal Jumblatt who was assassinated on March 16, 1977.

An ardent patriot and consistent anti-imperialist, he was the respected leader of the Lebanese people in their struggle to free Lebanon from the grip of reactionary and communal forces. He led the battle of the people of that country against the conspiracies of the reactionaries backed by U.S. imperialism and the Israeli aggressors to partition Lebanon to weaken and decimate the democratic and progressive forces.

When the reactionary forces and their patrons moved to liquidate the bases of the Palestine liberation forces, who were operating in Lebanese territory under the Cairo Agreement of 1969, it was Jumblatt who forged the alliance of the Lebanese progressive forces with the Palestine forces to foil these conspiracies.

Today, the uneasy peace in Lebanon is in serious danger with the Israeli aggressors, in collaboration with Lebanese Right-wing forces and backed by US imperialism, renewing their attempts to occupy South Lebanon and liquidate the Palestinian bases there.

Jumblatt's assassination in such a situation is aimed at

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, March 27, 1977.

facilitating these evil designs of the imperialists, Zionists and Lebanese reactionaries.

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) while extending its deepest sympathy to the Lebanese people, expresses the fervent hope that the progressive forces of Lebanon and the Palestine liberation forces with the support of all progressive forces in the world, specially in the Arab world, will beat back this new offensive against them, defeat reaction inside Lebanon and win the Palestinian Arab's right to statehood.

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Homage to Comrade A.K. Gopalan*

Resolution adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

It is with a heart weighing heavily with deep sorrow that the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) mourns the death of one of its veteran members, Comrade Ayilliath Kuttiari Gopalan, an outstanding leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Left and democratic movement in the country. He was an incomparable and beloved leader of the people.

Joining the Communist Party in 1939, he became a member of the Central Committee of the united Communist Party in 1951, a member of the Party's central secretariat in 1958 and was a member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) since 1964 till his death. Comrade AKG made significant contributions to building of people's movement under the leadership of the CPI(M) and mass organisations of toiling people specially of peasantry and agricultural workers. For over two decades till his death he was President of the All-India Kisan Sabha. From 1952, except for 1957-62, Comrade AKG was the leader of the Opposition in Parliament, respected and listened to with attention by all.

Entering the political arena as a humble Congress volunteer in the early twenties, Comrade AKG stood in the leading ranks of the freedom struggle and traversed the same path which the radical youth of those days took—the revolutionary path through the Congress Socialist Party to the

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, March 27, 1977. Comrade A.K. Gopalan died on March 22, 1977.

Communist Party of India spending many years in jail or hunted by police. At the time of the split in the Communist Party, Comrade AKG was among the leaders who worked tirelessly to reorganise the Communist Party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

Comrade A.K. Gopalan played an outstanding role along with Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad and the late Comrade Krishna Pillai in building up workers' and peasants' organizations in Kerala under the auspices of the Congress and building up a Left leadership of the provincial Congress committee—all of which stood in good stead for the Communist movement in the state in later years.

Wherever the people had problems, wherever they were victims of police repression, Comrade AKG would rush to their aid whether it was the peasantry fighting against betterment levy in Punjab or the peasants of the Hill Ranges of Kerala fighting against evictions, whether it was the people of Maharashtra fighting for Samyukt Maharashtra or the people of Gujarat fighting for Maha Gujarat. After the leonine violence of the Congress ruler in 1948-50 against the Communist movement and the common people, it was Comrade AKG who broke this terror in the worst-affected areas of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Age and illness never deterred him.

Only five-six months ago he was visiting the plantations in Kerala where the workers had to face brutal repression after their strike, and Cannanore district where the police and Congress goondas had unleashed a reign of terror against the people.

It was in Cannanore that finally his illness overtook him and he never recovered from it. Comrade AKG's death is an irreparable loss to the toiling people's movement and has created a void difficult to fill for the CPI(M).

Comrade A.K. Gopalan lived to see the day of the ending of the repressive regime and one-party dictatorship of the Congress. The Polit Bureau pledges to Comrade AKG that it will resolutely carry on the struggle in the cause of

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our working people to accomplish the tasks which he left unfulfilled.

The Polit Bureau dips the Red Banner of the Party in homage to Comrade A.K. Gopalan.

The Polit Bureau shares their grief with Comrade Susheela Gopalan, his devoted comrade in all his struggles and during his illness, his daughter Laila and his other relatives and extends to them its heartfelt condolences.

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Well Begun

Editorial of 'People's Democracy', April 10, 1977

The Janata-CFD Government which, at the time of writing these lines, is just a week old, deserves praise for the first few measures that it took by way of implementing its election promises to the people.

Following in the wake of the withdrawal of the internal Emergency—a measure undertaken by the former Government itself before laying down its office—the new Government has lifted external Emergency as well. The bans on certain organizations which were the products of the internal Emergency have also been removed. These are welcome steps along the road to full restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights.

The announcement made now that all the restrictions imposed on the Press during the Emergency would be removed by the repeal of the Press (Publication of Objectionable Matters) Act and by re-establishing the Feroze Gandhi Act, exempting Press reports of parliamentary proceedings from legal action, is another step in the same direction.

The Government has made it clear that it proposes to repeal the amendments to the Constitution and certain other measures which had been intended by the previous Government to institutionalise the Emergency, though it is not yet clear how, in view of the majority enjoyed by the Congress in the Rajya Sabha and in the majority of State legislatures, the Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act can be repealed. It is

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obvious that the struggle for the implementation of promises in this connection is arduous.

The Railways and Communication Ministers have in their turn declared that the Acts of victimisation restored to by the former Government against the Railway employees who went on strike in 1974, as well as against the P.& T. employees who launched their struggle in 1968 and 1974 would be cancelled. The victmised employees would naturally be reinstated.

It is to be hoped that employees under other ministries, victimised under various circumstances by the previous Government, would be reinstated and that forms of action other than termination of service would be cancelled so that all the Government employees will be saved from the vindictive actions resorted to by the previous Government.

Another welcome step taken by the Janata-CFD Government is the cleaning up of the administration which had been filled by the cronies of those discredited persons who constituted what was called "the extra-constitutional centre of power". The replacement of the secretary of the Union home ministry and the top officer of the Central Bureau of Investigation is a step in the right direction.

It is to be hoped that all those officers who acted as the tools of the extra-constitutional centre of power would be given the just punishment that is their due. Such punishment would not be an act of vindictiveness on the part of the new Government but justice done to the people who suffered for no other crime than that they refused to kowtow to "the extra-constitutional centre of power".

A significant announcement was made by the Union Home Minister, Charan Singh, in Parliament that enquiries will be conducted into the Maruti and Nagarwala affairs, as well as against the notorious former Defence Minister Bansi Lal. The activities of those who were responsible for these crimes have enraged the people beyond description. It is only right and proper that the machinery of enquiry and punishment be set in motion against them.

All this however is confined to the administrative set up at the Centre. Nothing has been done in the States where too a section of the bureaucrats became, during the period of Emergency, the tools of the extra-constitutional centre of power and resorted to high-handed actions. The chief ministers, other ministers and the leaders of the ruling party in the various states are as guilty of these crimes as the extra-constitutional centre of power in New Delhi. The people rightly expect that they too will be similarly punished.

It is not suggested here that the Centre should encroach on the Constitutional rights of State Governments. Enquiry into the conduct and punishment of the politicians and bureaucrats who are guilty of crimes in the States should be left to the people and their representatives who are capable of doing it under the new political conditions.

The massive majority secured by the Janata-CFD Government at the Centre, however, makes it clear that the Indian people as a whole demand a complete reversal of the policies pursued by the former Government at the Centre and its counterparts in the States. It would be incongruous if it were seen that, while the Union Government enquires into the conduct of and punishes the former Union ministers and the bureaucrats, who acted as their tools, their counterparts in the states pursue the same discredited policy enunciated and implemented by "the extra-constitutional centre of power". The least that should be done is to demand of every State Government that they set up commissions of enquiry into the conduct of and punish the guilty persons in the same manner as is done by the Union Government.

It is obvious that, most of the State Governments now being manned and headed by the Congress, these governments would sabotage any measure adopted in the direction of punishing the guilty persons (since the heads of these governments themselves are in most cases the fountain head of evils committed during the period of Emergency). But the very fact that the Union Government has adopted such measures and that it demands of the State Governments to

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do the same would enable the progressive democratic forces in the States to mobilise the people around these demands.

Such a mass movement would be the only effective way of beating down the resistance offered by those Congress Governments in the States who, like the Bourbons of old, would learn nothing from the ignominous defeat suffered by them at the hands of the people.

It is in this context that two recent developments in the country have to be seen—the ordering of fresh elections to the State legislature in Kashmir and the replacement of the former Congress Government by a new CFD–CPI(M) Coalition Government in Tripura.

In view of the massive majority recorded against the Congress Government at the Centre the principles of democracy would have normally demanded fresh elections to all state legislatures.

The formation of CFD–CPI(M) Government in Tripura would also help the process of democratisation.

We for our part would not suggest anything which, even by implication, would tighten the grip of the Centre over the States. But then the question of punishing the guilty politicians and bureaucrats in the States is as much a question of democracy in general as of Centre-State relations. Every political party, group and individual (including those Congressmen who have not yet lost their sense of democracy and moral values) should fall in line with the Union Government in the matter of punishing the guilty politicians and bureaucrats.

This, however, is only a beginning. It is no more than enabling the democratic movement, the mass of working people, to assert their rights. The major question is how the Government proposes to solve the internal problems of the national economy and the external problem of the country's relations with foreign countries. It is on the way in which the Desai Government tackles these problems that future generations will judge the Government.

Finance Minister Patel has drawn the attention of

Parliament and the people to the crisis that is overtaking the national economy. He has correctly pointed out how the policies pursued by the previous Government turned the nation's economy into shambles. He promises to come forward with the present Government's proposals to tackle these problems when he introduces the regular budget in a couple of months.

The CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties have gone on record to point out that the serious problems faced by the country would not be solved unless the pro-landlord, pro-monopolist policies of attacking the working people and collaborating with the foreign monopolies are completely reversed, unless new policies of democratic national advance are adopted. They proposed such constructive measures as would help the process of solving the serious economic problems at the expense of landlords and monopolies—foreign and Indian. It is to be hoped that genuinely democratic elements in the Janata, CFD and Akali parties would join the Left and democratic parties in the struggle for the reversal of the former Government's policies.

In relation to foreign policy, it is good that the new Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister himself made it clear that they do not give up the policies of friendship with the Socialist and non-aligned powers. The association of the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister in the bureau meeting of the non-aligned community in Delhi is to be welcomed. However, as the Central Committee of the C.P.I(M) points out, the democratic movement should be concerned over any such shift in the policy as would facilitate large-scale inroads of the multinationalists into our national economy and the erosion into the policy which is broadly known as that of the non-aligned movement.

The C.P.I.(M) in its part would certainly adopt its own independent position and fight for the policies of peace, anti-imperialism and friendship with the socialist and non-aligned powers.

(April 4, 1977)

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Greetings to People of Pakistan*

Communist Party of India (Marxist) greets the people of Pakistan for the heroic struggle they are waging against rigging of elections, terror and negation of democratic norms. The Government of Prime Minister Bhutto met the surging protest with severe repression, and the people have faced up to it with courage.

The CPI(M) salutes the memory of the martyrs who have laid down their precious lives in this battle for democracy.

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73

Greetings to Communist Party of Spain*

Communist Party of India (Marxist) hails the decision to legalise the Communist Party of Spain and sends warmest greetings to comrades in Spain on this historic occasion.

The Communist Party of Spain had been banned in the late 1930s when fascists led by Franco usurped power in that country and destroyed all democratic institutions. The Communist Party, throughout these long four decades, continued the most heroic resistance in the same spirit of indomitable courage with which it had fought the Civil War against Franco's forces and the Phalangists. The sacrifices of the Spanish Communists inspired democratic forces the world over, and their battle-cry of 'No Pasaran' became the slogan of all anti-fascist forces.

Communists in Spain, along with all Left, democratic and anti-fascist forces, had been subjected to the severest persecution by the fascist regime. The Party had to go underground and most of its leaders had to function in exile. The Party not only withstood the repression, but led the working class and the people in their class struggles and the struggle for an end to fascism and the restoration of democracy. Its programme and policies had been in tune with popular aspirations, and the people enriched the Party with tremendous confidence and support.

When the Franco regime was overthrown in 1975, the battle for democracy reached a new stage, and the decision to

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hold parliamentary elections and allow the Communist Party to participate in it is a big step forward. This victory represents the success of the democratic urges of the people, whose interests had been faithfully and correctly upheld by the Communists. It is hoped they will lead the people to still greater successes in the struggle for democracy and Socialism.

74

Maintain Unity Forged in Lok Sabha Election*

Call Given by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in the Statement Adopted in its Meeting Held in New Delhi on April 28-29, 1977

The text of the statement adopted by the Central Committee meeting in New Delhi on April 28 and 29, 1977:

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) notes that the Janata Government at the Centre headed by Sri Morarji Desai has lifted the external Emergency, thus completing the process of ending the Emergency regime; put an end to Press censorship; annulled the Press (Publication of Objectionable Matters) Act; re-enacted the Feroze Gandhi Act providing immunity to publication of Parliament proceedings; etc. The Government has thus restored, to a large extent, the civil liberties and democratic rights trampled upon by the previous Congress regime. This has earned for the Government the goodwill of a large section of democratic minded people in the country.

The CC, however, regretfully notes the hesitation shown in completing the process. The President's Address to the Joint Session of Parliament, which was the first statement of policy made on behalf of the Government, did not make the categorical announcement expected of it that the hated MISA would be annulled and that there would be a general amnesty to all political prisoners. The result is that there are still large numbers of political prisoners, convicted and undertrials, and even MISA detenus in jails. The dreaded special instrument of terror of the former Prime Minister, the Research and Analysis Wing, continues to be in

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existence. The CC calls on the Government, and requests the other democratic parties and organizations to call on the Government, to abandon this hesitation, to annul the universally hated legislations like the MISA and to declare a general amnesty to all political prisoners. The CC also demands the immediate dismantling of the RAW.

Similarly, while the Railways and Communications Ministers have decided to reinstate the employees victimised in their departments for participating in general strikes, and the Labour Minister has asked for the reinstatement of victims of Emergency in both the public and private sectors, there is generally a dragging of feet in this regard by other Ministers. The CC demands speedy steps to reinstate all of them.

State Elections Welcomed

The Central Committee also welcomes the steps taken by the Central Government to hold elections in nine States and urges upon it to take similar steps in regard to other States also where the lives of the elected Assemblies have already exceeded the original term of five years since such extension has no moral and political sanction.

While noting that several high ranking officers involved in the brutal attacks on the people during the Emergency have been shifted from their posts, the CC desires to point out that there are still large numbers of them who not only continue in their posts but are behaving as if there has been no change of regime at the Centre.

While the Central Government has appointed a Commission to enquire into the atrocities committed during the Emergency regime, most of the State Governments are withholding co-operation for the enquiry. It is necessary to take prompt and effective measures to bring every State Government in line with the Centre's policy of bringing to book those who have been responsible for the atrocities and brutalities committed during the Emergency, and even before, in the name of "saving democracy from the Right reactionaries and Left adventurists".

Widen Scope of Enquiry

The CC notes that the Central Government has set up the machinery for enquiries into some notorious cases of misuse of authority such as those of Maruti, Nagarwala and Bansi Lal. This, however, is inadequate since the source of all such misuse of authority was the former Prime Minister herself. She was the fountain head of the Emergency misrule. When, after the Allahabad High Court judgement, public opinion demanded that Smt. Gandhi step down from Prime Ministership it is on record that she in the most authoritarian and unconstitutional manner got the President to sign the declaration of Emergency without consulting the Council of Ministers. She is responsible for all the abuse of power during the Emergency period, and it is now known that even after announcing the poll and after the people had exercised their franchise, she made a desperate last-minute attempt to over-ride that verdict and perpetuate her authoritarian rule. Furthermore, such members of the notorious gang as V.C. Shukla, Om Mehta, etc., have not been brought into the net. The CC requests the Central Government, and appeals to all other democratic forces to join in requesting the Central Government, to widen the scope of such enquiries to include all those who are involved in the misuse of authority, the former Prime Minister above all.

Bestial Police Tortures

The CC desires, in this context, to draw the attention of the Central Government and all the democratic parties, organizations and individuals to the notorious "Rajan Case" in Kerala in which the High Court of the State and the Supreme Court have come to the conclusion that the State Government's handling of the case has been reprehensible. The ruling Coalition in Kerala and the Congress leadership at the Centre found it necessary to remove the then Home Minister from the Chief Ministership to which he had been elevated after the recent election.

The facts which are everyday being revealed and published

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in the daily Press, however, make it clear that the "Rajan Case" was not an isolated one, but part of a deliberate scheme of torturing helpless victims in ways which in bestiality would equal the most hated and dreaded methods of torture perfected under the Nazi regime. The officers who are responsible for organizing these dreaded torture chambers are still continuing in service, though a few who were directly associated with the "Rajan Case" have been suspended. The CC requests the Central Government to make a thorough investigation into the atrocities perpetrated in these torture chambers and with a view to facilitating such a probe, put under suspension all the officers who are directly associated with them.

Congress Game

Although the atrocities which are now being revealed in the daily newspapers have brought Kerala to the forefront, the CC desires to draw the attention of the Central Government to the brutal manner in which the political opponents of the Congress regime were handled in other States, particularly in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Investigations into all these cases with a view to bringing the responsible persons to book is an immediate task if resort to such terror is not to be repeated again.

The CC would like to remind the leaders of the Janata Party and the Central Government that although defeated in the Lok Sabha election, the former Prime Minister and her supporters in the Congress Party are trying to stage a comeback through whatever means are available to them. They have been emboldened by the manner in which the Congress Working Committee completely let off Smt. Gandhi and Om Mehta, while another member of the gang V.C. Shukla, was given only a light punishment. The call for "unity inside the Congress" made by all factions in its leadership is an indication that the Congress leaders would like to adopt a policy of "forget and forgive" in relation to those who brought their party and the country into the present deplorable condition.

Any lenient attitude by the Central Government also will not only allow the guilty to go scot-free but embolden them to prepare another assault on democracy.

Serious Problems

The CC desires to draw attention to the serious economic problems which are facing the country and which, if not properly solved, would lead to an erosion into the goodwill that has been generated for the Janata Government because of its record in getting the civil liberties and democratic rights restored. The problem of prices, employer-employee relations, taxation, employment, etc., are getting more and more serious, as a result of which discontent is bound to mount among all sections of the people.

The CC expresses its concern also at the failure to carry out such promises to the working class as are related to bonus, compulsory deposit, etc.

While Government spokesmen speak of the seriousness of the economic sitution, specially the rise in prices and huge unemployment, no measures have yet been announced to solve any of these problems. No relief can be given to the people unless the profiteering of the monopolists and landlords is curbed. Also, the invasion by multinationals and dependence on foreign aid are adding to the crisis of the economy and these have to be ended.

Wrong Steps

Far from doing this, what has been announced as policies in the economic sphere go to help these Indian and foreign vested interests.

The wheat policy that has been announced—the abandonment of all procurement by the State, the abolition of single State food zone, etc.—will ruin the small and medium producers who will not get even the price fixed, enable the big producers and big traders to amass huge profits and push up the price of foodgrains for the consumers.

Similarly, the import policy that has been announced and

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has already been welcomed by Big Business organised in the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, is a policy for liberalisation of imports in the interests of the monopolists and will be harmful to the indigenous industry.

Indications are there, as in the case of the steel industry, that multinationals will continue to be invited into the country and that the dependence on foreign aid will also continue.

The CC expects that the Janata Government would take into full confidence the trade unions, Kisan Sabha and other mass organizations representing the working people in evolving and implementing concrete policies in relation to problems affecting the particular section of the people concerned. In dealing with these mass organizations and with the political parties which are leading them, it is necessary that no partisan political considerations are allowed to influence the Government's policy.

Maintain Unity

The CC would, in this connection, remind the leaders of the Janata Party and the Central Government that one of the manifestations of the drive towards one-party dictatorship made by the Congress party was its attiude of hostility towards mass organizations and political parties which do not fall in line with the Congress party. Completing the process of eliminating all traces of authoritarianism should, therefore, mean taking a completely non-partisan attitude towards mass organizations and political parties which do not see eye to eye with the ruling party.

This, in the opinion of the CC, should equally apply to the Janata Party's approach to its allies in the struggle against Congress authoritarianism. The co-operation between the Janata and other non-Congress parties including the CPI(M) which began as mere adjustments of seats with a view to avoiding triangular contests but developed into joint campaigns and joint activities, is a great asset built up during the month and a half of the Lok Sabha elections.

The CC is of the view that it is necessary to preserve and strengthen that unity. Any complacent attitude adopted under the mistaken belief that what has come to be known as "the Janata wave" means support to the Janata Party alone would damage the cause of democratic unity. People were roused to unprecedented political activity because of the unity of all the anti-authoritarian forces of which the Janata Party was of course the strongest, but other forces like the CFD, the minority communities, the CPI(M) and its allies, the Akalis, etc., made their own distinctive contributions. It will be suicidal for the leaders of the Janata Party to close their eyes to all this and to assume that their party as such has come to occupy the position which the Congress party occupied for thirty years after Independence.

It is all the more necessary that the unity against the authoritarian forces is maintained and strengthened for the coming elections to the State Assemblies. These elections are a continuation of the political struggle fought arround the recent Lok Sabha elections and the continuation of the unity forged in that election is the guarantee of inflicting a further crushing defeat on the forces of authoritarianism. The CPI(M), while assuring that it will pursue this policy, expects other parties, specially the Janata Party, to shoulder their responsibility by making the necessary accommodation to ensure that the anti-authoritarian forces act together.

Far from adopting such a realistic attitude, certain elements in the ruling Janata Party are adopting the harmful, anti-democratic position of anti-Communism, going to the extent of saying Marxism cannot take root in this country. The CC appeals to the leaders of the Janata Party and the CFD to see where such anti-Communist postures have taken the country in the past. In the future, too, such postures can only endanger democracy and engender authoritarian trends.

The revial of the activities of the RSS is also ominous. It is well-known that the RSS has created for itself a disreputable record as a para-military organization, directed against the working class and democratic movements, as

well as the religious minorities. While the Left and democratic movement has rightly demanded the removal of the ban on the RSS organization imposed by the Congress Government, the working class and the other sections of the working people cannot be blind to the danger which a revival of the RSS on these lines would pose to all sections of the democratic movement. The CC hopes that the leaders of the Janata Party, including many of those who have to live down their past associations with the RSS, would realise the dangers inherent in a revival of the RSS.

The CC welcomes the successful talks between the Foreign Ministers of India and the Soviet Union, the Indo-Soviet Joint Communique and the three agreements signed at the conclusion of the talks. The CC also welcomes the successful Conference of the Non-Aligned Bureau in New Delhi. They have been a rebuff to those who have taken a hostile attitude to non-alignment and friendly relations between India and the Socialist countries. It is the demand of the CPI(M) that the Government should build ever-closer relations with the non-aligned and Socialist countries.

The country and the people face serious problems. The people expect a break with the policies that the Congress had been pursuing so that these problems can be solved in their favour. The unity that was forged for the Lok Sabha elections has to be preserved and strengthened to fulfil the expectations of the people as speedily as possible.

75

Greetings to the People of Pakistan*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in New Delhi on April 28-29, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) extends its warm greetings and support to the democratic forces and people of Pakistan, specially the working class of that country, at this moment of their grim struggle for their democratic rights, for the elementary right to exercise their franchise freely and fairly. They are facing the army and bullets, martial law, curfew and the Pakistan Army Act which prescribes the maximum punishment of death, and Press censorship and other repressive measures in the battle they are heroically waging. Even according to official figures, 240 persons have been killed since the movement began on March 8. Non-official estimates put it at hundreds.

The struggle began as a protest against the wholesale rigging of the elections to the National Assembly by Prime Minister Bhutto. As the movement launched by the Pakistan National Alliance demanding Bhutto's resignation gathered momentum, Bhutto began making offers one after another, none of which met the demands of the people. The Opposition rightly rejected all these offers as political manoeuvres by Bhutto to cling to office without getting the mandate of the people in a free and fair poll.

The movement against the Bhutto regime has assumed the proportion of a mighty popular movement. The working class in the whole country has been on general strike for days togther. Students as a community are in the thick of the

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struggle. So also other sections of the people not only against the rigged poll but against the policies pursued by successive regimes which have landed Pakistan in a severe economic crisis, the burdens of which the people are forced to bear. As happens with all such huge mass upheavals, certain reactionary elements have attached themselves to the movement. But that does not detract from its popular character.

Instead of meeting the demands of the people to relieve their misery, Bhutto is reassuring the vested interests that there will not be any further reduction in land ceilings, he is also trying to pander to and win over the worst obscurantist elements. At the same time, he is relying on the army, martial law, curfew to suppress the growing movement against his regime.

Only those who do not understand that the mighty movement has arisen out of the demands of the people, their struggle for elementary democratic rights, can think of suppressing it with the army and inviting the danger of a military dictatorship to the country — a country which for seventeen years after 1954 groaned under the iron heels of military dictatorships. There are reactionary forces outside the country who would be only too happy at the further strengthening of the military forces in the life of the country.

The democratic forces and people of India, who have special bonds of kinship with the democratic forces and people of Pakistan, are gravely concerned at these developments which are dangerous for the future of that country and also have a vital bearing on the security and stability of the sub-continent. They extend their wholehearted support to the people of Pakistan in their struggle for democracy.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) ardently hopes that the working class and people of Pakistan will succeed in defeating the Bhutto regime and all reactionaries and establishing a Government which will ensure democracy and a better life to the working people.

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CPI(M) Polit Bureau's Call to Right C.P.*

Give up Bankrupt Policy of Collaboration with Congress

Commenting on the Right Communist Party Central Executive Committee's call for unity of Left and democratic forces against the Janata Government, the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has, in a statement issued in New Delhi on May 9, 1977, made it clear that the CPI(M) cannot join in any move which is calculated to preserve the unity between the Congress and the Right C.P., nor can it be a party to anything which will impede the consolidation of the gains made by the popular movement by way of restoration of freedom of speech, Press, association etc.

The text of the statement reads:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) reiterates its view that the struggle for forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces cannot be separated from the struggle against the drive towards dictatorship which the leaders of the Congress party and its Government have been making.

Although defeated in the recently held Lok Sabha elections, the Congress has not abandoned the policies which culminated in the imposition of internal Emergency which was sought to be institutionalized in the 42nd amendment to the Constitution.

The utmost that the Congress leaders are prepared to go is, as was seen in the deliberations of the AICC, to admit that certain "excesses" were committed and that the Emergency

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was "misused". They still hold that the imposition of the Emergency and the abrogation of fundamental rights was necessary to "save democracy".

Their refusal to retrace the step towards dictatorship is seen in their resistance to the annulment of the 42nd amendment to the Constitution, in sticking to ministerial offices even in those states whose people have overwhelmingly voted them out in Lok Sabha elections and in all other ways trying to sabotage the process of restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights which were trampled upon during the Emergency.

The installation of the nominees of the universally detested caucus as Congress President and majority of Working Committee members also shows that the drive towards dictatorship would be resumed if and when the Congress gets an opportunity to get back to power. If their efforts in this direction succeed, our people will have to go through an ordeal much more painful than they had to during the 19 months of "unrelaxed" Emergency.

Our Party has, therefore, come to the conclusion that the forthcoming State Assembly elections should be looked upon as a continuation of the struggle waged around the Lok Sabha election and that the unity of anti-authoritarian forces which helped the resounding defeat of the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections should continue in the Assembly elections as well.

It is against this background that the P.B. looks upon the call given by the Central Executive Committee of the Right Communist Party for the unity of Left and democratic parties and forces against the Janata Government, as a continuation of the bankrupt policy of collaboration with the Congress which that party has been following ever since its leaders broke away from the undivided Communist Party of India.

Everybody knows that it was the leaders of the Right Communist Party who, in the critical days of 1969-70, broke the unity of Left and democratic forces—a unity which led

to the formation of United Front Governments headed by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala and West Bengal. They should bear the major responsibility for the evolution of authoritarian trends in the ruling Congress Party leading to the establishment of semi-fascist terror in West Bengal.

Their responsibility is still greater and more direct in Kerala where unspeakably brutal atrocities were committed under a regime headed by one of their stalwarts. At the very time when these atrocities are one by one being revealed by the victims of police torture and when the Congress Minister who was immediately responsible for this has been forced out by the pressure of public opinion from the Chief Ministership, to which he had been elevated after the recent elections, the Central Executive Committee of the Right Communist Party is singing paens of praise to "the glorious United Front Government". If they had even a modicum of honesty and Communist consciousness, they would at least at the present stage have severed their connections with a State Government which has earned notoriety equal to that of Congress Governments in other States which, as is well-known, were directed by the caucus.

The Polit Bureau wants to make it clear that while the CPI(M) is behind none in striving to forge the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country, the CPI(M) cannot join in any move which is calculated to preserve the unity between the Congress and the Right C.P. Nor can it be a party to anything which will impede the consolidation of the gains made by the popular movement by way of restoration of the freedom of speech, Press, association, etc. These gains are valuable above all for the working class and other sections of the working people who are today in a position to use these freedoms to organize themselves to win their demands.

The P.B., therefore, appeals to the ranks and leaders of Right C.P. to see that their policy of collaboration with the Congress has proved bankrupt and that it is, therefore,

necessary to join the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic parties in the struggle against the Congress, for the consolidation of the gains by way of restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights and mobilising the working people for the realisation of their demands.

77

CPI(M) Quits Tripura Coalition*

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has asked its ministers in the CFD-CPI(M) coalition in Tripura to submit their resignations from the State Cabinet. This announcement was made at a Press Conference held in New Delhi on July 16 by Comrades B.T. Ranadive, Samar Mukherjee and Nripen Chakraborty, Finance Minister of Tripura.

The following is the text of the statement circulated at the Press Conference explaining the reasons for the decision:

The Tripura State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) lodges its emphatic protest against the arbitrary undemocratic and authoritarian functioning of the Chief Minister who has reduced collective ministerial functioning to a farce.

Purpose of Coalition

The Party decided to form a Coalition Ministry with the CFD MLAs to avoid the installation of President's rule and to give relief to the people suffering from the political and economic devastations of Congress misrule and to arrange for early free and fair election to the legislative Assembly. The Party was hopeful of the coalition restoring the democratic rights of the people and of meeting their urgent demands.

Lest there was any doubt about the purposes and objectives

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of the Party, it put forward a 14-point programme before the CFD partner which the latter accepted without reservations.

The experience of the last three and a half months, however, has dashed all our hopes to the ground. The Chief Minister has arbitrarily distributed the portfolios and has concentrated no less than 21 portfolios in his own hands, thus grabbing the major share of ministerial authority.

Dictatorial Behaviour

He behaves like a dictator and pays scant respect to collective functioning. In utter disregard of Constitutional functioning, he has been interfering in the work of other ministries, cancelling their directives and imposing on them his personal whims and decisions.

Favouritism, partiality and shielding of corrupt officials of the Sen Gupta regime has been the result of these malfunctioning. The worst result of all this was that not one item of the 14-point programme could be fulfilled.

No Restoration of Democracy

Due to the opposition of the Chief Minister it has not been possible to withdraw the anti-democratic measures of the Sen Gupta Ministry. Cases started against the workers of the democratic movements like food movement, etc., have not been withdrawn. Fabricated cases against some of our MLAs continue. The suspension, forced retirement, dismissal and termination of service orders against a large number of Government employees continue, despite a directive from the Central Janata Government to withdraw them. Cases against Naxalites have also not been withdrawn.

Police Used Against Workers

On the contrary, the Chief Minister has started using the police in a big way to suppress the trade union movement, student movement and other democratic movements of the people. Anti-social elements have been deputed to disrupt

the unity of the motor workers, tea workers, etc., and directly under police protection, they are becoming a serious law and order problem in the State.

The people of Agartala town, as well as the leading newspapers openly accuse the Government of handing over the town to the anti-social forces. The Chief Minister is directly responsible for this state of affairs in the State. While recognized trade unions are being bypassed, the anti-social forces are being given recognition in utter disregard of accepted trade union practices.

Equally dismal is the record regarding the fulfilment of the urgent demands of the people. The Chief Minister had issued an arbitrary circular to prevent restoration to the tribals of the illegally transferred lands, even when Revenue Courts decided in favour of such restoration. Instead of withdrawing that circular, he is encouraging further grabbing of tribal land.

Large-Scale Evictions

The Janata Government at the Centre attaches importance to the protection of weaker sections. But in Tripura, large-scale evictions of poor kisans are taking place from khas land, and sharecroppers are being evicted forcibly, under police protection and with police help. Due to the opposition of the Chief Minister, khas land, long in occupation of the landless agriculturists, could not be settled on them. As the Revenue Department was in his hands, despite an Assembly resolution, he opposed any exemption of revenue for ryots who have in their possession three acres or less of land. On the other hand, certificate notices are being issued for forced realization of arrear revenues.

Whatever relief money has been sanctioned has been passed over to the hands of corrupt people, because the Chief Minister arbitrarily refused to form all-parties' village committees for relief work, and instead, extended the terms of office of the Panchayat Pradhans, postponing election to Panchayats.

The negative attitude of the Chief Minister has prevented the Ministry from taking decisions for appointing more teachers, for opening of more schools and the strengthening of the teaching staff particularly in rural areas.

No Co-operation Possible

The Ministry has been debarred from giving dearness allowance to the Government employees though two instalments have become due.

While making new appointments, the Chief Minister refused to accept any guideline which may help the needy unemployed who are waiting for jobs. Instead of that, in making appointments he is showing favouritism and nepotism. These misdeeds of the Chief Minister have made the Ministry utterly unpopular among the youth.

No D.A. to Government Employees

We repeatedly drew the attention of the Chief Minister to these malpractices, but there was no response from him. Ultimately, we, in our long memorandum (published in PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY last week), catalogued the undemocratic and authoritarian activities of the Chief Minister and wanted a discussion with the State leaders of the Janata Party. But receipt of that letter was not even acknowledged.

After the formation of the Coalition, though important decisions were taken, there was not a single attempt to have joint consultation with us. On the other hand, in all mass meetings, both Sri S.L. Singh, M.P., one of the State CFD(Janata) leaders, as well as the Chief Minister, openly carry on vicious propaganda against the CPI(M), while wooing corrupt former Ministers of the Congress for drawing them inside the Janata Party.

From these facts, it is clear that neither the interest of democracy nor the economic interests of the masses can be protected in the company of the Chief Minister. Our Party therefore cannot continue to co-operate with these anti-people policies which heap more sufferings on the people. By

remaining inside the Ministry we cannot be a party to the misdeeds and corrupt practices of the Coalition partner. Having apprised the Janata Party leaders of the misdeeds of this man, our Party has asked its Ministers to resign from the Ministry and end the Coalition.

78

CPI(M) Stands by Proletarian Internationalism*

Statement issued by E.M.S.Namboodiripad, General Secretary of CPI(M)

Comrade E.M.S.Namboodiripad, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on August 3, 1977:

The Right C.P. General Secretary, Rajeshwara Rao, in his Chandigarh statement of August 1 expressed his desire that the CPI(M) "becomes friendly to the Soviet Union".

Speaking of the speculation of the Press regarding the contacts established between certain Soviet personalities and the leaders of the CPI(M), Rajeshwara Rao says that the said Soviet personalities were only some academicians.

In view of the Press speculation and Rajeshwara Rao's statement concerning the same, it has become necessary for me to state the attitude adopted by our Party towards the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of China and all other fraternal Parties.

Our Party has never been "unfriendly" to the Soviet Union or the CPSU, as is insinuated by Rajeshwara Rao. Ours is a Party loyal to the principles of proletarian internationalism. We have always defended, and will continue to defend, all the Socialist countries when they are under attack either by imperialism or by our own reactionaries.

May I remind Rajeshwara Rao that, while his party prevaricated for months together in 1968 when the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact Powers had to intervene in

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Czechoslovakia, our Party had no hesitation in supporting the action of the Warsaw Pact Powers.

We do not, however, consider, as Rajeshwara Rao and his party do, that friendliness to the Soviet Union means hostility to China. Proletarian internationalism, according to us, requires a fraternal attitude to all Socialist countries, including the Soviet Union and China, the Communist Parties in those countries, as well as to all the fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties in the capitalist world.

It is well-known that we differ from the leaders of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and of China on a number of national and international issues. While we do not hide these differences, we do not allow them to stand in the way of our adopting a fraternal attitude to the Socialist system developing in these countries as well as to the Governments and Parties which are leading them. Declining to join either the Soviet or the Chinese "camp" after the international Communist movement got divided, we work out our own policies on the national and international issues as we see them.

Rajeshwara Rao is perfectly correct in saying that the Soviet personalities who visited the country and talked to us were only some academicians and not the representatives of their party. In the course of the informal exchange of views which took place between them and us, we clearly explained our views to them. The question, therefore, does not arise, as has been suggested in some Press speculations, of our changing the basic positions we have been following. We are as firm as we have ever been in our fraternal attitude towards all the Communist and Workers' Parties in the world, including those of the Soviet Union and China, while we work out our own line in relation to all national and international issues.

79

CPI(M) Bill for Recognition of Nepali*

Comrades Samar Mukherjee and Somnath Chatterjee, CPI(M) members of Parliament, have submitted a Bill in the Lok Sabha for inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

In the Fifth Lok Sabha, a similar Bill was submitted by Comrade Ratanlal Brahman, CPI(M) M.P., but the Bill lapsed on the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to include Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule in acknowledgement of its cultural heritage and of the fact that a large number of the people of the country speak Nepali language as their mother-tongue.

The West Bengal Legislative Assembly has recently unanimously passed a resolution in support of the inclusion of the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule.

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CPI(M) Polit Bureau Communique*

At its meeting in New Delhi which ended on August 12, 1977, the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) considered several urgent questions pertaining to organisation and the political situation, says a communique issued in New Delhi on August 13, 1977.

The Polit Bureau decided to hold the Party Congress from April 2 to 8, 1978 in Punjab. The Congress which was due in 1975 could not be held because of the Emergency. It was decided that the District and State Conferences of the Party prior to the Congress should be finished by the end of December. It was further decided that the Political Resolution to be presented to the Congress should be finalised and released for discussion full two months before the Congress according to the requirements of the Party Constitution.

The P.B. decided to convene a meeting of the Central Committee from September 25 to 29, 1977. The decisions regarding the Party Congress and Conferences will be placed before the Central Committee for its approval. The Polit Bureau discussed at length the framework and contents of the documents to be presented to the Party Congress. The drafts will be placed before the CC for final approval.

West Bengal : The meeting discussed the situation in West Bengal. It welcomed the relations of understanding and friendliness between the Union Government and the

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State Government and felt confident that they would continue for the common benefit of the people of West Bengal.

The meeting noted the efforts of anti-social elements and certain vested interests to create law and order problems through snatching, looting and terrorisation of the ordinary citizen. Unable to take a political stand against the Ministry, certain elements are adopting the methods of the underworld to create a sense of insecurity among the people. But the people and the united popular movement of West Bengal have seen through this game and the mischief-makers are meeting with frustration and defeat.

The meeting welcomed the steps and measures taken by the West Bengal Ministry to undo the mischief of the Emergency period. The unconditional release of all detenus and the orders for the withdrawal of cases against politicals have met with widespread approval of all democratic-minded people. The reinstatement of the victimised State Government employees with all arrears of pay paid, constitutes another outstanding act in defence of democracy and trade union rights. There is no doubt that with the masses vigilant and active, the Ministry will be able to overcome all difficulties in its way to ensure a fair and equitable deal to the people.

Tripura : The Polit Bureau considered the situation in Tripura and felt satisfied that the new Ministry has started initiating measures in conformity with the agreed programme. The victimised State Government employees have been reinstated, those arrested have been released and steps are being taken to restore land to the dispossessed tribal peasants. The Polit Bureau feels that given the common will to implement the agreed programme, the Ministry will be able to undo the mischief of the Emergency period, expand popular rights and institute measures for relief, before the State goes in for fresh elections.

Check Drift : The Central Committee of our Party and the Polit Bureau have recently expressed their concern over the failure of the Janata Party Government to push ahead measures of democratic reform and dismantle the authoritarian

framework introduced during the Emergency. The P.B. expresses its sharp protest over the continued retention of the MISA on the Statute Book which is in flagrant contradiction with the promise made in the Janata Party Manifesto. The rescinding of the 42nd Amendment Act also hangs fire. The Constitutional reforms promised to prevent a repetition of the 1975 June situation are hardly talked about. The P.B. feels that the original urge and momentum to fight and eliminate the effects of dictatorial rule is being rapidly lost. The P.B. calls upon all democratic elements, and especially all members of the Janata Party, its MPs and MLAs to check this drift.

Failure on Prices : The P.B. feels deeply concerned over the failure of the Government to take effective steps to control prices. Prices had already reached giddy heights and instead of coming down they continued to rise in recent months, inflicting intense suffering on the people. Measures to restrict export of certain commodities were taken too late and even then the restriction was often marginal. Prices of some essential goods can be immediately reduced and they can be made available in plenty for the common man. There is increased production of sugar for instance and plenty of stocks. Commandeering of the entire stock of sugar under the levy scheme, accompanied by a reduction in the excise duty on sugar will bring down the prices of sugar to within the reach of the common man. Reduction of excise duty on many essential commodities will help to lower prices.

The P.B. feels that too little is being done too late while the main remedy is not being used at all. The previous regime also talked about opening a number of fair-price shops to relieve the price situation. Every one knows that the measure proved ineffective. The main point is control over supplies before fair-price shops can be effective. That means nationalisation of wholesale trade in certain essential commodities. Without it, in the context of inflationary financing and some shortage of supply, effective price-control is unthinkable. But the Janata Government seems averse to

this essential step and its price measures prove ineffective. The P.B. earnestly asks the Union Government to move in this direction before people's goodwill is squandered away.

Bonus : The P.B. considered the developing situation in the industrial areas. There is deep resentment over the delay in the announcement of Government's decision on the bonus question. Today the welling discontent over the suppression of the Emergency years and the economic distress are getting focussed on the question of bonus and only the blind can fail to see it. The Janata Party is committed to bonus, having accepted it as deferred wage in its Election Manifesto. But it seems that some people in the Ministry hold the worker's pay packet directly responsible for the inflationary situation and are dragging their feet over this essential measure of relief. The working class has earned the right to bonus through prolonged struggles and it should not be arbitrarily taken away. The P.B. hopes that the Government will be able to announce a minimum of 8.33 per cent bonus for all before the Onam and Puja holidays and meet the just demand of the workers. It also hopes that it will strike a new path and extend the right of bonus to railway and other workers under it.

Harijans : The P.B. strongly denounces the atrocities against Harijans in several parts of the country. Outrages and atrocities are being perpetrated in States under the Congress and Janata Ministries alike. They constitute a challenge to all democratic forces and must be dealt with the utmost firmness. The Janata Government who have recently secured massive mandate from the people bear a special responsibility to protect the Harijans. Thirty years of Congress rule have failed to safeguard their lives and property. Statements of some Central Ministers, however, show that they neither recognise the gravity of the situation nor their own responsibility. The official account of the Belchi affairs did not add to the prestige of the Government and provided a screen for the miscreants who perpetrated the foul deed.

Muslim Minority : The P.B. is of the opinion that

the official acts of commission and omission have served to alienate the Muslim minority masses from the Government. The earlier faith and hope that justice will be done to them by the new regime is collapsing and it is high time that the Government moved to take remedial steps to regain their confidence.

Anti-secular : The P.B. is afraid that obscurantist ideas inconsistent with a democratic and secular outlook and freedom are being spread by certain elements in the ruling party. The controversy raised in connection with certain well-known books on history is a product of this reactionary outlook which openly flaunts its hostility to communism. This is nothing but following in the footsteps of the Congress which used its political power to stifle all freedom of thought. The Janata Government has been elected on a programme of saving democracy and it is not entitled to take any measure which restricts freedom of thought and expression. The P.B. hopes that the secular forces in and outside the Janata Party will assert themselves to defeat this pernicious tendency.

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42nd Constitution Amendment Must Go : Lock, Stock and Barrel*

Demanded by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press on September 16, 1977, in New Delhi :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its concern over the delay in the abrogation of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act. Reports now are that the Government is not planning to abrogate the whole Act, but only certain of its provisions. An earlier statement by the Law Minister and the decision of the informal Cabinet Committee to draft a Bill which is to be discussed with the Opposition parties, mainly the Congress, are indications that only what the Congress party approves of will be included in the Bill in the name of getting the Bill passed by the Rajya Sabha.

The 42nd Constitution Amendment Act is the monstrous offspring of the illegal Emergency. The Janata Party and all the anti-authoritarian forces which joined hands to inflict a crushing defeat on the Congress at the hustings had pledged to the people that this Black amendment would not be allowed to blot the Statute Book.

The Indian Constitution certainly needs to be changed. Our Party has already put forward its views on the changes that have to be brought about. Other parties will also have their views on the matter. They have to be discussed and a comprehensive Constitution Amendment Bill will have to

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be drafted and enacted on the basis of the widest possible discussions.

The first task is to abrogate the entire 42nd Constitution Amendment Act which is illegal, anti-people and designed to serve the purposes of an authoritarian regime and then begin discussion on the question of overhauling the Constitution.

We call upon all those who have pledged to the people that the entire 42nd Constitution Amendment Act would be rescinded, and those who have come to accept that position now, to appeal to the Janata Party Government to stand by its pledge to the people and rescind the 42nd Amendment Act lock, stock and barrel. If the Congress party stands in the way of doing this in the Rajya Sabha, it is the Congress that will lose since the people will understand that it still continues to obstruct the process of restoration of democracy even after the massive verdict against it on this issue.

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Polit Bureau Hails U.N. Membership of SRVN*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on September 22, 1977 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), on its own behalf and on behalf of the entire Party, expresses great joy at the triumphant entry of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the United Nations to fill its legitimate place as a full member of the world organization.

Having inflicted an ignominious defeat on U.S. imperialism, the first ever defeat it suffered in the battlefield, the people of Vietnam, supported by the freedom-loving people of the world, have now defeated the political and diplomatic manoeuvres of the U.S. imperialists to block the admission of their country to the United Nations.

This great victory, first and foremost of the heroic Vietnamese people, is also a victory for all anti-imperialist forces in India and the rest of the world. Our people rejoice in this great event and the Polit Bureau calls on them to manifest their joy in meetings and demonstrations to greet the socialist Republic's entry into the United Nations.

Though defeated militarily, politically and diplomatically in Vietnam, the U.S. imperialists are still refusing to fully implement all the provisions of the Paris Agreement. The Polit Bureau demands that the U.S. imperialists fulfil their

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commitment according to the Paris Agreement to contribute to the reconstruction of Vietnam, a country ravaged by their fascist war of aggression as no other country was ravaged before. Let this demand rise powerfully from all the celebration meetings and demonstrations.

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C.C. Statement on Current Situation*

Adopted in the Meeting of the Central Committee of CPI(M) in New Delhi on September 25-29, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) had, on a number of occasions, expressed its appreciation of and support to the various steps taken by the Janata Party Government to restore civil liberties and give some urgent relief to the workers and employees.

It had especially hailed the lifting of the Emergency and Press censorship, reinstatement of victimised railway workers and other Central employees, and appreciated the grant of bonus this year to the working class.

The Central Committee, however, expresses its deep concern over recent trends in the policies of the Janata Party Government at the Centre. It also expresses its concern over the undignified in-fights inside the party which tarnish the image of popular victory over the forces of authoritarianism and threaten to unleash a new wave of opportunism in the political life of the country.

It is now more than six months since the formation of the Janata Government at the Centre and three months after the formation of Janata State Governments. High hopes were raised by this victory and the mass of people were expecting effective response to their urgent demands. None can say that any State Government led by the Janata Party has distinguished itself by a bold and imaginative tackling of the urgent questions facing the people. Such issues as implementation of wage legislations for agricultural workers, land

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distribution, tax and debt relief and remunerative prices for their produce to the peasants, and their freedom from the tentacles of big traders and moneylenders, have no urgency for the new rulers. The masses are yet to feel the glow of their victory and their patience is being strained beyond measure everyday.

At the same time the atrocities on the most downtrodden sections of the people—the Harijans—continue as before. Atrocities are also continuing on the tribal people and other backward sections. We are yet to learn that drastic punishments have been meted out to the perpetrators.

Suppression of Struggles

Certain Janata State Governments have started emulating the Congress to suppress working class struggles. The U.P. State Government has banned not less than six strikes of the working class. Encouraged by this, the owners have started an offensive which led to the bizarre happenings in Ghaziabad where the hired goondas of an employer opened fire on the workers. The Government has replied with banning of all meetings of the workers and arrest of trade union leaders. The Madhya Pradesh Government has promulgated a monstrous Ordinance for detention without trial whose immediate objective was the suppression of the agitation of the State Electricity Board employees. In Bihar, under Sri Karpoori Thakur's Government, police have opened fire and killed a mine worker in Dhanbad and workers of the Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited in Bokaro. The police are running riot against other sections of the people also as was seen in the firing and killings in Barahiya in Bihar. It seems that the policy declarations of the Central Government are not taken as guidelines by some of the State Governments, who wish to run the administration on the basis of the Congress pattern of open bias for the capitalists.

The statement of the Central Government on bonus not only falls far short of the expectations of the trade union movement but constitutes a negation of the accepted principle

of bonus as deferred wage. It also repudiates the clearcut statement on wage and income policy in the Janata Party Manifesto and hides the fact that a correct policy can be based only on need-based wage for the worker and minimum living conditions for the masses. The recent Trade Union Convention has correctly criticised these aspects of Government policy and demanded bonus for all employees, workers, and also raised its voice against the continued victimisation of a number of Central and State Government employees and workers and employees in the private sector.

The contradictory statements made by the leaders of the ruling party and the slanging match between its former constituents are rapidly undermining its prestige. The factional wranglings in Bihar displayed in the presence of Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan, and the events preceding these, are raising doubts whether the party will be able to devote serious attention to the problems of the people.

Democratic elements and forces sympathetic to the Janata Party have also noted the slashing attacks by the RSS elements on others. It is not accidental that those who belonged to the former Socialist Party are attacked viciously. Nor is it a chance that every effort is made to denigrate those who stick to a secular outlook, however vague, and do not stand for "Hinduising" the nations's life and retaining extreme obscurantist concepts. The withdrawal of certain history text-books prepared by well-known historians is an attempt to revise history from the anti-secular and Hindu-revivalist outlook, to suppress the scholars' freedom of research and to start a witch-hunt of those who will not conform to the outlook of the Hindu-revivalists. The utterances of some of the Janata Party leaders and Ministers, certain Government orders and practices in Government departments, have all roused the feeling in the non-Hindi speaking people that Hindi is being imposed on them to the detriment of their own languages. Also the rejection of the demand for according the status of a second official language to Urdu in states where more than ten per cent of the people speak the

language is causing the apprehension that the Hindu and Hindi chauvinists are being allowed to have their way.

The minorities, especially the Muslim minority, expected an end to the raw deal they were getting under the Congress rulers. Their expectations of a fair deal under the new Government have been belied with discrimination against them continuing in regard to education, employment, services, etc. Also, the spate of Hindu revivalist statements being made by certain elements in the ruling party are causing concern to them. The ruling party will not be able to discharge its mandate unless it controls and disciplines this force and steers clear of its ideological influence.

The many weaknesses, hesitations and failures of the Janata Party have emboldened Mrs. Indira Gandhi to return to the charge and unabashedly justify the Emergency, exonerating herself and her son from all responsibility for the innumerable atrocities and murders and adopt a pose of offended virtue to criticise the Janata Government. The caucus leader is feeling confident that public indignation against her has weakened and that there is a ready soil for acceptance of her claims and criticism.

Contrary Direction

The Government's most obvious failure is on the price front. The wholesale and retail price index has not come down from the giddy heights under the Emergency. On the other hand prices are higher than ever before. And Ministers are forced to extol a small marginal reduction from the peak prices or a slight reduction in the rate of monthly increase.

The whole bankrupt policy of promises of price control through monetary control alone has fallen to pieces. What is immediately required is physical control and possession of available stocks of necessaries and their distribution through a viable public distribution system.

This the Janata Government refuses to accept and thereby announces its incapacity to solve the price problem. The ideology of the constituents of the ruling party which

favours private trade and capital, which is opposed to nationalization, now stands as a barrier to the solution of the price problem.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the Janata Party Government is moving in the contrary direction of lifting controls, of removing the restraints on free trade and opening the people to the full fury of the speculative market. Free trade in foodgrains, accompanied by free trade in sugar, removal of the distinction between levy and free market price of sugar, are now openly advocated by the Prime Minister. A single rice zone is to be followed by a single wheat zone. What chance has control of the public distribution system under this policy ?

The Central Committee warns against this growing shift in the Government's policies and calls on all democratic elements to intervene to stop it.

When the Janata Party Government was formed at the Centre, there were many who felt that its bias in favour of the private sector may prove injurious to planning and that planning may soon be given a back seat. There were reassuring statements in the beginning . And even now the Janata Party President assures that the party will not deviate from the basic policies adopted by the country as a result of the independence struggle.

Rolling Plan

And yet the new concept of "rolling plan" cannot be described as anything but abandonment and abjuration of all serious planning. What was wrong with the earlier plans was not their so-called rigidity or lack of realism, but their complete dependence on the forces of the market, which made all planning targets subject to vagaries. Now in the name of realism, all serious efforts to achieve the five-year plan targets will be given up and ad-hocism will be resorted to in the name of rolling plan. There will be no five-year plan henceforth. At best there will be some targets which can be changed every year according to the whims of the Finance Department.

An overall effort to converge all resources to attain the desired goal will be lacking. In short, the rolling plan will be abandonment of all genuine planning. The variance between targets and achievements seen in previous plans cannot be avoided under the new dispensation. On the other hand, it will increase, considering its increased dependence on the forces of the market and the private sector.

The new concept, besides, has certain programmatic and ideological objectives behind it. It is said that it will help to orientate towards the new priorities proclaimed by the Janata Government—diversion of resources to rural areas, to small-scale industries and denuding heavy and large-scale industry of State support, i.e., developing them in the public sector.

To make this possible and relieve the pressure on planning resources, some Ministers are scurrying forth abroad to invite multinationals to build Indian industries. The Steel Minister, the Industries Minister, the Energy Minister, all are staking development on wooing of foreign capital to relieve the strain on the budget, and this is the genesis of the rolling plan which, for its freedom, requires that resources should not be tied to the big industries.

Inviting Multinationals

Incidentally, the World Bank has been making demands to free planning from heavy industry and open the latter to private foreign capital.

It is, therefore, not accidental that alarming trends should be witnessed in connection with the Government's industrial policy. Responsible Ministers are openly inviting multinationals to exploit Indian labour and guaranteeing good return, all free from red tape. This is called inviting foreign capital for export purposes—export-oriented investments. The West German monopolists have been persuaded to invest one billion US dollars in the course of two years. It seems that while official emphasis will be on smaller industries, foreign capital will be put in charge of big industries. The vulnerable condition of the Indian economy with its stagnating

growth rate and its shortages is being exploited by the World Bank to pressurise the country further. The Bank is pressurising the Government to purchase captive power plants although there is unutilized capacity in the industry. It has suggested that unutilized capacity should be used for promoting exports while the country imports captive plants from abroad.

Imports Liberalized

Further, under pressure from the Bank and with the excuse of utilizing the foreign exchange reserves, the Indian capital goods industry is being thrown open to competition from abroad with the removal of many import restrictions. It is known that a large section of the capital goods industries is not able to utilize its full capacities.

In this context the plan for the virtual disbandment of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research by taking away a large number of laboratories from its control and handing them over to the "user Ministries" creates serious misgivings. This will not only put a brake on scientific and technological progress, but also lead to bureaucratisation of research work. Further instead of such research serving the interests of the people, it will thereafter be made to subserve the profit interests of industries. There is also the general suspicion that this move is to propitiate the multinationals who do not want us to develop our own science and technology but want to keep us dependent on them. Shortcomings there are in the working of the Council, but instead of removing them and making it efficient, what is being planned is its virtual liquidation.

Jobs Threatened

All this will not only compromise the independence of the economy but will also affect the jobs of thousands of people in India. Foreign competition together with multinationals with their sophisticated machinery will mean less jobs for the people and accentuate the problem of unemployment.

The Central Committee lodges its emphatic protest against this policy of increasing dependence on foreign capital and warns the people that this is not the path to lift the economy out of depression, but a path of economic surrender. This was the inclined path down which the previous Government had started travelling, the path which ended in authoritarian dictatorship and its complete repudiation by the people in the last election.

The democratic forces must exert their strength to see that this course is given up and the mistakes of the previous regime are not repeated. It must be clear that a party which relies for the viability of the economy on the multinationals and the World Bank will not be able to maintain democracy in the country. This is the experience of all countries and the Indira Gandhi regime also.

The Central Committee is of the opinion that every effort should be made to get technical knowhow and aid from Socialist countries which is without strings and promote the independence of our economy through mutually beneficial agreements. It is the experience of our country that we have had to accept no derogatory conditions from any of our agreements with the Socialist countries.

United States Pressure

Praising the new Government and offering it more economic aid, extolling its "pragmatism", the U.S. imperialists are attempting to enmesh India in an anti-national derogatory agreement on nuclear progress and use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. The Central Committee supports the stand of the Government on the Non-Proliferation Treaty and justifies its refusal to sign it. At the same time, the Central Committee is of the opinion that the unilateral declaration giving up explosion for peaceful purposes was not only uncalled for but detrimental and derogatory to national interests and prestige. It is necessary to set the record straight during President Carter's visit to this country, when the question is bound to be discussed and new pressures are

going to be exercised. The new legislation on the anvil in the U.S. leaves no doubt that economic blackmail will be used to coerce India to accept dictated conditions on nuclear development.

Withdraw MISA

The Central Committee expresses its emphatic disapproval of the failure of the Central Government to take effective steps to withdraw the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act. The Central Committee is strongly of the opinion that the time has now come for all democratic forces, all lovers of civil liberty, all those who suffered under the lawless laws under the Emergency, to protest against the continued retention of the MISA on the Statute Book. The leaders of the Janata Party owe an explanation to the people why their Government is retaining this law, is chary of giving up the illegal powers under it and whether it has any intention to withdraw it at all.

West Bengal Ministry

The Central Committee is proud to note that among the State Governments, it is only the Left Front Government of West Bengal in which the CPI(M) plays a leading role that has taken the necessary steps and measures to undo the mischief of the Emergency period within the limits of its powers. The unconditional release of all political detenus and the orders for the withdrawal of cases against politicals and the release of most of them barring a few whose release has been held up because of legal processes beyond the control of the State Government, have met with widespread approval of all democratic-minded people in the whole country. The reinstatement of victimised State Government employees and employees and workers in State undertakings with full payment of all arrears constitute another outstanding act in defence of democracy and trade union rights. The Left Front Government has also won the acclaim of the working people by its decision to give bonus to the workers and

employees in all undertakings under it including sick ones. The implementation of enhanced minimum wages for agricultural workers, exemption from land revenue for four acres of irrigated and six acres of unirrigated land, the assistance sought from the mass organisations of the peasantry and the rural poor for identifying surplus land over the ceiling etc., have generated new enthusiasm in the rural areas. Unable to take a political stand against the Ministry, certain elements are adopting the methods of the underworld to create a sense of insecurity among the people and some leaders of the Opposition parties in the State have already raised the familiar cry of law and order in danger. But the people have seen through this game and with their support the Ministry will be able to overcome all difficulties in its way to ensure a fair and equitable deal to the people.

The Central Committee cannot but protest against the opportunist course pursued in relation to certain State Governments by the Centre. The Congress State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Assam are functioning under the illegal 42nd Amendment Act. Their legal term has already expired. To allow them to function when the elections are approaching is contrary to democratic norms and practices.

In particular, to allow the Vengal Rao Ministry of Andhra Pradesh to function and operate in the pre-election days is to give it an opportunity to intimidate and terrorise the electorate. The vile misdeeds of this Ministry are already known in connection with the wanton murders of over three hundred Naxalite prisoners. Now the Ministry and its officials are terrorising the witnesses appearing before the Bhargava Commission. If this is the two-party system in operation then it means only collaboration with the murderous forces of authoritarian dictatorship. In the interest of free and fair elections, and pre-election propaganda, it is necessary that the present illegal Ministry is disbanded.

Today it is urgently necessary that all Left and democratic forces unite the people to put an impassable barrier

against the forces of authoritarianism and defeat them. The vacillations and hesitations of the present period cannot be cured without the unity of these forces.

Right C.P.'s Collaboration

The leadership of the Right Communist Party continues its disruptive role and maintains collaboration with the Congress in Kerala, oppresses the people and strengthens the anti-people forces of dictatorship. Leaders of its State units are preparing for an unholy alliance with the representatives of the caucus in the coming elections.

The collaboration of the Right C.P. leadership with the Congress in the Kerala Coalition is directed against the people. The end of the Emergency has not seen an end to the anti-people crimes in that State. In the period since the election, twelve persons belonging to the Opposition parties, most of them of the CPI(M), have been murdered by elements belonging to the ruling parties. In this same period there have been two lock-up killings. The Right C.P. leadership's talk of "Emergency excesses" becomes totally hypocritical when similar excesses are continuing even today under the Coalition in which it is a partner.

The Central Committee notes at the same time that the ranks and units of the Right C.P. in some States are engaged in a serious reappraisal of the policies pursued by the leadership. The more advanced elements have left the party in large numbers to take the proper place in the fight against the forces of authoritarian reaction.

The Central Committee warns the Right C.P. leadership that it will be committing yet another act of treachery if it maintains its collaboration with the Congress in the coming elections. It decries its misdeeds in Kerala when using its position as a ministerial party, it uses goondaism against our Party.

The ranks of the Right C.P. must exert all efforts to change this course so that they can join the Left and democratic forces to carry forward the common struggle.

The Central Committee wishes to convey to the people and the Janata Party that the battle against dictatorship is not over.

The Congress is trying to profit by the hesitations, vacillations and some of the erroneous policies of the Janata Government. It is exploiting the situation created by the economic crisis—with its closures, lay-offs and unemployment. It expects to improve its position, in the same way it did during the Assembly elections when it was able to swing a large number of Harijan voters to its side.

It is the duty of the democratic forces and the Janata Party to recognise these weaknesses, overcome them in the coming months and face the Congress with an overwhelming consolidation of anti-authoritarian forces. To defeat the Congress forces in the coming elections is an important part of the fight against authoritarianism and our Party will do its best to see that once again all the democratic forces and parties are rallied in a common fight against the Congress danger.

The Central Committee expresses its solidarity with our people who are undergoing innumerable hardships and sufferings. Unemployment has risen to colossal proportions. Widespread distress exists in rural areas, both peasants and agricultural workers are on the move. The University campuses and colleges are reverberating with huge student protests. The innumerable grievances of the students are hardly being attended to. The employees—Bank and LIC employees—staged a magnificent protest action on September 27, to give expression to their discontent. The last few months have witnessed a developing strike wave with strikes becoming more and more prolonged.

The Central Committee calls upon all units and Party members to be with the people, organize them and lend support to their demands and actions. Only their intervention and timely guidance will ensure that the people's struggle for their immediate demands does not get divorced from the central fight against the forces of authoritarianism.

The Central Committee welcomes the growing urge for unity among the people. It particularly hails the unprecedented unity demonstrated in the recent all-India Convention of Trade Unions and calls upon all unions to strengthen and consolidate this unity. Without such solid unity neither the working class can win its demands nor the Left and democratic forces can get a solid foundation. The Central Committee calls upon all trade union organizations to extend and expand this unity so that it becomes all-inclusive and all sections of workers and their organisations are included under it.

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Resolution on Language Policy*

Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in New Delhi on September 25-29, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) strongly disapproves the various measures adopted by the Union Government which amount to imposition of Hindi on the non-Hindi speaking sections of the people.

Apart from the performance of Ministers like Raj Narain on the floor of Parliament which was so much at variance with democratic practices that the Prime Minister himself had to make amends, the practice has been established under Government orders of more and more officers putting up notes in Hindi. This is making it impossible both for the officers and Ministers who do not have sufficient knowledge of the language to follow the Hindi notings and discharge their responsibilities. Discussions at cabinet meetings are reported to be taking place in Hindi, making it difficult for non-Hindi-knowing Ministers to take active part in those discussions.

Circulars

It should also be noted that circulars have been issued by some senior officers of departments and institutions controlled by the Central Government but operating in Hindi-speaking States that communications between the State headquarters and district offices of the department or institution concerned should be carried on in Hindi. This amounts to the insistence that the non-Hindi-knowing members of the

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concerned service should not be posted in the Hindi-speaking States, although the service concerned is an all-India and not a State Service.

Publications

Publications of the Central Government are brought out only in English and Hindi. The Central Government refuses to bring out their publications in the other languages. Furthermore, the practice has of late been established of the same publication being printed in English and Hindi which is another way of forcing Hindi on the non-Hindi-speaking people. Exclusive use of Hindi has become the practice in several public offices, railway stations, etc., in such a metropolitan city as Delhi itself, so that non-Hindi-speaking people who have to live and work in the country's capital are put to great inconvenience and disadvantage. Instances have also occurred where the Governments of the Hindi-speaking States send their communications in Hindi even to non-Hindi-speaking States.

Apprehension

All this plus the insistence on the use of the Hindi language in public offices, railway stations, milestones, etc., in non-Hindi-speaking States, has created the legitimate apprehension that the practice of the authorities is that of imposing Hindi on the non-Hindi-speaking States, even though the Prime Minister has repeatedly denied that the Government has any intention of such imposition.

The Central Committee desires to draw the attention of the leaders of the Janata Party and Government to the explosive situation that will arise if this apprehension is not removed by timely steps.

The CPI(M) is behind none in its anxiety to put an end to the domination of English as the language of administration and medium of instruction. The continued domination of English is a serious impediment in the way of the all-round development of the people's languages through which

alone the country can advance economically, politically and culturally.

Pre-requisite

But this very development of people's languages in this multi-lingual country of ours requires that all the people's languages in India are assured full equality and that no single one from among them is raised to the position of superiority over the others. Replacement of English by Hindi, as is sought to be enforced by the Hindi chauvinists, would not enable the various linguistic groups in the country to develop themselves as they rightly expect to do in a free and democratic country. Raising all languages recognized in the Constitution as official languages of the Central Government; providing facilities for the use of everyone of these languages in the Central Secretariat and Parliament and in all Central Government establishments throughout the country—this is the essential pre-requisite for finding a democratic solution for the question of official languages.

At the State level, the language of the State concerned should be the recognized official language, with facilities for the use of such minority languages as are spoken in any part of the State to be used as official language in that particular region and also for communication between the State, Centre and the people of the minority region.

The status of a second official language should be accorded to Urdu in all those States and regions where that language is the mother-tongue of more than ten per cent of the people.

Our Position

Experience has demonstrated that the three-language formula is a failure and was bound to be so because it had no relation to realities. The Central Committee reiterates the position of the Party that the people's language of a particular State, together with the minority languages wherever more than ten per cent speak the languages, should be adopted

not only at the school level but in the higher educational institutions, including post-graduate education. At no stage should Hindi be made a language for compulsory study, while of course facilities should be given from the secondary stage to those who desire to study that language which may help the students in their subsequent life. Similarly, facilities to learn English in the secondary classes and in colleges must be available, at the option of the students, but it shall not be a compulsory subject.

The Central Committee is conscious that inter-State contacts in such a large and multinational country as India would require the evolution of a link language. But any attempt to impose Hindi on the non-Hindi-speaking peoples or to continue the use of English, in the name of either of them being the link language, would defeat the very purpose of a link language. For, compulsion in favour of Hindi or English would naturally provoke resistance to that language.

The Central Committee would like to remind the leaders of the Janata Party and Government of the explosive situation that was created when Hindi was sought to be imposed on the non-Hindi-speaking peoples. It became so serious that the then Prime Minister, the late Jawaharlal Nehru, gave an assurance to the non-Hindi-speaking peoples that till they (the non-Hindi-speaking peoples) were prepared to replace English by Hindi, the present practice of using Hindi and English as the official languages of the Central Government would continue. The recent measures adopted by the Central and some State Governments amount to a violation of the solemn assurance given by the then Prime Minister to the non-Hindi-speaking peoples. Far from facilitating the integration of the nation, such a forcible imposition of Hindi will lead to its further disintegration.

Appeal

The Central Committee appeals to all the democratic parties, organisations and individuals both in the Hindi and non-Hindi-speaking States and regions to develop a strong and united

movement for the most rapid replacement of English by all the Indian languages recognised in the Constitution with none of them being superior to the others. Such a replacement of English by the Indian languages on the basis of complete equality among them should be made part of a time-bound programme with Central Government assistance to all the Indian languages on the same basis as it is now being given to Hindi. Till such a time-bound programme of replacing English by all the Indian languages is carried out, the Nehru formula of Hindi and English being used as the official languages of the Central Government should continue.

85

Resolution on Prohibition*

Adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in New Delhi on September 25-29, 1977

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) expresses its strong disapproval of the attempt being made by the Janata Government to revive the policy of prohibition which, having been sought to be implemented earlier, was found to be unworkable and had to be virtually given up.

The ostensible explanation for this new policy is that prohibition has been included in the Directive Principles of Policy written in the Constitution. Directive Principles, however, include several other measures of socio-economic reforms and development, such as free and compulsory primary education, reduction of inequalities in income, etc. None of these socio-economic measures has been implemented. The problems connected with many of them have, in fact, become still more critical. By no stretch of imagination can it be said that introducing prohibition should have priority over these socio-economic measures.

The experience of introducing and implementing the policy of prohibition in India had been no different from that in the United States and some European countries. The Tek Chand Committee appointed by the Maharashtra Government called prohibition, as it was working in the State, a farce. The evils of prohibition were brought home in the Committee's report which pointed out that the number of people drinking liquor had increased enormously; this led to the mushroom growth of illicit distillation and a criminal society of

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bootleggers, so much so that it was very difficult to control them at any stage.

This was the story in every State. Wherever prohibition was sought to be implemented and worked for some time, the evil practice of drinking, far from being reduced, did in fact grow at an alarming rate. Even the control that existed in the legally operating liquor shops were removed in the illicit production and consumption of liquor which acted to the detriment of the health of the community as a whole. The growth of the illicit trade in liquor also gave rise to an army of bootleggers and their accomplices leading to corruption in every aspect of social life. The very machinery created by the State Government for enforcing prohibition got linked up with the machinery for the illicit production and distribution of liquor—that, too, of varieties that are injurious to the health of the consumers. The State Governments themselves had to incur a double loss in that while losing crores of rupees by way of excise revenue, they had to provide still more crores for setting up the machinery to enforce prohibition. Lakhs of people who were rendered unemployed by prohibition could not find alternate means of livelihood. The people and Government of every State that sought to enforce prohibition thus had to suffer in every respect. That was why State after State decided during the sixties to abandon the policy of prohibition.

The Central Committee wants to make it clear that the CPI(M) will give whole-hearted support to any movement to educate the people against the evil of drinking. It is, however, of the view that one of the important reasons why people take to drinking is that it gives them temporary relief from the worries of a life in which they find it difficult to make both ends meet. The real way to bring the evil of drinking under control is, therefore, to find genuine solutions to the socio-economic problems faced by the people. Far from adopting this course, the Central Committee regrets to note, the Government is trying to enforce prohibition through State coercion at a time when all the serious

problems faced by the people like increasing prices of essential commodities, unemployment, etc., are getting aggravated due to the wrong policies pursued by the Congress Government for thirty years and which are continuing under the Janata Party Government.

86

Madhya Pradesh Ordinance Denounced*

Resolution adopted by the Central Committee of CPI(M) in its meeting held in New Delhi on September 25-29, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the Ordinance promulgated by the Janata Party Government of Madhya Pradesh to detain people without trial. The Chief Minister of the State himself has made it clear that the immediate aim of the Ordinance is the suppression of the agitation of the State Electricity Board employees.

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, justifying the Ordinance, has stated that the Public Security Act which gives powers for detention up to three years without trial is to lapse next month and hence the Government is arming itself with similar powers. This only means that some of the Janata rulers, like the erstwhile Congress rulers, cannot rule without powers of preventive detention. That the hated MISA still remains on the Statute Book, that the Union Law Minister has suddenly begun finding virtues in preventive detention laws, etc., are all indications of the same.

Restoration of democratic rights and continuation or enactment of preventive detention laws cannot go together. The Central Committee demands the immediate scrapping of the MISA and the Madhya Pradesh Ordinance and guarantees that such anti-democratic laws will not be enacted in future.

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87

Polit Bureau on Mrs. Gandhi's Arrest*

Statement issued in New Delhi on October 4, 197

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on October 4, 1977:

While welcoming the arrest of Indira Gandhi and some of her closest collaborators in the Council of Ministers, among the bureaucrats and businessmen, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) desires to point out that this is a step which should have been taken much earlier.

Delay in bringing them to trial has enabled the former Prime Minister and her colleagues to regroup themselves and take the first step towards a comeback to power.

While in the AICC session held in May, the Congress leaders made some sort of "confession" regarding the "excesses" of the Emergency and while Mrs. Gandhi herself was then lying low, the soft line adopted by the leaders of the Janata Party and Government emboldened her to go back on the confession made in the AICC resolution. Becoming more and more aggressive, she has, during the last few weeks, justified everything that was done during the Emergency. These postures enabled her to force her colleagues in the organisational and parliamentary wings of the Congress party to protest against the arrest, calling it "vindictive", "politically-motivated", etc.

The Polit Bureau wants to point out that while the crimes for which Indira Gandhi and her collaborators are now being

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charged are serious and that they should be given adequate punishment for these crimes, the real serious crime committed by the former Prime Minister was the deliberate attack on the democratic rights of the people.

Beginning with the institution of semi-fascist terror in West Bengal in 1972, she and her collaborators steadily went forward along the same path. An unprecedented reign of terror was clamped on the whole country on the night of June 25-26, 1975. The clamping of the Emergency and the subsequent amendments of the Constitution are the most serious crimes against democracy. Tens of thousands of common people and their leaders were imprisoned, tortured and many killed in the name of "protecting the nation against internal and external reaction". These should in fact have been the main charge against the former Prime Minister, she is now being tried on some specific crimes connected with the "misuse of authority".

Now that at least on the misuse of authority, prosecutions are being launched, it should be the endeavour of all democratic parties, organisations and individuals to demand that while vigorously pursuing prosecutions on the charges now being levelled, the more basic issue of attack on democracy should be taken up for prosecution. That alone will ensure that what the leader of the Congress Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Y. B. Chavan, characterised as late as on October 2, "the dark period of Emergency" will not be repeated.

The P.B. is, however, surprised that, within less than twentyfour hours of his assurance to the people that the dark period will not be allowed to repeat itself, Chavan has thought it fit to protest against the arrest. Congress President Brahmananda Reddy for his part, has called for countrywide protests against these arrests. The pronouncements of the leader of the Congress Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the President of the Congress and the resolution of the Congress Working Committee clearly indicate that those Congress leaders who once claimed to be stout opponents

of the anti-democratic caucus in the Congress have surrendered to Indira Gandhi.

The P.B. appeals to all democrats in the country, including those Congressmen who claimed to be fighting the authoritarian forces inside the Congress, to rally against these tactics of the Congress leadership, and rally round the demand for the vigorous prosecution of Indira Gandhi and her collaborators not only on the charges levelled against them now but on the more basic charge of trampling democracy underfoot.

88

Try Indira Gandhi on Political Charges*

Statement dated October 8, 1977 issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on October 8, 1977 :

While the bureaucrats of the CBI and the Home Ministry cannot be absolved of their share of responsibility for mismanaging their action in arresting the former Prime Minister and producing her before the court, the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) holds that the major responsibility falls on the political leadership of the ruling Janata Party and its Government.

Arresting and prosecuting the former Prime Minister and her closest colleagues is primarily a political act. For, the biggest crime for which they should be charged is the crime against democracy. The CPI(M) was among those which from the very installation of the Janata Government, have been demanding that subversion of democracy and the Constitution and setting up an authoritarian regime should be the main charge for which the leading clique of the former regime should be prosecuted.

Being primarily a political case, this should not have been dealt with in the routine legal procedural way. Whatever legal procedures had to be adopted should have been supplemented by political action by way of mobilizing public opinion against the anti-democratic postures and actions of the former Prime Minister. The entire democratic public opinion, including those who for various reasons had

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acquiesced in the authoritarian measures and actions of the former regime but subsequently regretted it and came out against them should have been mobilised in support of rigorous action against the perpetrators of the Emergency atrocities. Legal action on specific charges through courts of law should be combined with this.

The leaders of the Janata Party and the Government, however, refused to adopt such a political attitude. Trusting the bureaucratic investigating agencies of the Government to unearth the crimes and to bring before the courts of law what were called "foolproof cases", they proceeded to file individual charge-sheets against former Ministers and former bureaucrats in courts of law. The utter futility, if not worse, of such an approach was proved by the fiasco with which their action against Indira Gandhi met on October 4. What had originally been claimed to be a "foolproof case" ended in making fools of the entire governmental machinery, and giving a handle to Indira Gandhi and her cohorts to mount a counter-attack.

Mrs. Gandhi is also taking advantage of the Janata Government's failure to check the price-rise, the continuing attacks on the Harijans, give a fair deal to the minorities which they were expecting from the new Government, to divert attention from the thirty years of Congress misrule and her own Emergency crimes.

The Polit Bureau notes with gratification that this fiasco has led many even in the ruling Janata Party to the conclusion that what is required is the trial of the former Prime Minister and her close associates for the major crime of subverting democracy and the Constitution. The need for such an approach to the problem is still further emphasised by the postures adopted by Indira Gandhi after the Delhi Magistrate ordered her release. She is using the advantage secured through this not only to reorganise her forces and try to stage a comeback into the leadership of the Congress party but to mobilise the people for the restoration of her authoritarian regime. She has no hesitation even now to

justify the Emergency and all the crimes committed during the Emergency "except for some mistakes here and there" The Emergency regime which was supposed to have been buried with the Congress defeat in the March elections is thus sought to be restored to life.

The challenge thus thrown out to the democratic public opinion in the country can be met only if the Janata Party and its Government are prepared to give up the exclusively legal-procedural battle on the misuse of Emergency and join issues with the leaders of the former Congress regime politically, i.e., combine the mass political campaign with trial on the political charge of subverting democracy and the Constitution. Prosecutions on individual charges of corruption, misuse of authority, embezzlement of funds, etc., should be subordinated to this.

The revelations made before the Shah Commission have already strengthened the case that the Emergency was proclaimed with the deliberate intention of transforming the parliamentary democratic system in the country into a personal dictatorship. Vigorous pursuit of the Shah Commission hearings and the continuance of prosecutions on individual charges of corruption, embezzlement of funds, etc., should be combined with trials on the charge of subverting democracy and the Constitution.

The Polit Bureau appeals to the people and to all honest Congressmen who regret the imposition of the Emergency to perpetuate her authoritarian regime, not to be deceived again by Indira Gandhi's hypocritical utterances, and to rally even more powerfully to defend and restore democracy.

89

Central Political Issue*

Statement dated October 16, 1977 issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in New Delhi

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on October 16, 1977 :

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) notes that the National Council of the Right Communist Party in its resolution on the current political situation reiterates its call for the building of "a Left and democratic national alternative". It makes the categorical declaration that this national alternative "rules out both the consolidation of the Janata power as well as the restoration of Congress rule". But the content of the analysis made, and the slogans of action given by the National Council, are a continuation in new form of the Right Communist Party's traditional line of friendship and co-operation with the Congress and hostility to the Janata Party.

The main danger that faces the nation today, according to the National Council, is the fact that "the Janata rulers—for all the credit they had initially earned for 'restoring' democracy—are increasingly revealing their anti-democratic tendencies". It is against this that the Right Communists want all the Left and democratic forces to unite.

The CPI(M), for its part, has never lagged behind anybody in criticising and opposing the Janata Government wherever its policies and practices are found to come into conflict with the interests of the common people. Our Party, therefore, would be prepared to unite with all other Left and

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democratic forces in the struggle for the reversal of these policies.

The Party, however, cannot be blind to the fact that the main danger which is increasingly coming to the fore is the attempt at restoring the power of the Congress dominated by Indira Gandhi and the notorious caucus around her. The struggle against the anti-democratic policies of the Janata should not be allowed to become the cover behind which the dethroned former Prime Minister and the caucus around her are striving to stage a comeback.

The reality of this danger has become clear to everybody who has eyes to see. Lying low for a few weeks after the March elections in which they were defeated, Indira Gandhi and her caucus have once again come to the fore. The National Council of the Right C.P. itself speaks of "a calculated attempt to revive the personality cult of Indira Gandhi who is continuing not even to admit the misdeeds of her Government and the caucus during the Emergency". The long resolution of their National Council, however, does not make this the Central political issue on which the Left and democratic forces are to be immediately mobilised.

It is significant in this context that "the immediate tasks" outlined in the resolution on the current situation do not include the task of resisting the former Prime Minister and the caucus around her who are trying to stage a comeback, nor do "the slogans of the all-India satyagraha" proposed by the National Council include such demands connected with the restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights as the annulment of the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution and the trial of those who are responsible for the crimes against democracy perpetrated during the Emergency.

As a matter of fact, the National Council resolution justifies their alliance with the Congress by calling it as "a part of the national Opposition". It goes on : "The positive potentialities of this development must not be under-estimated, but rather should be utilised to the best advantage of the Left and democratic movement."

It should be noted that no distinction is made here between the anti-caucus democratic elements within the Congress and the Congress as a whole. The latter, and not the former, is characterised as "a part of the National Opposition". It is, therefore, not surprising that the National Council persists in the Right C.P. line of justifying the Right C.P. participation in the Congress-led Government of Kerala which has become notorious for the tortures, killings and other anti-people actions perpetrated during the Emergency. "Hostility" to this Government is one of the "crimes" of which the CPI(M) has been accused of by the National Council.

The CPI(M) wants to make it clear that it is prepared to co-operate not only with the Right C.P. but even with those Congressmen who are carrying on a struggle against the Congress led by Indira Gandhi and her caucus, provided they look upon the struggle for the liquidation of the legacies of Emergency rule and for the restoration of democracy as the central political issue around which all the Left and democratic forces have to be urgently united. It, however, cannot subscribe to anything which will provide a cover for the caucus to mobilise the people in defence of the Emergency and all that was done during that dark period.

The Polit Bureau appeals to the ranks as well as the leaders of the Right C.P. to make a complete break from the politics which led them to support the Emergency and consider its imposition as a great "anti-fascist" act. It appeals to them to realise that there cannot be any genuine Left and democratic national alternative unless the programme of this alternative includes the struggle for completing the process of restoring democracy which was begun with the defeat of the Congress at the polls. The trial and punishment of those who were responsible for the perpetration of crimes against the people during the Emergency regime, the annulment of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, further extension of the democratic rights of the common people—these are crucial demands without which the Left and democratic forces cannot provide a national alternative.

90

On Constitution Amendments*

Statement adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in its meeting held in New Delhi on November 2-4, 1977

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting in New Delhi on November 2-4, 1977, has given earnest consideration to the proposals made by the Law Ministry for making amendments in the Constitution with a view to reversing the anti-democratic changes brought about under the earlier amendments pushed through Parliament during the Emergency—the 38th to the 42nd amendments.

The P.B. welcomes the general direction of the proposals, particularly the restoration of the powers of the Judiciary to scrutinise the actions of the Executive. The civil liberties and democratic rights abrogated in the 42nd Amendment would thus, to a large extent, be restored. Much of the mischief committed by the 42nd Amendment Act to subvert parliamentary democracy, will also be undone.

The proposals, however, fall far short of the unanimous demand made by democratic public opinion in the country— that the 42nd Amendment as a whole should be scrapped. This should be seen against the background of the failure of the Government to annul the MISA which has been universally denounced by the entire democratic movement in the country.

One of the most obnoxious provisions of the Constitution as amended by the 42nd and some of the earlier amendment Acts is that relating to preventive detention. This had,

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for several decades even before Independence, been stoutly opposed by the democratic movement in the country. The Congress in the days of the struggle for freedom included the abolition of preventive detention as one of the fundamental rights of the people which would be incorporated in the Constitution of free India. When the Constitution came to be written, however, this promise was forgotton with disastrous consequences for the entire democratic movement.

How this provision was misused by the Congress Government even before and particularly during the Emergency is well-known. The Janata Party, along with the democratic parties and organizations in the country, had pledged in its Election Manifesto the removal of this provision from the Constitution. The proposals made by the Law Ministry, however, do not do this. The CPI(M) is totally opposed to it.

The same is true of the provision concerning the power of the Executive to proclaim Emergency. The gross manner in which this provision was abused by the Congress Governments is well-known. Democratic public opinion has been demanding that the Executive should not be empowered to proclaim Emergency except when actual war is taking place so that the end of the war should automatically mean the end of the Emergency. The proposals made by the Law Ministry, however, empower the Executive not only when there is war but also when there is an "armed rebellion". That this can be misinterpreted and misused by the ruling party will be clear from the manner in which the internal Emergency was proclaimed by the authoritarian regime of the former Prime Minister. The CPI(M) is opposed to this provision. It is also opposed to the wide powers given to the Executive authorities when there is a state of Emergency. It is of the view that even when the conditions for proclamation of Emergency are restricted as laid down above, the Executive should not have unrestricted powers to curb the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people.

The P.B. expresses its disagreement with the elusive definition of the term "Socialist" and "secular" as proposed

by the Law Ministry. Socialism as has been acknowledged throughout the world means above all "social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange". Similarly, secularism means "complete separation of the State from all religious institutions". The two definitions should be changed accordingly.

The CPI(M) along with other democratic parties and organizations has been demanding since long basic changes in the Contitution of India with a view to making it really democratic. These changes relate to the fundamental rights, the role of the President, Governors and Judges, elections to Legislatures, proportional representation and right of recall, safeguarding States' autonomy and Centre-State relations and language. Our experience of working the Constitution particularly in the period immediately before and during the Emergency has still further underlined the importance of democratising the Constitution by making the amendments proposed by the CPI(M) and other democratic forces. The Party will, therefore, press for these amendments.

91

Polit Bureau Statement on Tripura*

Adopted in its meeting in New Delhi on November 2-4, 1977

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is amazed at the statement by the former Chief Minister of Tripura on the eve of submitting the resignation of his Ministry to the Governor.

Two allegations are made by him against the CPI(M). Firstly, that the CPI(M) Ministers withdrew from the Coalition Government "unilaterally and without prior notice". Secondly, that there is great opposition to this decision within the Party leading it to an internal crisis. Both these allegations are totally baseless.

It should be recalled that like the previous CFD-CPI(M) Coalition, the second Janata-CPI(M) Coalition, too, was based on a 14-point minimum programme agreed to by both the constituents of the Coalition. But like the earlier, the second Coalition, too, took the same negative attitude adopted by the CFD in carrying out the pressing demands in the 14-point programme.

The facts concerning the Chief Minister's refusal to carry out some urgent issues of the common programme were reported to the Central Committee at its meeting held in the later half of September. The State Committee had recommended to the C.C. that the Ministers belonging to the Party cannot under these circumstances function in the Coalition any more.

The Central Committee, however, was anxious that in view

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of the necessity for preserving the cooperation of the Janata and CPI(M) in the interest of completing the task of dismantling the authoritarian regime and undo some of the grave injustices done during the Emergency regime, the all-India leaders of the Janata Party should be informed of the situation so that whatever is possible to avert a break might be done. The leader of the CPI(M) Group in the Tripura Legislature and Home Minister, Nripen Chakravarty, therefore wrote a letter to the Prime Minister explaining the difficulties in continuing the Coalition. Following this, he had personal discussions with the Prime Minister. Three members of the Polit Bureau also met the President of the Janata Party to explain the difficulties. It was hoped that a way might be found to resolve the differences between the two constituents of the Coalition and save it from a break-up.

Unfortunately, however, the Chief Minister and his Janata colleague, the Minister for Law, not only continued but further intensified their attacks on the democratic movement making it impossible for our Party to continue in the Coalition.

The Polit Bureau wants to point out that the differences between the Janata and the CPI(M) constituents of the Coalition related to some urgent issues such as the withdrawal of the penal measures taken against Government employees and payment of arrears due to them, restoration of land illegally transferred from the tribals to the non-tribals in no less than 10,000 cases, the allotment of land to the landless and homeless (tribal as well as non-tribal), exemption of ryots having three acres or less of land from payment of land revenue—all of which, it is clear, are not matters of interest only for the two constituents of the Coalition but for the mass of the working people. On every one of these issues, decisions were taken in the Cabinet and in some cases even by the Assembly. These, however, were not carried out because of the anti-democratic stand adopted by the Chief Minister and his colleagues.

An equally, if not more important issue, on which the Coalition had been committed was that the wrongs done

during the Congress Ministry headed by Sen Gupta would be undone by ordering a probe into the misdeeds of the Sen Gupta Ministry and by removing the corrupt officials who were helping the Sen Gupta Ministry in its anti-people activities. The Chief Minister and his colleagues refused to carry out these promises to the people.

It will be clear from the above that the Janata Ministers of the Coalition were in effect continuing the same anti-people policies adopted by the Congress Ministry. It was when the CPI(M) found that far from rectifying their error, the Janata Chief Minister and his colleagues were trying to continue their anti-people policies and for this purpose carrying on an offensive against the CPI(M), that the Party had to take its decision on withdrawing its Ministers. The former Chief Minister is deceiving himself, deceiving his party leaders and deceiving the people when he makes the completely baseless allegation that our Party is facing internal crisis due to differences on this question.

92

Resolution On Communal Riots In U.P.*

Adopted by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in its meeting in New Delhi on November 2-4, 1977

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its grave concern at the communal riots that broke out in some parts of U.P. as a result of which there is continuing tension even now in Varanasi.

As in earlier communal riots, the minority community is the victim. It is regrettable that the Janata Government of the State has failed to stop the riots.

Neither the State Government nor the local authorities tried to prevent the outbreak of the riots by timely action in co-operation with the representatives of the people. Even after the riots broke out, they depended upon purely administrative action without bothering themselves to take the people's representatives into confidence and secure their co-operation, in bringing the situation back to normalcy.

While the bulk of the people belonging to the majority as well as the minorty communities are interested in maintaining peace and preventing the outbreak of riots, anti-social elements were interested in rousing communal passion and inciting riots.

The P.B. would draw the attention of the Janata leaders to the role that the RSS has played in all communal riots in the past. In Varanasi the RSS diehards and the Youth Congress zealots have both indulged in activities directed to aggravating the situation and each is charging the other with the responsibility. We demand a probe to fix the responsibility

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of all those who have engineered the current communa riots and also demand that any effort by these elements t incite communal riots in the future be put down with a firm hand.

The P.B. appeals to all political parties, the mass organi sations, groups and individuals who are interested in main taining peace to come together and fight all anti-socia elements who are making determined efforts to incite riots

93

Polit Bureau Statement on J & K Ordinance*

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement in New Delhi on November 7, 1977 :

It is extremely unfortunate that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, led by Sheikh Abdullah, has promulgated an Ordinance for preventive detention in the State. This was least expected from the Sheikh who himself had been a victim of preventive detention for years at the hands of Congress rulers.

The Ordinance has come at a time when the democratic forces in the whole country are pressing the Janata Government to withdraw the MISA, abrogate the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, and restore full civil liberties and democratic rights. It is also the demand of the democratic forces that powers of preventive detention should not be vested in any Government—Central or State.

The Polit Bureau is aware that certain elements are up to mischief and are trying to incite communal trouble in Jammu and Kashmir. They have to be dealt with politically and by other methods, not by taking powers of preventive detention.

When recently the Janata Party Government of Madhya Pradesh issued an Ordinance for preventive detention for three months, there was universal condemnation in the country of that measure.

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The Polit Bureau appeals to the Jammu and Kashmir Government, and specially Sheikh Abdullah, to take all this into consideration and withdraw the Ordinance immediately and thus facilitate the struggle of the democratic forces in the country for full restoration of civil liberties and democratic rights.

94

Stab-In-The-Back of Arab Cause*

Statement issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement to the Press in New Delhi on November 21, 1977 :

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces Egyptian President Sadat's visit to Israel as a stab in the back of the Arab cause.

The Israeli Zionists have been persistently refusing to withdraw from the Arab territory they occupied by force and to recognise the national right of the Palestinian Arabs to statehood. The Israeli rulers have been colonising the occupied Arab territory with the setting up of Jewish settlements. It is Israeli intransigence that has made the convening of the Geneva Conference impossible.

The U.S. imperialists who want to strengthen their position in the region have been encouraging and aiding the Zionists and have been striving to impose a peace in West Asia without full vacation by Israel of the occupied territory and without conceding the just demands of the Palestinian Arabs. In pursuit of their line, the U.S. imperialists have been putting pressure on the Arab countries to reach separate settlements with Israel bypassing the Geneva Conference and it is they who have inspired Sadat's present trip to Israel.

Sadat's move has naturally evoked protest and condemnation

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in the entire Arab world, from both the people and the rulers, and democratic public opinion the world over.

The Polit Bureau regrets to note that the Government of India is still watching the situation instead of expressing its strong disapproval of the step taken by the Egyptian President.

95

Decisions of the Central Committee of CPI(M)*

Taken in its meeting held in New Delhi on November 15-19, 1977

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) met in New Delhi from November 15 to 19, 1977 and discussed the recent political developments in the country.

The Central Committee also discussed the Draft Political Resolution prepared by the Polit Bureau for circulation to all Party units for pre-Party Congress discussions. In the light of the discussions and the amendments suggested, the Central Committee authorised the Polit Bureau to make the necessary changes in the draft and place the revised draft before the next meeting of the Central Committee to be held in Vijayawada from December 23 to 28. The December meeting of the C.C. will finalise the document which will be released to the Party ranks for discussion.

The Central Committee considered the Janata Party's Statement of Economic Policy and is of the view that it is not in any way basically different from the policies pursued by the Congress party, policies which have landed the country in the present acute crisis.

Tall claims are being made for the new Statement of Policy such as that it is based on what is called "Gandhian Socialism", that it is oriented towards agriculture and the rural sector which had been neglected under Congress rule,

*This was a PRESS COMMUNIQUE issued after the Central Committee meeting and published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, November 27, 1977.

that it bases itself on decentralisation and development of the small-scale industries and that it will protect individual freedom and democracy.

None of these claims has any basis in reality.

It is no doubt necessary that a proper balance is struck between industry and agriculture, between big and small industry, between consumer goods industry and heavy industry and so on. But that is not what the Janata Party's Statement of Policy does.

Considering the present situation, small industry does require State assistance of various types in order to survive in a world of cut-throat competition from big industry—foreign as well as indigenous. That however has to be supplemented by a conscious policy of rapid industrialisation which requires the development of machine-making and other heavy industries. No country in the present-day world can develop its economy without rapid industrialisation which necessarily requires the building of heavy industry and that, too, in the public sector. By refusing to see this reality, and the transitional character of the role of small industry, by prescribing it as the one and only panacea for our country's ills, the Janata Party wants to reverse the path of industrialisation which India should tread.

What was wrong with Congress policies was not industrialisation with emphasis on heavy industries to be built in the public sector, but the bourgeois-landlord policies which turned its face against abolition of landlordism; instead of curbing and eliminating foreign and Indian monopolies, the Congress policies facilitated the growth of Indian monopolies, further penetration of foreign monopolies and increasing collaboration between the two. The Congress also pursued such economic and fiscal policies as helped the private sector to use the public sector in its own narrow class interests. What is worse, the Government itself was made growingly dependent on foreign aid.

In the agrarian sector, Congress policies facilitated the growth of capitalism, enabled the feudal landlords to transform

themselves into capitalist landlords. They at the same time facilitated the emergence of capitalist elements in the rural areas such as the rich peasants, traders, etc., and thus created a social base for itself in the countryside.

Congress policies in the industrial and agricultural spheres were not thus such as to unleash the productive capacities of the working people, nor enhance the incomes of the overwhelming majority of the people which could have created the basis for agricultural and industrial advance and, above all, an expanding home market. They on the other hand, resulted in a shrinking home market and reliance on exports.

Sections of Janata leaders have been claiming that their party is committed to the reversal of these disastrous Congress policies with their concomitant inflation and high prices, industrial stagnation, unemployment, crisis in agriculture, etc. The Janata Party's Statement of Policy, however, makes it clear that there is no departure from the basic policies pursued by the Congress since it assumed power over thirtyone years ago.

The mere investment of forty per cent of available resources in agriculture will not lead to the regeneration of the economy, as promised by the Janata leaders. In a country where about thirtyfive per cent of the land is still owned by five to six per cent of landlords, where there is total aversion by the Government to break this land monopoly, the Janata Government being no exception, the so-called "rural orientation" and forty per cent investment will only help the big landlords and the rural rich just as the "Green Revolution" of the Congress had done in the past.

There have been many things wrong with planning as pursued by the Congress. But instead of reversing the wrongs, the Janata Party's approach to planning, as is spelt out in the Statement of Policy, will ultimately end in the dissolution of the very process of planning. Though there is no mention of the concept of the rolling plan in the statement, giving the impression that planning as hitherto accepted will remain, no due emphasis had been placed on planning. Though the public sector has been mentioned, its importance has been denigrated.

The Janata Policy Statement says on foreign collaboration that it will be "selective and flexible". There is also mention of purchasing technique outright which is welcome. But such statements have been made earlier by the Congress Government also. Promises had been made one after the other by the Congress rulers with definite dates fixed for achieving self-reliance. But instead of self-reliance what has grown is dependence on foreign capital and foreign "aid". It will be the height of complacency to underestimate the danger of multinationals tightening their grip over our economy under the policy spelt out by the Janata Party.

The position regarding incomes and wages policy is a reversal of what had been stated in the Janata Party's Election Manifesto. The Manifesto had a correct approach when it declared as the Party's aim the reduction of income disparity to 1:20. Although the policy statement also repeats it, it does not talk of income disparity but mixes up this question with wage differences, forgetting altogether that the disparity that has to be reduced is between the inadequate wages of the working people and the fabulous incomes of the vested interests. Hence it is that the Janata Party does not mention need-based minimum wage which has necessarily to be the starting point of any realistic wage and income policy and endorses the retrograde terms of reference of the Bhoothalingam Committee which does not have on it a single representative of organized labour.

Taken as a whole, the policy statement, shorn of its frills, will only serve the interests of the dominant classes and betray the interests of the masses.

It is sheer idle talk under these circumstances when the Janata leaders claim that the path mapped out by them for India's development is neither capitalist nor Communist. It, in fact, is the same old capitalist path pursued by the Congress Government—the path which further strengthens the class alliance of the bourgeoisie and landlords and facilitates collaboration between Indian and foreign monopolists.

The Central Committee hopes that all the Left and democratic forces in the country, including large numbers of Janata Party members will see the damage done by this capitalist path and join hands with all those who fight for the taking over of foreign monopoly capital, such other measures against Indian monopolists as have been consistently demanded by the Left and democratic forces in the country and radical land reforms in the interests of the landless and poor peasants. These policies directed against foreign and Indian monopolies as well as against landlords will take the economy out of the crisis which has overtaken it.

The C.C. noted the proposals made in some quarters that existing States like Bihar, U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, etc., should be broken up to create smaller States. This is being advocated in the name of better administration which, in fact, is a plea for even more bureaucratisation of the administration. Further, this is a move which will only accentuate the friction among the various sections of the people in the same State. There is no rational ground for breaking up of States after their re-organization broadly on the linguistic principle. The present demand will only divert people's attention from the real issues facing them.

The C.C. is in full sympathy with those friends in the Janata and other parties who give expression to their apprehension about the activities of the RSS. While the CPI(M) has never supported the former Congress Government's policy of banning any organization it shares with other democratic and secular elements in the country, their concern at the revivalist and Hindu chauvinist approach of the RSS to national problems which would only aggravate tension in the country. The C.C. into this context denounced the attack on the guide to the Gandhi Smriti made by some RSS elements. The C.C. regrets to note that the Prime Minister in his intervention in Parliament on this incident made statements which amount to whitewashing the role of the RSS in the Gandhi assassination.

The Central Committee noted that, though a section of Congressmen headed by President Reddy and Parliamentary

Party leader Chavan have been claiming to be fighting th notorious caucus in the Congress, they do not propose t take such measures against the caucus as expelling the forme Prime Minister and the coterie around her from the Con gress. Though the requisitionists have been given a forma rebuff and Indira Gandhi has been unable to wrest what sh wanted President Reddy has once again reiterated that th former Prime Minister continued to be the "respected leader" of the Congress party. The C.C. is of the view that, unles Indira Gandhi and her caucus and Emergency platform ar resisted and fought out, the danger from the Congress party to the democratic rights of the people will continue.

It was in this context that the C.C. heard reports from the States where Assembly elections are to be held shortly. The line of unity against the Congress in order to carry on the struggle against, authoritarianism will obviously have to continue. The concrete line of alliance in various states will be considered and finally decided by the Central Committee at its next meeting.

The C.C. in this context deplored the attitude adopted by the leaders of the Janata Party in Tripura which is one of the fighting CPI(M) rather than continuing the struggle against Congress authoritarianism. It appeals to the national leadership and ranks of the Janata Party to ponder over the damage done by this policy.

The C.C. noted that, despite all the revelations made before the Shah Commission, the leaders of the Right C.P. refuse to see the enormous harm done to the democratic movement in the country by their policy of collaboration with the Congress. It is strange that, at a time when the Congress leadership is being pilloried, the Right C.P. leaders concentrate their fire rot against the forces of authoritarianism gathered around the Congress but against the Janata which, with all its vacillations and limitations has been and is still fighting the Congress and its authoritarian platform.

The C.C. therefore made it clear that, unless the Right C.P. leaders discarded their line of continuing collaboration

with the Congress and take to the path of fighting the forces that stand for Emergency and dictatorship, all their talk of united front between the Right C.P. and CPI(M) and of building Left and democratic unity carries no conviction.

The C.C., however, reiterated its stand that united action at the level of mass organizations, regardless of political differences, is possible and desirable. The CPI(M) has always been advocating such united action and in fact had proposed such united actions even during the Emergency. United actions however were not possible at that time because the Right C.P. leaders insisted on the CPI(M) supporting the 20-point programme. The C.C. was glad to note that they have now abandoned that position and are prepared for united action.

The C.C. heard reports of the talks held between the representatives of the two Kisan Sabhas led respectively by the Right C.P. and the CPI(M). It was decided that the talks should continue with a view to evolving minimum points of agreement not only between the two Kisan Sabhas but with other mass organizations led by various political parties, groups and individuals interested in the cause of peasant and agricultural labourers.

96

Dismiss Vengal Rao Government In Andhra Pradesh*

Demanded by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M) in A Statement dated December 2, 1977

Reports of the devastation and disaster in Andhra Pradesh caused by the killer cyclone and twenty-foot high tidal wave have been so grim and heartrending as to defy description. Mass deaths in thousands, tens of coastal villages being completely washed away, had not been known during the last hundred years and more since the ghastly tragedy of 1864 when a thirty-foot tidal wave had taken a heavy toll of 34,000 lives in the town of Masulipattam and areas around it. The recent cyclone and tidal wave not only resulted in the death of nearly 20,000 people but caused the destruction of cattle in thousands, ravaging of dwelling places in lakhs, and devastation of standing crops in lakhs of acres.

This is not a great tragedy for the people of Andhra Pradesh alone, but a national tragedy which demands urgent and massive effort on the part of both the State and Central Governments, particularly the former which is directly and immediately connected with the entire administrative machinery. The twelve days' experience after the disaster shows that the State Government has proved totally unequal to the task, the State Cabinet being involved in shabby politicking, leading to the resignation of eight senior Ministers and a serious crisis. Whatever boastful talk the State's Chief Minister, Mr. Vengal Rao, is indulging in about the stability of his party's rule and Government in the State despite the resignations and mutual recriminations of Cabinet Ministers,

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, December 11, 1977.

it is inconceivable that his crisis-ridden and paralysed Government is capable of attending to the urgently called-for needs of the grief-stricken and uprooted lakhs in the gravely affected areas of Andhra Pradesh.

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) urges upon the Central Government to dismiss the State Government, dissolve the State Assembly and ensure effective relief and rehabilitation operations on a massive scale. It also calls upon the Central Government to constitute all-party committees at different levels to closely cooperate with, assist and supervise the relief operations, carried on by the administration. The P.B. disagrees with all those in the leadership of the Central Government who advance legalistic arguments and raise Constitutional niceties in order to perpetuate the bankrupt Vengal Rao Government in the State, and escape the responsibility of urgent and direct assistance to the lakhs and lakhs of victims of the killer cyclone and tidal wave. What did not come in the way of dissolving nine Assemblies and State Governments in April 1977 cannot and should not come in the way of the dismissal of Vengal Rao's Ministry, and dissolution of the time-barred Andhra Prades State Assembly.

97

On The Affairs of Jawaharlal Nehru University*

Statement dated December 2, 1977 issued by the Polit Bureau of CPI(M)

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) disapproves of the manner in which the Central Government has handled the agitation of the students and teachers of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, and records its strongest protest against the Prime Minister's ordering of enquiry into the affairs of the university since its inception some ten years ago.

Such a blanket enquiry has not been demanded by the mass of students and the teachers, what they are demanding is an enquiry only into the excesses committed by Vice-Chancellor Nag Chowdhury and his cohorts during the 20 months of Emergency, and the removal of the Vice-Chancellor during the pendency of the enquiry.

This demand and the struggle in JNU are a part and parcel of the countrywide struggle that is going on for the dismantling of the Emergency set-up and punishment of all those guilty of Emergency excesses.

It is Mr. Nag Chowdhury who is interested in a blanket enquiry of everything since the inception of the JNU so that his excesses during the Emergency can be covered up in a host of omissions and commissions. It is a demand of such elements who in the notorious McCarthyian style are interest only in a witch-hunt of Communists, and who are clamouring for rewriting history books in the spirit of Hindu communalism.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, December 11, 1977.

It is very unfortunate that Sri Morarji Desai in the capacity of Chancellor of the University succumbed to the pressure of these obscurantist forces and orderd such an enquiry, contrary to the assurances given earlier by the Education Minister, Sri P.C. Chunder, to the JNU students' deputation. This is not what the entire students and staff of the JNU fought for in their three-week-long struggle, and this is not what was expected from the Central Janata Government which is pledged to undoing the Emergency excesses and to punishing the guilty.

The Polit Bureau appeals to the Prime Minister who, in his capacity as Chancellor, has ordered a general enquiry into JNU affairs, to retrace from such a retrograde step, and to confine the enquiry to the period of the Emergency and the misdeeds of the Vice-Chancellor during the Emergency.

Appendix-I

Killings of Prisoners in West Bengal Jails Condemned*

Resolution adopted in the meeting of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Calcutta on May 5-7, 1975

The West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), meeting from May 5 to 7, 1975, strongly condemned the brutal firing on the under-trial prisoners inside Howrah Jail on May 3, 1975, resulting in the death of five youngmen and injury to several prisoners. Whatever may be the official version of the incident, there could be no reason to fire on the prisoners with deliberate intention of killing them.

This fascist method of killing prisoners is being pursued in West Bengal by the ruling party for the last four years. Up till now the Congress rulers have killed 84 prisoners inside the jails of West Bengal.

The meeting called upon the people to raise their voice of protest against such savagery and merciless killing of prisoners by the Congress rulers and demanded an immediate public enquiry into the Howrah Jail incident.

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*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, May 11, 1975

Appendix-II

Polit Bureau Condemns Brutal Killings in Bihar*

Resolution adopted in its Meeting held in Calcutta on June 10-12, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces the brutal killing of 17 extremists by the Bihar police in the village of Gharauan, Patna district. The usual story is trotted out that the police were fired upon first by the extremists, and the police thereupon had to open fire, and in the ensuing gun battle that lasted for 13 hours from 10.30 a.m., 17 "extremists" were killed while 'several' policemen received injuries. It is strange and unbelievable that revolutionary leaders from various far-flung districts of Bihar, taking shelter in a village and then in broad daylight challenging the armed police and engaged them in a day-long battle and allowing themselves to be butchered! It seems to be nothing but cold-blooded murder of the extremists, whom the police might have arrested and kept in their secret lock-ups. So many such murders have been already committed by the Indira Congress Government's armed police, in various parts of our country, in Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Punjab and Bihar. The Polit Bureau demands that a thorough public probe be conducted and the guilty be punished severely. The Polit Bureau appeals to all political parties and democratic forces to raise their voice to see that these brutal killings are put an end to, and the drive to a lawless regime is fought back.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, June 15, 1975.

Appendix-III

Release Tripura MLAs*

Demanded by the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) in a Statement issued in Calcutta on June 12, 1975

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has issued the following statement in Calcutta on June 12:

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) severely condemns the arrest and detention without trial under the MISA of 12 CPI(M) and Independent MLAs, including the leader of the Opposition and member of the Central Committee of the CPI(M), Comrade Nripen Chakravarty, on the eve of the last budget session of the Assembly.

These detentions have been resorted to only with a view to preventing the collapse of the Indira Congress State Ministry. The factional feud in the party had assumed such proportions that one of the dissident Congress MLAs had given notice of a no-confidence motion against the Ministry.

This fact has been testified to by the leader of the dissident group in the ruling party. The plea of the Chief Minister that these MLAs were planning to obstruct the sowing of *boro* paddy is patently false, for not only *boro* sowing but even harvesting is over long ago.

This was not the first time that the Tripura Government had resorted to such arrests. In the earlier session of the Assembly, when the State Government employees were on strike, the Government had resorted to such detentions without trial.

These detentions, which are in keeping with the practice of the Congress Governments all over the country, not only belie the assurances given by the Government in Parliament

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, June 22, 1975

that MISA will not be used against Opposition parties, but have made a mockery of parliamentary democracy, preventing the Opposition party from attending the session of the Assembly.

They also show the extent to which the Indira Congress Government will go, throwing to winds all norms of democracy in the drive to one-party dictatorship.

The Polit Bureau welcomes the condemnation of these detentions by leaders of various Opposition parties, and also by a large number of Congress MLAs of Tripura.

The Polit Bureau demands the immediate release of the detained MLAs.

Appendix-IV

Proclamation of Emergency

The Gazette of India, EXTRAORDINARY, Dated June 26, 1975, containing the PROCLAMATION given here:

REGISTERED NO. D-(D)-72
The Gazette of India
EXTRAORDINARY
PART II Section 3 Sub-section (i)
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 1975/ASADHA 5, 1897

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
NOTIFICATION
New Delhi, the 26th June 1975.

G.S.R. 353(E)- The following Proclamation of Emergency by the President of India, dated 25th June, 1975, is published for general information :-

'PROCLAMATION OF EMERGENCY'

In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of Article 352 of the Constitution, I, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, by this Proclamation declare that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened by internal disturbance.

New Delhi
The 25th June, 1975.

F. A. AHMED.
President.

New Delhi,
The 26th June, 1975.

[No.II/16013/1/75-S&P(D.II)]
S. L. KHURANA, Secy.

Appendix-V

Constitution Amended to Save Indira Gandhi*

Prime Minister Placed Beyond Reach of Courts

The 40th Constitution (Amendment) Bill passed by Rajya Sabha after a one-day discussion makes the Prime Minister immune from all civil and criminal proceedings. This proposed immunity from criminal proceedings, either during the term of office or thereafter, is in respect of any act done during or before the term of office. The Bill also lays down that no civil proceedings, even in respect of personal acts, can be instituted against the Prime Minister during the term of office.

The Law Minister, H.R.Gokhale, who piloted the Bill, said that the Prime Minister occupied a "most pivotal position", and the immunities now being enjoyed by the President and the State Governors should have been extended to the Prime Minister much earlier. "It is better to be late than never", he commented. He also said, "The Constitution is after all only an instrument, a means to an end, and not an end in itself".

The Bill will be placed before the Lok Sabha very soon.

The 39th Amendment to the Constitution was assented to by the President on August 10, 1975. The amendment, passed by Lok Sabha on August 7 and Rajya Sabha on August 8,

*This censored news on the subject was published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of August 17, 1975. The caption given in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' was : *'Prime Minister beyond reach of Courts/Amendments To The Constitution'*. Smt. Indira Gandhi brought this amendment to Indian Constitution to negate the judgement of Allahabad High Court against her election to Indian Parliament in 1971.

after one-day discussions in each House, was ratified by 17 States on August 9, 1975.

This amendment places beyond challenges in courts with retrospective effect, the election to Parliament of a person holding the office of the Prime Minister or the Speaker, and the elections of the President and the Vice-President.

Several other laws, including the MISA and some land reform laws, have been given similar protection from judicial scrutiny.

All pending court proceedings under existing law in respect of the Prime Minister's election to the Lok Sabha has become null and void, including the case which was taken up by Supreme Court on August 11.

The amendment envisages the creation of a new forum under a law to be enacted by Parliament to decide disputes relating to the elections of persons holding these high offices. Law Minister Gokhale found it "very ridiculous" that "these dignitaries", elected "by vast majorities" should be harassed and should have to submit the validity of such elections to judicial determination. It was "all the more ridiculous" in the case of the Prime Minister who was "the undisputed national leader", he reminded Parliament. The matter, according to him, had now "assumed grave urgency". He assured that Opposition parties, particularly those who had been "broadly sympathetic and cooperative" with the Government would be consulted before the new review body was formed.

Earlier, Lok Sabha passed an Election Laws amendment on August 4, 1975. It was approved by the Rajya Sabha on August 6, 1975 and the President gave his assent the same day.

The relevant provisions of the new legislation are :

The case of every person found guilty of a corrupt practice by an order under Section 99 of the Representation of Peoples Act shall be submitted as soon as may be, after such order takes effect, by such authority as the Central government may specify in this behalf, to the President for determination of the question as to whether such person shall be disqualified and if so, for what period.

Any person who stands disqualified under Section 8A of this Act as it stood immediately before the commencement of the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 1975, may, if the period of such disqualification has not expired, submit a petition to the President for the removal of such disqualification for the unexpired portion of the said period.

The new Bill is also aimed at removing with retrospective effect certain doubts regarding the provision of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951, relating to (1) definition of a candidate under Section 79(B); (2) the corrupt practices under Section 123 (3) of the Act as to the use of and appeal to religious and national symbols; and (3) the corrupt practice under Section 123(7) of the Act as to assistance by officers in the service of the government for furtherance of the prospects of the candidate's election.

Appendix-VI

Prime Minister's Election Case In Supreme Court*

The Supreme Court of India took up the Prime Minister's election case on August 11,1975.

Sreemati Indira Gandhi's counsel submitted that the Allahabad High Court judgement of June 12, 1975, setting aside Smt. Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha, has been rendered legally invalid by the 39th Amendment to the Constitution of India. He, therefore, pleaded that Smt. Gandhi's appeal against the Allahabad High Court order be allowed and the order be finally quashed.

Sri Santi Bhusan, counsel for Sri Raj Narain, who had challenged Smt. Gandhi's election, however, made a plea that his client would now challenge the 39th Constitution Amendment itself as well as the latest amendments in the election laws.

The Supreme Court admitted the plea and allowed Counsel Santi Bhusan time till August 20 to intimate the grounds of such challenge. Consequently, the hearing of the poll case was adjourned till August 25. The Court, however, rejected his argument that it was necessary for Sri Raj Narain to be present at the Court at that time.

The Supreme Court heard interesting arguments on the right of Parliament to change the basic structure of the Constitution, and on its own jurisdiction after the 39th Amendment.

*This is the censored version of the news published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', of August 24, 1975. Though censored, this news reveals the steps taken to save Smt. Indira Gandhi's Prime Ministership.

Sri Santi Bhusan argued initially that the Amendment eroded the final and highest judicial authority of the Supreme Court, and this was a basic structure Parliament was neither intended to, nor had power to make.

He cited a Supreme Court ruling in the Kesavanand Bharati case that Parliament had no such power. He argued further that the powers of the Supreme Court under Article 136 were adversely affected by the 39th Amendment. He also pointed out that the Amendment had come into effect only a day before the Supreme Court was scheduled to take up the present case.

Sri Niren De, Attorney General, intervened on behalf of the Government. He asked the Supreme Court to lay down precisely what constituted the basic structure, "so that Parliament knows where it stands". Sri De also claimed that if Parliament could not change the Constitution the situation could lead to a revolution. Sri De did not, however, elaborate on 'revolution'. If parliamentary democracy was to survive, Parliament must be allowed to make changes in the basic structure, he added. He wanted the Supreme Court to revise its ruling in the Kesavanand Bharati case.

Sri Ashoke Sen, Counsel for the Prime Minister, held that Smt. Gandhi's election had been annulled on technical grounds, and that the judgement had involved the judiciary in the 'controversy' it had generated. He thought that Parliament had properly taken up responsibility on its own to resolve the issue. He argued that in view of the recent amendments to the Constitution and the election laws, the Supreme Court was no longer entitled to go into the issues raised by the Allahabad judgement. All the major issues of the Prime Minister's election case are, incidentally, covered by the election laws amendment.

Appendix-VII

Jyoti Basu Nails Down Right C.P. Lies*

Comrade Jyoti Basu, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), issued the following statement to the Press in Calcutta on September 15 :

A report of a Press Conference held by Sri Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the Right Communist Party, published in several newspapers of September 14, has been brought to my notice. If I have to comment on the report in one short sentence, all I can say is, a party which claims to be a Communist Party but which has lost all its moorings in Marxism-Leninism can exist only on the basis of a factory grinding out lies.

Sri Rao has told the Press, that "two prominent members of the CPI(M) had met the Prime Minister", after the declaration of Emergency to say that they were not with Right reaction. This is a heinous lie.

No two prominent members of the CPI(M) have met the Prime Minister nor does any leader of the Party have to meet her to present our credentials to the Prime Minister as fighters against Right reaction for two simple reasons : one, it is the wrong place to present such credentials; two, our Party has been consistently fighting Right reaction from all sources as is well-known to the people. In the past also, Sri Rao must remember that after the 1971 Lok Sabha elections, even the enemies of the Communist movement in this country had to admit that it was the CPI(M) alone,

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, September 21, 1975.

among the political parties in the country, that pursued a principled line of not aligning with the ruling Congress or the "Grand Alliance". Sri Rao talks about his party's fight against Right reaction, but he does not understand the source of Right reaction in the country. There is certainly a difference between his party and ours, between class collaboration and Marxism-Leninism.

In line with this type of lie-manufacturing is his talk about a thousand CPI(M) members in Nalgonda and Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh, in Tanjore in Tamil Nadu and in Trivandrum in Kerala leaving the CPI(M) and joining his party.

His party's journal NEW AGE has been publishing such "reports" constantly for some time now. In PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY of May 25, the Secretary of the Tamil Nadu State Committee of our Party had given details to show how NEW AGE was extolling some renegades from the Communist movement expelled by the CPI(M) and admitted to its ranks by the Right C.P.

In Trivandrum, Sivanandan, a person expelled from the Party for factional and disruptive activities over two years ago, a fact announced and published in the Party Press even then, was reported recently by NEW AGE as having defected from the Party to join the Right C.P. Similar is the case of C.A. Peter who was expelled from the Party for making anti-worker agreements with the managements—again an expulsion which was announced in the Party Press at the time it was made.

The ridiculous lengths to which the Right C.P. goes is exposed when it propagates resignation from the CPI(M) in Armoor taluk in Andhra Pradesh. The fact is that there is no Party unit or even a Party member in that taluk.

What Sri Rajeswara Rao is really worried about is what is happening to his own party. There is resentment amongst the ranks of his party against the leadership which has not only abandoned its character as a Communist Party but has taken the party out of the pale of even the democratic movement. On the other side, inside his own party are those

who have decided that it is more beneficial to be in the ruling party that in a party which is only an appendage of the ruling classes. After so many others, the latest is the case of many members of the party's Purulia District Council (West Bengal).

Sri Rao, if he thinks he can exploit the present situation to create confusion in the CPI(M) by making such statements, is terribly mistaken. The confusion is more likely in his own party.

Appendix-VIII

Promode Dasgupta on Bangladesh Killings

Statement issued in Calcutta on November 6, 1975

On the killings in Dacca Central Jail, Comrade Promode Dasgupta, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M) and a member of the Polit Bureau of the Party, issued the following statement on November 6, 1975 :

Four front-ranking leaders of the Bangladesh freedom struggle, Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali and Kamaruzzaman were murdered within the jail precincts and we are deeply shocked by the incident. It is difficult to express in words the condemnation for this atrocious crime. We share the revulsion felt by the democratic opinion of Bangladesh. The killing of prisoners inside jails must always be condemned. This is nothing but a barbaric attack on democracy We express our heartfelt condolences to the people of Bangladesh and to the members of the bereaved families.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, November 16, 1975. Refer Document on Bangladesh Developments under Item No. 27 of this Volume.

Appendix-IX

Disciplining the Press*

Three New Ordinances promulgated by Smt. Indira Gandhi's Government in December, 1975, to impose most rigid control over the Press to completely suppress the voice of the people against National Emergency

The Government has promulgated three new Ordinances on December 8, 1975, all relating to the Press.

Of the three, the one through which the Government vests itself with the widest powers to regulate the Press is the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Ordinance.

Explaining the purport of the Ordinances, a Government source expressed concern for the need to "bring about a high standard of journalism in India", and to prevent injuries caused by the Press to "the moral and intellectual health of the society". The Ordinance is supposed to "enable the Press to be truly free, that is to enable it to be free from vested interests seeking to use it for narrow interests to the detriment of wider social and national interests."

The new Ordinance brings back, in the main, the provisions of the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act, 1951, which was framed to provide a "deterrent to harmful writings in the Press". The Act was repealed in 1957.

The present Ordinance prohibits publication of news exciting disaffection towards the "Constitutionally established Government", inciting disharmony among different sections of society, etc. The existing method of pre-censorship is also directed towards these ends.

The Government has been empowered to forfeit an

*Report published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, December 12, 1975.

objectionable publication, detain it on transit, and forfeit the Press involved. The Ordinance also provides for security to be demanded, and for the security to be forfeited and further security to be demanded in case of a second offence.

The Government feels that these measures would "create conditions for an assured growth for decent and healthy journalism".

Another Ordinance repeals the Parliamentary Proceedings (Protection of Publication) Act, 1956, which extended certain privileges and immunities to newspapers in the matter of reporting Parliamentary proceedings. The right to publish speeches made on the floor of the Houses of Parliament was being largely misused, according to the Government sources, and was not properly used to educate the public. This had lowered the standard of journalism, and the law guaranteeing the right to publish Parliamentary speeches had, therefore, to be repealed.

The 1956 Act had been enacted largely on the initiative of the late Feroze Gandhi.

A third Ordinance has abolished the Press Council, established with the aim of evolving a code of conduct and bringing about a balance between the rights and responsibilities of the Press. The Press Council, the Government thinks, has "outlived its utility" The two other new Ordinances would be enough to regulate the Press, the Government feels.

The Press Council, at the time of its abolition, was looking into a complaint against Sri K.K. Birla, chairman of *THE HINDUSTAN TIMES*, in the matter of terminating the services of its former editor, Mr. Verghese.

Appendix-X

On Chasnala Disaster

Polit Bureau Resolution published in 'People's Democracy', January 18, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expresses its shock at the mine disaster in Chasnala, a captive colliery of the Government-controlled Indian Iron & Steel Company. Even according to official reports, 372 miners were inside the mine when this worst ever mine accident in the country occurred. There is no hope for these trapped miners. The Polit Bureau conveys its deepfelt sorrow to the families of the miners involved.

A judicial inquiry into the accident has been ordered and the Government of India have constituted a Committee to go into the whole question of safety in the nationalised coal mines.

Mine safety has all along been a scandal in this country. It was so when the mines were in the private sector, that it continues to be so after nationalisation has been seen in Chasnala and a series of earlier smaller accidents in other mines.

A number of questions have been raised about the Chasnala disaster itself—whether the 80-foot safety wall between the abandoned water-inundated mine above and the colliery below was really 80 feet; whether water had been seeping into the mine from the abandoned mine all along; whether workers and overseers had warned that working in certain parts of the mine would endanger the safety of the wall; whether there were more workers involved in the accident than mentioned by the authorities, and so on.

Despite all official claims, rescue operations have been slow and tardy.

Only a full probe will bring out all the facts regarding the cause of the accident, whether workers' warnings had been ignored and also why the rescue operations are taking such a long time.

While calling for such a probe, the P.B. demands that the families of the miners involved in the accident be paid adequate compensation.

Appendix-XI

Meetings Prohibited During National Emergency*

Government Prohibited Meetings by Issuing Written Orders

HALL MEETING PROHIBITED UNDER DIR

A hall meeting convened by the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to condole the death of Comrade Chou En-lai, was banned by an order of the Government of West Bengal. The order, later published in the official Calcutta Gazette, is reprinted here:

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
HOME DEPARTMENT — POLITICAL
ORDER
No. 124 – P.S.
Calcutta, the 15th January, 1976.

WHEREAS it has come to the notice of the Governor that the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) have decided to hold a meeting at Thyagraj Hall at P 530, Raja Basanta Roy Road, Calcutta on the 16th January, 1976;

AND WHEREAS the Governor is of the opinion that the holding of the said meeting will cause a disturbance of public order;

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the power conferred by rule 69 of the Defence and Internal Security of India Rules, 1971, the Governor, with a view to securing the

*These two Government Orders, prohibiting meetings, were published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, January 25, 1976.

maintenance of public order, is pleased hereby to prohibit the holding of or taking part in the said meeting at the said Thyagraj Hall in Calcutta on the 16th January, 1976.

To
Shri Promode Dasgupta,
Secretary,
West Bengal State
Committee of the
Communist Party of India
(Marxist),
33, Alimuddin St. Calcutta.

By order of the Governor,
Sd/- B. Mukhopadhyay
Secretary to the
Government of West Bengal.

A large number of people, who could not be informed of the ban, assembled in front of the hall, where two CPI(M) leaders announced the circumstances in which the meeting could not be held. The people dispersed after observing a minute's silence outside the hall in memory of the great revolutionary leader.

Comrade Promode Dasgupta wrote to the Governor on the 16th protesting against the ban.

ONE MORE
MEETING BANNED

Government of West Bengal
Home Department
Political
ORDER
No. 148–P.S.

Calcutta, the 17th January, 1976.

WHEREAS it has come to the notice to the Governor that the United Central Refugee Council (U.C.R.C.) have decided to hold a meeting at the Indian Association Hall at 62, Bepin Behari Ganguli Street, Calcutta, on the 19th January, 1976;

AND WHEREAS the Governor is of the opinion that the

holding of the said meeting will cause a disturbance of public order;

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the power conferred by Rule 69 of the Defence and Internal Security of India Rules, 1971, the Governor with a view to securing the maintenance of public order, is pleased hereby to prohibit the holding of or taking part in the said meeting at the said Indian Association Hall in Calcutta on the 19th January, 1976.

By order of the Governor,
Sd/- B. Mukhopadhyay
Secretary to the Government of West Bengal

The meeting had been convened by eight Left parties and three central refugee organisations to discuss the problems of eviction faced by roadside stall owners and some refugee colonies.

Appendix-XII

Victory in Angola*

The whole world barring the imperialists, the racists, and their hangers-on, is rejoicing at the victory of liberation forces in Angola. It is regrettable that People's China is striking a discordant note. The forces of disruption, the tools of white South African racism, and those who sold themselves out to imperialism have been decisively routed. The success of MPLA in preserving and consolidating independence, and in extending it to the whole country is now nearly complete.

It is a time to rejoice, and also to remember the thousands of martyrs, Angolans, Cubans and others who paid the supreme price for the glorious victory.

The FNLA, propped up by imperialism till the last moment, has been eliminated both militarily and politically after they lost San Salvador, Luso and the vital Benguela railway. The UNITA, the tool of the racists, has lost its last stronghold, Silva Porto. The white South African troops with them are fast retreating towards Namibia. They are afraid of meeting the advancing columns of MPLA troops and Cuban volunteers in the southern front. UNITA boss Savimbi, whose connections with the Pretoria racists were confirmed by two visits to South Africa made by him in the last one month, has boasted of a plan of guerilla warfare. But he lacks the essential ingredient for such efforts—people to back him.

Both FNLA and UNITA have abandoned all organized

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 29, 1976.

combat, but as a last fling killed hundreds of civilians while retreating.

Angola has asked for a total withdrawal of all white South African troops from its soil. Such withdrawal must be unconditional, and not linked to any 'deal' which the racists would now welcome very much.

The recent U.S. warning to the Soviet Union that Angola must not be treated as a precedent, and the British warning to Cuba that it should not get involved again in affairs of other countries are, in fact, pathetic admissions of defeat of imperialist efforts to scuttle Angolan independence.

South Africa's Vorster and Rhodesia's Smith have displayed a new found spirit of accommodation, but this means no change in their policies. Decisively cornered now, Vorster is worried over the 'threat' to the racists' colony of Namibia, and Smith is worried over the survival of his white minority set-up. Vorster's 'offer of a deal' with the MPLA springs from a desperate urge to save the hold over the Cunene hydel project in Namibia which caters to South Africa's industrial military complex.

The MPLA's diplomatic victory is dramatically underlined by the rush in western capitals for recognition of the Luanda Government only weeks after everything was attempted to throttle it. The EEC countries and others "fell head over heels to make up with the MPLA". Their face saving pretext was that any delay would push Angola further towards the Soviet Union. France, some Western partners have privately complained, did not even wait "to act together" in granting recognition. Only the USA continues stubbornly to refuse recognition.

Portugal, whose colony Angola had been for centuries, has recognised the MPLA Government in Luanda.

The U.S. diplomatic efforts to split the Organisation of African Unity on the Angolan issue had a dismal failure. To date, 40 O.A.U. members of a total of 46 have recognised the MPLA Government. President Amin of Uganda will reportedly visit Angola to persuade the opponents to "give up resistance".

The writing on the wall for racists and imperialists in Africa is now clear for all to see. It has been rightly stressed that the next task is the liberation of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). The big question of the moment is: how far will the West back up the white minority rulers in their refusal to quit? There are reports that both USA and Britain have let it be known that they will not favour a military confrontation over the issue of keeping Smith in power. The United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, which technically is a trust territory, expects freedom fighters to start operations very soon.

Appendix-XIII

Jyoti Basu Replies to Rajeswara Rao We are always with the Toiling Masses*

"Our Party is and has always been with the mainstream of national life, that is, with the toiling masses, and unlike the Right C.P., which follows a line of class-collaboration, we have never deserted or betrayed the people", commented CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Jyoti Basu, referring to Right C.P. General Secretary Rajeswara Rao's appeal to the CPI(M) to join "the mainstream of national life".

"Similarly, we serve the international Communist movement and the cause of the international proletariat by our support to all forces fighting against imperialism the world over, by struggling for our people and opposing every move to stifle democracy and to facilitate imperialist conspiracies inside our country."

Comrade Basu made these comments in course of an interview with PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY and SWADHINATA when his views on some recent utterances of Right Communist leaders were sought.

When his attention was drawn to Sri Rajeswara Rao's statement that he could discern 'some changes' in the CPI(M)'s stand after its Central Committee meeting in Mardras, Comrade Basu noted that Sri Rao refers in proof of his contention to its resolution in Angola and its reference to sections of Congressmen among others who feel concerned about democratic rights. "But there is nothing new in our latest news", Comrade Basu said. "As Marxist-Leninists we have

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 29, 1976.

been guided by our own study and understanding and we have not toed the line of either the Soviet or the Chinese party, although we try to learn fron the revolutionary experience of all Communist parties. In being guided by such an independent policy, just as there may be unity of views with other Communist parties of the world, there may arise differences also. What is therefore surprising or new in a disagreement with the Chinese Party and Government's stand on Angola and the MPLA Government?"

"Nor is this the first time that such a thing has happened", elaborated Comrade Basu. "Similarly we have differences with the CPSU and the Soviet Government on several national and international issues. But unlike the Right Communists, we regard both the Soviet Union and China as Socialist countries."

With reference to Sri Rajeswara Rao's appeal to the CPI(M) to discard its 'blind' anti-Congressism, Comrade Basu said that on the question of the ruling party, there is no 'blindness' in our stand. "After a study and analysis of the Congress, we have come to the conclusion that it is a bourgeois-landlord party serving bourgeois-landlord interests, taking the capitalist path of development in compromise with feudalism and foreign monopolists. But among the members and supporters of the Congress there are wide sections who feel concerned about the future of parliamentary institutions and democracy. It must certainly be our task to approach them, along with others, in course of the broad mobilisation of the people, which has become so urgent, particularly today, when fertile soil is being created for imperialist-inspired plots and growing influence of U.S. imperialism and the multinational corporations."

On the Right C.P.'s characterisation of and relation with the Congress, Comrade Jyoti Basu explained the stand reiterated by the CC in Madras.

"The Right C.P., however, is of a different view and basically supports the Congress whilst indulging in criticising some aspects of its policies on occasions, when hard

pressed. Such a policy cannot establish its bona fides with the people and it cannot be taken seriously because when it comes to movements against reactionary policies and vested interests, it usually backs away and disrupts unity. In West Bengal and Kerala, when the ruling party had been isolated from the people, the Right Communists as an earnest of their servility to it, ranged themselves against the Left and democratic forces", he said.

What about Sri Rajeswara Rao's expression of readiness to open talks with the CPI(M) for united movements?

To this question, Comrade Basu replied, "Even in the present situation whilst ruling out a political front with the Right C.P. unless it changes its policy, our Party is always prepared to have joint actions on mass and class issues".

Comrade Basu also said that it would be advisable for the Right Communists not to repeat *ad nauseum* the slanders that our Party is allied with right reactionary forces. "The people are able to see for themselves who are upholding their interests and who are betraying them."

Appendix-XIV

India and China Exchange Ambassadors*

A Step in the Right Direction

India and China have decided to exchange ambassadors, after a gap of nearly 14 years. The Indian decision to restore diplomatic representation at the ambassadorial level was announced by the External Affairs Minister in the Lok Sabha on April 15, reports SAMACHAR.

Naming Sri K.R. Narayanan, at present Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, to take up the assignment in Peking, Sri Chavan said : On the basis of the discussions which have taken place, it is our understanding that the initiative for raising the level of our diplomatic representation in Peking will be followed by a similar move by the Government of the People's Republic of China.

The reciprocation came in two days when a Chinese Foreign Ministry official said, as quoted by REUTER, that "China has already given its agreement to the nomination of the Ambassador chosen by India. After the Indian Ambassador is sent to China, we will send our Ambassador to India". The Chinese acceptance of Sri Narayanan's nomination was conveyed a day ahead of Sri Chavan's Lok Sabha announcement.

Parliamentary and diplomatic history was created when Sri Chavan announced the nomination in Parliament. Never before had the appointment of an Indian Ambassador been formally announced first in Parliament.

The consultation for the upgrading had been going on seriously for the last three months in both the capitals. While

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, April 25, 1976.

the Indian side made some carefully considered and unpublicised moves, the ball was set rolling for the latest round of discussions by the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister's speech at the 1976 Republic Day reception by the Indian Charge d'Affaires in Peking. The Chinese Minister had then specifically suggested that ambassadors should now be exchanged between the two countries.

The Indian Government has taken care to assure all concerned that the present development would not dilute or disturb India's friendship with countries like the Soviet Union, or moves to improve relations with some others like the United States.

Informed sources have indicated that the Soviet Union had been taken into confidence before the decision was finalised. The Prime Minister's Secretary and later, the Foreign Secretary had detailed discussions with the Soviet Ambassador in New Delhi.

TASS reports from Moscow on April 15 that the Soviet Union was ready to normalise its relations with China at the diplomatic level. TASS was quoting the Soviet Premier's formal message of congratulation to the new Chinese Premier Hua Kuo-feng.

In Washington, U.S. President Ford, at the swearing-in ceremony of the new American Ambassador to China on April 15 said, "The process of normalisation of relations with the People's Republic of China is now well under way".

Comrade Jyoti Basu, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) said that the Party has for long been demanding that the Government of India take the initiative for full normalisation of relations between the two countries in the interests of the people. The restoration of diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level had been suggested as an initial step, and now that this step has been rightly taken, it should be followed up with some more moves. The CPI(M) welcomes the decision to send an Ambassador to Peking.

Along with steps towards normalisation of relations with China, the Government of India should also take the initiative to ease tensions within the sub-continent.

Appendix-XV

We Stand Firmly against the Ruling Class*

Promode Dasgupta refutes slanders in Bourgeois Press

In recent times, the bourgeois press has launched a virulent campaign against the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Stories about the Party are being fabricated, particularly in several Calcutta dailies.

There is nothing new, however, in such campaigns by the ruling classes and their mass communication media against a Communist party, in their discoveries concerning the loss of strength and direction of a Communist party, in forecasts that it is about to disintegrate. Such discoveries and the seemingly knowledgeable analyses which accompany them, are all the more pronounced when the party concerned stands firmly to challenge the policies of the ruling classes and their parties.

Comrade Promode Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) and secretary of its West Bengal State Committee made this observation while commenting on the series of reports and 'inside stories' about the CPI(M) in a section of the bourgeois press.

Comrade Dasgupta, in an interview with the Party's Bengali daily, GANASHAKTI (published June 24) said that the bourgeois press has often changed its tactics to malign the CPI(M). One such change came after the 1972 elections in West Bengal, when the bourgeois newspapers were out to prove that the Party was failing in its role of organizing and leading mass movements.

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, July 4, 1976.

But the four general strikes in the State between July 1973 and June 1975, the mass movements in the districts on the issues of food, prices etc., the countrywide protest action on May 3, 1974, and some glorious working class actions in 1974 and 1975 called the bluff. Then the tactics of these newspapers shifted to one of circulating stories on serious dissensions within our Party.

When, in the present circumstances, we cannot say openly all that we would like to, such stories on controversies and dissent have been blown to such proportions as would apparently make out that the Party is disintegrating.

In this campaign of slander and fabrication, the Right Communists have fallen in step with the ruling classes. They have been discovering in recent months so many defections from our Party and so many dissenting groups within it! Their idea is to prove that our very existence is at stake.

It was never suggested, Comrade Dasgupta asserted, that there will be no ideological debate within the Party. In fact, such debate adds vitality to a party. Our Party is primarily a party of the working class and we follow Marxist-Leninist organizational principles, he added. As the Party has come face to face with the different problems in different situations, different questions have also come up. Answers to these were found out through debates and discussions. This is the correct method laid down by the science of Marxism-Leninism. Debates within the Party are not against its interests, and those who raise questions are not all anti-party elements.

The Issues

The themes chosen by the bourgeois press to villify the CPI(M) were, according to Comrade Dasgupta :

(i) the Party is leaning more and more towards the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, (ii) there are serious differences in the Party on the question of participation in elections, (iii) the Party is in the midst of a heated controversy on united front tactics and the shape of united mass

movements, and (iv) the Party has failed to chart a programme of action, leading to despondency and frustration among the cadres.

Relations with CPSU and CPC

On the issue of our relations with the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and China, the CPI(M) stand is clear and unequivocal. The Party holds both the Soviet Union and China to be great Socialist countries. The achievements of both prove the supremacy of the Socialist system. But we think, Comrade Dasgupta said, that both the CPSU and the CPC leaderships have deviated from the path of proletarian internationalism and have failed to play their vanguard roles in the cause of world revolution.

The Right revisionist line of the CPSU leadership and the Left sectarian line of the CPC leadership are both equally harmful for world revolution and for us. We consider that both the deviations carry equal danger. Comrade Dasgupta affirmed that the CPI(M) had reached this conclusion after prolonged discussions. So, it is absolutely wrong to suggest that the Party is disunited on this issue, or is swinging closer to the Soviet Union.

The CPI(M) is ever willing to learn from the revolutionary experiences of both the Soviet and Chinese Parties, and to apply such lessons in practice, keeping in view the objective and historical conditions in our own country.

The CPI(M) would continue to work for world Communist unity on the basis of a correct application of the science of Marxism-Leninism, of proletarian internationalism, and would appeal to both the CPSU and the CPC to join in and lead such efforts. At the same time we would continue to criticize all their views and activities in relation to our task of bringing the incomplete revolution in India to a successful conclusion and of establishing Socialism in our country whenever such views and activities militate against the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and reflect a failure to assess correctly the Indian situation and the tasks of the revolutionary

forces here. This has to be done, Comrade Dasgupta said, in the interests of the Indian revolution.

On Participation in Elections

The first assertion made by Comrade Dasgupta on this issue was the Party had never boycotted elections. It is well-known, he added, why we kept away from the State Assembly and the by-elections in West Bengal after the 1972 experiences. We do not think there has been any improvement in the conditions. Such conditions, however, were confined to West Bengal till May 1975. Now the environment and the situation in the whole country is such that we have to think afresh if we can take part in elections in the other States as well, Comrade Dasgupta concluded.

United Front and United Movement

The problems of united front and united movements are of great significance, and are diverse and complex. A united front and a united movement are not one and the same thing.

United movements can be built up in different circumstances and on different class and mass issues. In such movements broader sections of the people and many parties may come together. For example, for civil liberties and on various economic demands, we have organized and taken part in united movements with many parties, and intend to do so in future. In these movements, forces ranging from the Left to the Right may be involved.

The question of pursuing united front tactics is, however, completely different. Here a minimum agreed programme against the main enemy is essential. There can be no united front without such a programme. The present stage of the Indian revolution is the people's democratic stage and the main enemies of the Indian people are feudalism, monopoly capitalism and imperialism. Any united front against these enemies, on the basis of a common minimum programme, is bound to be a Left and democratic front. Rightist parties cannot have any place on this front, for they cannot agree to its programme.

The programme of the Left and democratic front may have immediate and long-term objectives. The immediate objectives can have no contradiction with the long-term aims. On the other hand, the former must reinforce and facilitate the latter.

Some people have asked if there is any possibility of our Party forging a united front with the Right C.P. Replying to this point, Comrade Dasgupta said that the possibility of united movements with them can always be seen, but the two parties must agree on the issues involved. For instance, there cannot be any united movement with the Right C.P. on the issue of constitutional changes.

But in the present situation, there cannot be any united front with the Right C.P., so long as they do not give up their class collaborationist line and their policy of close alliance with the ruling Congress party.

On Mass Movements

A charge that the bourgeois newspapers repeat, in order to divert and confuse the people, is that we are not taking up a programme of mass movements. Comrade Dasgupta strongly denied this allegation, and said the bourgeois campaign on so-called frustration in our ranks is motivated and not based on reality.

Movements in the forms of meetings, big rallies, processions, are surely not evident now. Does it mean that all class and mass actions have dried up? Comrade Dasgupta referred to the continuing actions by kisans, bargadars and agricultural workers in the villages, the very broad-based united actions by the working class on the bonus issue, the glorious strike conducted by Bata workers unitedly for 39 days, the observance of May Day on an unprecedentedly wide scale in difficult circumstances. The working people are not sitting back. They are trying to forge unity and move ahead. Their efforts in the present situation must not be measured in terms of old concepts of forms of struggle. In the changed situation, new forms of struggle have to be

adopted. This is a difficult task which requires caution, alertness and hard work.

Such difficult tasks are nothing new for Communists, or beyond their capabilities. In different countries Communists have faced up to and tackled such difficult tasks in more difficult situations. We know, Comrade Dasgupta concluded, that we shall have to pass through more trying circumstances. But we are not afraid, for there is no place for despondency, hesitation and fear in the life of Communists.

Appendix-XVI

Alert the People to Congress Rigging Tactics*

Jyoti Basu

The election to the Sixth Lok Sabha, polling for which begins on March 16, is on many counts qualitatively different from the five elections that have gone before.

Thirty years of Congress misrule which made the rich richer and the poor poorer was climaxed with the Internal Emergency that was imposed on June 25, 1975, on top of the External Emergency that has been continuing since 1971.

Balance Sheet of Emergency

At one stroke all civil liberties and democratic rights of the people were abrogated. Political opponents of the Congress party as also critics of Smt. Indira Gandhi inside the Congress party were put behind the bars without trial. The Press was placed under the heaviest censorship it had ever experienced. The period of the Emergency was used to enact obnoxious laws and tamper with the most vital provisions of the Constitution with the sole purpose of strengthening the one-party dictatorship of the Congress party and the personal dictatorship of Smt. Indira Gandhi.

It was again in this period that Sanjay Gandhi, a mere nobody without any responsible position either in the Government of the country or the higher echelons of the ruling party, was built with the help of the entire State machinery and the powerful backing of the Prime Minister to become No. 2 in the ruling party and the administration

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, March 13, 1977.

of the country. It was under his patronage and with the blessings of Smt. Gandhi that the Indian people were rounded up like cattle and forcibly sterilized and bulldozers razed to the ground the hutments of the urban poor. Congress Chief Ministers who enjoyed majority support in the Legislature parties and Pradesh Congress Presidents and Committees which did not dance to the tune of Sanjay Gandhi were unceremoniously thrown out and replaced with pliable puppets. Not a word of all this could appear in the heavily censored Press, all that could be printed was the "controlled" news circulated by *Samachar* which is being run as another Government medium along with AIR, Television and the Films Division.

All sections of the people except the handful who were benefited by the authoritarian regime, traditional Congressmen themselves were finding it difficult to breathe in this suffocating atmosphere.

The conviction was already growing in the country that Smt. Gandhi's party had to be defeated if democracy and freedom were to be restored to the people, more and more people were beginning to feel the need for safeguards to prevent any Prime Minister from ever again plunging the country into the dark days of another Emergency.

It is this overwhelming feeling of the people that has found expression in what has been called the "anti-Congress wave" sweeping the country since Smt. Gandhi's announcement on January 18 of the Lok Sabha elections.

For Democracy, Defeat Congress

The conditions under which this election is being held are also different, in none of the five previous elections did the Opposition face such a situation. The Emergency has still not been lifted, thousands are still under detention while fresh arrests are being made in various parts of the country, the Press continues to be shackled by the repugnant Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Act. In fact, on the morrow of the elections, if by any chance

Smt. Gandhi wins, the Emergency will be back again in its full horror.

The imperative in this situation is to defeat Smt. Gandhi's party and reduce it to a minority in the Sixth Lok Sabha. That is the only way democracy and the freedoms of the people can be protected and preserved.

What is different again is that for the first time in thirty years of freedom, there is a distinct possibility of replacing Congress rule at the Centre by a non-Congress Government.

Smt. Gandhi's calculation when she called the snap election was that with the Opposition in disarray, with the people held in the thrall of fear, her party would win and she would be able to legitimize her totalitarian regime.

Upsetting all her calculations the Congress (O), BLD, Jana Sangh and the Socialist Party have come together in the Janata Party; Jagjivan Ram, Bahuguna, Nandini Satpathy, Vijaya Laxmi Pandit and others have walked out of the Congress demanding lifting of the Emergency and formed the Congress For Democracy which continues to draw into its fold Congressmen from the ruling party. The biggest blow to Smt. Gandhi's ambitions was struck when the CFD, the Janata Party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and its allies, and the Akalis and the DMK, realizing that the supreme task of the hour is to restore and defend democracy from the onslaughts of an unscrupulous dictatorship reached agreement on seat adjustments between themselves, minimizing to the utmost the division of the Opposition votes in the country. The Congress which has always come to power on the basis of a minority vote has been denied that facility in this election. This and the intense anti-Congress, and even more, the anti-Emergency, feeling in the people are the guarantee of a Congress defeat in the mid-March election.

But it will be the height of folly to think that the Congress defeat will come out of a spontaneous, automatic process. Experience of the past belies any such complacency.

Experience Of 1972

In 1972, the CPI(M) had the bitter experience of the Congress rigging the State Assembly elections in West Bengal. That rigging was not confined to just manipulation of ballot papers. Violence marked the entire Congress campaign. Armed hoodlums, with the backing of the CRP committed murders of CPI(M) cadre with impunity, threw 20,000 of them out of their areas, and on polling day, captured polling booths at the point of guns and knives threatened polling officers, polling agents and the voters and filled the boxes with ballot papers stamped in favour of the Congress. It was an election which reeked with the smell of gun powder.

Same Tactics Again

A number of incidents in the last few days rouse the apprehension that the Congress, unwilling to accept the democratic verdict of the people, will resort to the same type of tactics once again.

To cite only a few of these incidents:

—On March 1, goondas attacked Salil Ganguly a former CPI(M) member of the Rajya Sabha, in his residence in Calcutta. On the same day, the house of Tarakeswar Tewary, Secretary of the Texmaco Workers' Union (CITU) was raided.

—The next day, a meeting of CPI(M) and Janata Party workers near Subhasgram Railway Station in the South Calcutta constituency was attacked. Intelligence Branch agents went round colleges to collect the names of teachers joining a demonstration organized by the West Bengal College and University Teachers Association. A CPI(M) worker carrying posters for the Bolpur constituency was attacked in Guskara Railway Station and 6000 posters were burnt.

—On March 4, CPI(M) candidate in the Katwa constituency, Mansoor Habibullah, was given notice that he would be killed if he did not leave Kalna. The driver of his jeep was threatened and he had to abandon the jeep.

—Election offices have not been allowed to be opened in

a number of localities where tens of thousands of voters live, workers putting up posters have been intimidated.

A number of such incidents had been brought to the notice of the Chief Minister in a written communication. But he dismissed them as either totally incorrect or grossly exaggerated. It was this nakedly partisan and provocative attitude of the Chief Minister that, to a great extent, was responsible for the major incident on March 6 in which the Janata Party candidate in South Calcutta, Dilip Chakravarty, the CPI(M) candidate in Jadavpur, Somnath Chatterjee, and other CPI(M) leaders like Prasanta Sur and Asok Bose were attacked by Congress hoodlums while they were addressing street-corner meetings in Jadavpur. Dilip Chakravarty was seriously injured in his head and has since been in hospital. All those arrested so far in connection with the incident are known Congressmen of the locality—though the real culprits, some of whom belong to the Right Communist Party, have not been apprehended, and the terror in which they hold the area can be seen from the statement of the official security agent travelling with Dilip Chakravarty that when he went to a medicine shop for help, the shop-owner refused saying his shop would be looted later if he gave any help.

The same day, a meeting addressed by Janata Party leader P.C. Sen was disturbed in Beliaghata (Calcutta) and another meeting addressed by CPI(M) leader Promode Dasgupta in Garden Reach was disrupted by hoodlums cutting electricity and microphone wires twice during the course of a few minutes. Later, in Shujapur in the Malda constituency from where Union Minister Pranab Mukherjee is contesting, CPI(M) campaigners were attacked and two of them were injured.

In the Diamond Harbour constituency from which CPI(M) candidate Joytirmay Bosu is contesting, after Smt. Gandhi's specific instruction to West Bengal Congress leaders that he should be defeated at any cost, armed gangs of the Congress are roaming the constituency disturbing election meetings and obstructing the CPI(M)'s campaign.

In the days before polling more and more such efforts are likely to be made by the Congress and the administration run by it to obstruct the campaign of the Opposition candidates and to terrorize the voters. The people have to be alerted to the possibility of rigging of all kinds, gangsterism, capturing of polling booths and so on which may be resorted to by the hirelings of the ruling party.

But 1977 Is Not 1972

But 1977 is not 1972. In 1972, West Bengal was alone and in West Bengal, too, the CPI(M) had to single-handedly face the brunt of the Congress and official violence. Today West Bengal is not alone, the battle in West Bengal is part of the battle for democracy in the whole country. Today it is not the CPI(M) alone, but the entire Opposition, and not only the Opposition but also many who are in the Congress, who are facing the ruling party and its undemocratic tactics. What is more, the wrath of the people, their disillusionment with the ruling party, their urge to regain their democratic rights have never been so pronounced as today.

With the people alerted to the dangers and made ready to face them, any tactics that the Congress and its administration resort to can be faced and defeated—the hands of the hoodlums and hirelings can be stayed. The first battle in the struggle for democracy is on the polling day itself—with the people asserting the right of the electorate to freely exercise its franchise without intimidation and terror. That will ensure the trouncing of Smt. Gandhi's party, that will open the path for brighter days for the people who with their democratic rights regained will carry on the struggle for the social transformations they so ardently desire.

Appendix-XVII

AKG Memorial Committee Formed in Delhi*

An A.K.Gopalan Memorial Fund Committee was set up in Delhi with Union Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram as President at a meeting held on July 29, 1977. The meeting presided over by Kerala RSP M.P. N. Srikantan Nair was attended by members of Parliament and leaders of various political parties and prominent personalities from various walks of life.

The CPI(M) General Secretary E.M.S. Namboodiripad welcoming the gathering, explained the purpose of the Committee. Members of Parliament Z.A. Ahmed, Vayalar Ravi and Samar Mukherjee and Aruna Asaf Ali and Janata Party leader Surendra Mohan spoke—supporting the proposal to set up the Committee.

Apart from President Jagjivan Ram and Secretary, Prakash Karat, the Committee consists of :

Aruna Asaf Ali, Madhu Limaye, Rabi Ray, Surendra Mohan, Ram Dhan, H.V. Kamath, P.G. Mavlankar, Samar Mukherjee, P. K. Kunjachan, Ahilya Rangnekar, Chitta Basu, Tridib Chaudhury, N. Srikantan Nair, M.N. Govindan Nair, Z. A. Ahmed, C. K. Chandrappan, Vayalar Ravi, K.P. Unnikrishnan, Sudheeran, Kadnapally Ramchandran, Ranbir Singh, Abid Ali Shardnath, Abdullah Koya, Danial Latifi, Bimla Prasad, K. P. Karunakaran, Edatata Narayanan, Nikhil Chakravarty, C. Raghavan, A. Raghavan, V. P. Ramachandran, C. P. Ramachandran,

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, August 7, 1977.

Madhavan Kutty, Shenoy, Jaipal Singh, Zahoor Siddiqui, J. Roy, Narikutty Mohan, B. K. Paliwal, Sitaram Yehchuri, V. C. Koshy, and P. N. Singh.

The Committee will function from 14 Vithalbhai Patel House, Rafi Marg, New Delhi-110001, and all communications should be addressed to the Secretary.

Appendix-XVIII

Hold Election In Tripura Now*

Promode Dasgupta

Welcoming the formation of the CPI(M)–CFD coalition government in Tripura, Comrade Promode Dasgupta, member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), said in Calcutta on April 4, 1977, that the immediate task of the new ministry in Tripura should be to hold fresh election to the State Assembly. "Our Party has joined the coalition ministry with a view to ensuring free and fair election to the State Assembly", he commented.

Comrade Dasgupta replied to allegations in some quarters that the CPI(M) has joined the ministry in the company of defectors. This is not a correct assessment of the situation. Those who have joined the Congress for Democracy in Tripura had decided to leave the Congress long ago, not only before the CFD was born, but even before the internal Emergency had been proclaimed. A number of dissident Congress MLAs had been opposing the Congress ministry led by Sukhamoy Sengupta for a fairly long time before the Emergency was imposed. Congress had then been reduced to minority in the State Assembly and had no right to continue in office.

In 1975, the Congress ministry was faced with certain defeat in the budget session of the State Assembly. To forestall the defeat, most of the CPI(M) members of the State Assembly were detained under MISA along with a number of dissident Congress MLAs, and an artificial working majority

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, April 10, 1977.

for the Congress was created. Thus, the Congress ministry had been living on borrowed time during the entire period of the Emergency. Had not the blatant undemocratic steps against the elected representatives of the people been taken, the Congress ministry would have fallen in 1975 itself, before the imposition of the internal Emergency.

"The new government in Tripura is only an interim one, whose prime task is to hold election to the State Assembly", Comrade Dasgupta emphasized. The government, in order to ensure free and fair election, must release all political prisoners, remove the undemocratic and repressive measures undertaken by the previous government, exert itself to the limits of its power to restore the freedoms and rights of the people, and undo the crimes committed against the people by the Congress during the period of the Emergency. Meanwhile, it will seek to provide some relief to the people on the economic front.

Appendix-XIX

Dissolve Assembly, Release Prisoners in West Bengal*

Joint Statement of Left Parties in West Bengal

Jyoti Basu (CPI-M), Ashok Ghose (F.B.), Makhan Paul (R.S.P.), Sudhin Kumar (RCPI), Suhrid Mullick Choudhury (MFB) and Ashish Bhattacharjee (BBC) have issued the following statement on April 6, 1977:

We are of the firm view that the West Bengal Ministry must immediately resign and the Assembly should be dissolved. The mandate for the present Assembly which came into existence in 1972, through rigged elections, has already expired and a massive verdict of the people has been registered against the Congress party and the 42nd Amendment Act through which its life has been extended to six years. It is urgently necessary to impose President's rule for a brief spell in order to hold elections by June 1977. There is great resentment against the present Voters' List wherein large numbers of non-existent voters have been included and lakhs of genuine voters excluded. Hence an opportunity must be given to the electorate and the political parties to correct the list.

In the changed situation after the elections, reports are pouring in that many corrupt and discredited individuals, oppressors of the people and anti-social elements are trying to find shelter in different political parties and thereby wash off their sins. This is a matter of grave concern for the people and the Left parties are pledged to defeat these attempts.

We are confident that all political parties drawing a lesson from past experience will abide by strict norms in

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, April 17, 1977.

admitting such individuals and groups and respect the clearly expressed desire of the people.

We consider it of the utmost importance that the unity between the Janata Party, CFD and the Leftist parties must be maintained and strengthened in order to inflict a crushing defeat on the Congress in the Assembly Elections and provide an alternative Government in the State to carry out a minimum programme.

We urge upon the Government in view of the changed political situation to declare immediately a general amnesty and release all political prisoners, detained without trial, convicted and undertrial.

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Appendix-XX

Dismiss the Andhra Pradesh Government*

Demand made by the Secretariat of Andhra Pradesh State Committee of CPI(M)

The Secretariat of the Andhra Pradesh State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has in a resolution urged upon the Government of India to take urgent steps to dismiss the Andhra Pradesh Government and set up an enquiry commission as suggested by the Tarkunde Committee in regard to the police atrocities and killings that had taken place in the state.

The Secretariat feels that the Union Home Minister Sri Charan Singh's statement in Parliament on this question and the Chief Minister's acceptance of the proposal to appoint a judicial commission, do not at all meet the needs of the situation. The State Government and, at its instance, some of the police officers, degraded themselves to the extent of disregarding all human values and laws of the land in torturing and massacring politicals in the State both before and after the declaration of Emergency. Sri Vengala Rao has been mainly responsible for such heinous crimes against our youth as Home Minister in the former Congress Government and as Chief Minister of the present one.

Hence the suggestion to hold an enquiry while he continues to be in office is tantamount to an eyewash. A commission appointed by the Ministry which itself is an accused in the case is bound to face many a hurdle in discharging its duties impartially and freely. While the terrorized people cannot come forward to speak out freely, the man responsible

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, June 26, 1977.

for such tragic events will have complete freedom to tamper with the records and hush up things. Therefore the State Secretariat of the CPI(M) demands that the State Government be dismissed forthwith and an enquiry be held.

In this context the Secretariat urges upon the Central Government to take immediate steps to scrap the MISA, declare a general amnesty for all political prisoners, withdraw cases and warrants pending against such politicals, and for the denotification of Disturbed Areas in Andhra Pradesh.

The Secretariat appeals to all Left and democratic parties and forces and progressive individuals to come together to raise their powerful voice unitedly for these demands.

It fully supports the call for the observation of June 26, 1977, as "Civil Liberties Day" jointly by the "People's Union of Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights" and "A.P. Civil Liberties Committee".

The Secretariat directs all its units to take this political campaign as their foremost task and do the needful.

Appendix-XXI

Danger Signals*

E.M.S. Namboodiripad

It will be useful to recall that on assuming office as Prime Minister, Morarji Desai asked a mass rally in Delhi that the people should "box his ears" when he goes wrong.

At about the same time, Jaya Prakash Narayan, the recognized adviser of the Janata Party on basic policy matters, suggested that People's Vigilance Committees should be formed at all levels to correct the Government whenever it went wrong.

The eight-month-long rule of the Janata Party and its Government, headed by Morarji Desai, makes it necessary for the people, who hailed the new Government's assumption of office as the opening of a new chapter in their history, to recall these two significant pronouncements of the two leaders and do something to rectify the wrongs committed by the Government in some directions.

For, unless a vigilant public exercises its pressure on the ruling party and the Government, there is every danger that the anti-authoritarian essence of the Janata Party will get slowly eroded. If that happens, it will be the beginning of a slide-back to the same authoritarian regime from which the Janata Party, together with its allies, led the people back to freedom and democracy.

Let us confine ourselves to one of the most recent developments in the post-election political situation in the country—the new respectability that is being given to the old discredited

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, December 4, 1977.

policy of keeping political workers in detention without trial. First in Janata-ruled Madhya Pradesh and then in the National Conference-led Jammu and Kashmir, the respective Governments reintroduced the hated MISA in new forms.

We are not at present concerned with the differences in the detailed provisions of what is called the "mini-MISA" of Madhya Pradesh and its equally, if not more, rigorous counterpart in Jammu and Kashmir. What is important is that the principle of detention without trial against which the Janata along with other Opposition parties carried on a crusade is being reintroduced.

The Jammu and Kashmir Ordinance also adds some provisions which make serious erosions into the freedom of the Press. That such legislations should be reintroduced in two States whose Governmental leaderships are of two different political complexions but who were both victims of the MISA, is the first warning of the danger facing the nation.

It was good to see that many Janata leaders, including no less a person than its President Chandra Sekhar, came out against the mini-MISA of Madhya Pradesh. It was also good that some leaders of the Central Government expressed their concern at the J. & K. Ordinance. As opposed to these, however, is the defence of the mini-MISA made by the Prime Minister in his Lok Sabha speech. He is reported to have said that there cannot be absolute freedom.

This, let us recall, was the starting point of the inclined path along which the Congress Party and its Government took the country into the dark days of the Emergency.

Preventive Detention Act

Forgetting all that they had said and done against detention without trial when it was resorted to by the British rulers, the new Congress rulers reintroduced the old legislation under the new name of Preventive Detention Act. While framing the democratic and republican Constitution, too, they put such limits on the freedom of the citizens as to enable the State to make laws providing for Preventive Detention.

This latter was claimed to be only an enabling provision not to be used in an irresponsible manner. As for the Preventive Detention Act, the plea was that it would be purely temporary, to be repealed the moment the law and order situation came back to normal. Furthermore, assurances were given that all the necessary guarantees would be made in the Act itself that the provision would not be misused.

Ritual Practice

Everyone of these assurances, justifications and promises was broke in actual practice. The so-called "temporary" Preventive Detention Act remained on the Statute Book for the whole thirty-year period of Congress rule (except for a shortwhile when the new political climate created after the 1967 electoral defeat of the Congress oblige it to cancel it). The notorious MISA is incidentally the successor of the Preventive Detention Act which had to be repealed in the post-1967 political situation.

It is on record, too, that the provisions of the Act were used against the democratic Opposition and such fighting organizations of the working people as would not take the bourgeois-landlord classes and their attacks on the people lying down.

The Same Argument

Throughout this period when the draconian provisions of the P.D. Act and the MISA were used, and subsequently when the universally condemned "internal Emergency" was proclaimed, the argument advanced in their defence by the leaders of the Congress Party was exactly what Morarji Desai is advancing now—that freedom is not absolute. The freedom of anti-national, unpatriotic and disruptive elements should necessarily be curbed in the very interests of the freedom of the rest of the nation—this justifies the proclamation of the Emergency.

It is regrettable that the Prime Minister mixes up the specific question of absolute ban on detention without trial

with the general question of the absolute or relative character of individual freedom.

What is Objectionable

Nobody can or will challenge the right of society acting through the State to abridge the freedom of the individual in the common interests of society. That is the rationale behind the legal provisions in the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code directed against murder, theft, cheating, smuggling and other crimes against society or against other individuals.

Those who are opposed to the mini-MISA or similar legislations providing for detention without trial are not pleading for absolute freedom in the sense of freedom for these anti-social criminal individuals or gangs to indulge in crime. What they object to is such legislation as arms the Executive to bypass the normal procedure of the law, of the accused being given specific charges and permitted to answer the charge in a fair trial, to arrest people and keep them indefinitely behind the bars.

Danger of Such Powers

Morarji Desai and his colleagues of the Janata Government at the Centre as well as the Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir Ministers have themselves been victims of preventive detention. Sheikh Abdullah, in fact, had to spend the major part of the 24 years since he was thrown out of the Prime Ministership of Jammu and Kashmir State in 1953, in jail either without any charge being levelled against him or with frivolous charges which did not stand before any court of law and had therefore to be withdrawn. It should therefore be clear to them that arming the Executive authorities with the right to put people behind the bars without making any specific charges against them and bringing them to trial would be as dangerous in the future as it has been in the past.

What happened during the Congress regime culminating in the dark days of Emergency is not the result merely of

the viciousness of particular individuals, though of course the character of the individuals did undoubtedly play an important part in shaping the actual developments. The authoritarianism which developed over the years and culminated in the Emergency regime (whose viciousness including the use of the MISA) is being revealed day after day is the culminating point of the process which began in the early years of Congress rule. Is there any guarantee that the present and future rulers will in any way be better than the Congress rulers of the past?

People's Struggles

As a matter of fact, both the economic and political situation in the country is such that if the Executive authorities are armed with the powers to detain people without trial, to put curbs on the freedom of the Press, etc., they will be abused in the same manner in which they were abused by the Congress rulers.

For, the economic situation in the country is such that the working people are being forced to resort to what is called an "agitational approach". Workers in the factories and mills, employees in the offices, teachers and other professionals, peasants and agricultural labourers, students and youth, women, backward and minority communities—all are forced to resort to direct action of one or another type.

Suppression of Movements

It was to meet such a situation, to deal with the strike of the Electricity Board employees, that the Janata-led Government of Madhya Pradesh proposed to introduce the mini-MISA. The leaders of the Janata Party and several others are today talking of "indiscipline" growing in the country, the need to reintroduce discipline, etc.

The theory of the citizens having no absolute freedom can therefore lead to the suppression of the movements and struggles of these sections of the people, even if the Prime Minister does not personally intend it that way.

Coming to the political situation in the country, let us note the tensions that are building up both in the relations between the ruling and the Opposition parties, as well as within the two major political parties in the country.

Situation in Parties

The circumstances under which the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister is being made to bow out of office, the development of similar movements to make some other Chief Ministers follow suit, etc., are indications that all is not well with the ruling party. Arming the Executive authorities with the power to deal as they like with the freedom of the citizens might, under these circumstances, lead to not only the erosion of the right of the non-ruling parties but to attacks on the non-ruling groups within the ruling party itself.

Let us note further that the same is true of the internal situation in the Congress Party. The sharp conflicts among the various groups inside the Congress in several States have led to accusations that the ruling groups in the States where the Congress is the ruling party are using the administrative power at their disposal, to cow down their opponents.

Illustrative of this is the public accusation made by the defeated candidate in the keenly contested election to the post of President of the Kerala PCC, C.M. Stephen, that the Antony group used its administrative power to intimidate those members of the PCC who wanted to vote for him (Stephen).

Reverse the Trend

The theory of "freedom being not absolute" would under the multi-party system emerging in the country, end with the same if not worse authoritarianism than the Emergency.

The Janata Party is committed to action which includes the repeal of the MISA and the restoration of the civil liberties and democratic rights of the people which had been taken away by the former Government. The mini-MISA of

Madhya Pradesh and its defence by the Prime Minister is contrary to that commitment. This, therefore, is a fit case in which the people should intervene. If the trend is not reversed right now, there is every danger that it will develop and devour freedom and democracy.

Appendix-XXII

Right C.P.'s Vijayawada Congress The Dirge for Its Opposition Role*

M. Basavapunnaiah

The Right Communist jamboree at Vijayawada which lasted for a week between January 27 and February 2, 1975, ended with the big fanfare of a demonstration and a mass rally. Some ten special trains and a thousand lorries and special buses were pressed into service to collect the people for the demonstration and rally. It is being tomtommed that as big a sum as Rs. 20 lakhs was collected and most of it was spent. The style and the manner in which the whole show was organized go to show that the Right C.P. leaders were feeling that they had already won "power", and what they were celebrating was a "Victory Day", in the style of any ruling Communist Party in a Socialist country.

New Admirers

The Right C.P. leaders and their Press were boasting that when they approached the public for donations many new donors had come forth to pay them five, ten and twenty thousand rupees, at the mere asking. But they don't ask themselves who these new admirers of the Right C.P. are, and why so many from the big-"bracket" have rallied to the Right C.P. which is out to "destroy" monopolists, capitalists, landlords and every other exploiter on earth.

When some critics point out that they have become the docile tools of the ruling Congress party and the Government, virtually acting as a part of the Establishment, they

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, February 16, 1975.

retort that it is not the Right C.P. that is dependent upon th Congress Party either for their perpetuation of their party nominee as the Chief Minister of Kerala or for securin some seats in different Legislatures and Parliament with th aid of the ruling Congress party, but that it is the Congre party and the Central Government that are dependent on it support in Kerala, Orissa, West Bengal, U.P., Bihar and severa other places.

The leaders of the Right C.P. go a step further and openly brag that they are instrumental in forging the bonds of close friendship between the Socialist Government of the USSR and the bourgeois-landlord Government of the Indian Union. They boast that they are also instrumental in securing the desperately needed Soviet aid to bale out the crisis-ridden Indian capitalist economy—the aid that is playing no small role in strengthening the tottering bourgeois-landlord Congress regime.

Soviet Stamp

As though to confirm such assertions of the Right C.P. leadership, the leader of the Soviet delegation to the Tenth Congress of the Right C.P. declared: "The Communists and the entire people of the Soviet Union know well and highly appreciate the immense role played by the members of your party and its leadership in strengthening and developing Soviet-Indian friendship and co-operation. As you know, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, last year, conferred the Order of Lenin, the highest order in the Soviet Union, on Comrades Dange and Rajeswara Rao. This award is the recognition of their services to the world Communist, working class and national liberation movement and of their outstanding contribution to strengthening Soviet-Indian friendship".

If it is in recognition of the services rendered by the Right C.P. leaders towards Indo-Soviet friendship and co-operation that Dange and Rajeswara Rao are awarded the Order of Lenin, then that is a matter of judgement by the Soviet leaders and it is in their discretion. No one who

supports good and friendly relations between India and the Soviet Union needs grudge or resent that. In reality the award is for something more, namely, the abandoning of the role of revolutionary opposition to the bourgeois-landlord Congress party and for forging a united front with the ruling Congress party and forming a united front Government against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and its Left and democratic allies.

Sharaf Rashidovich Rashidov head of the delegation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Tenth Congress of the Right C.P. openly lauds the class collaborationist and treacherous role of the Right C.P., saying, "This is the fifth year that a Government of the united front—consisting of representatives of the Communist Party of India, the Indian National Congress and other democratic parties, and headed by Comrade Achutha Menon, a prominent figure in your party—has been working successfully in the State of Kerala, and it has been able to carry out a number of important changes in the State, and to effect a progressive agrarian reform."

Treacherous Path

Such is the path charted out for the Indian revolution by the Soviet leaders and this is the treacherous path which is being proclaimed by the Right C.P. Congress as the Kerala path and Kerala way, to be extended to States wherever it is possible and to the Centre whenever the ruling Congress provides a seat or two in the Central Cabinet to the representatives of the Right C.P.

The leader of the Soviet delegation has also announced his party's and Government's approval of the totally opportunist concept of Left and democratic front which is being advocated and built by the Right C.P. leaders in India. With a pseudo-revolutionary pose, he declared, "Indian Communists are playing an active role in defending the democratic gains of the people of India against the onslaught of Right-wing reaction and pro-imperialist circles". He added, "the course charted by your party to attain a firm unity of all

democratic forces and to co-operate with the country's Le democratic and patriotic circles, is highly important".

May we know from this Soviet worthy which are t parties and groups which represent "Right-wing reaction a pro-imperialist circles" in Kerala and on whom they hav launched their "onslaught", against which the so-calle Government is fighting ?

Most of such Right-wing reaction and pro-imperialist force in Kerala are rallied either behind the ruling Congress or th Coalition Government and hardly any such force exists outsid This Front Government is fighting none but the powerfu Marxist Party and its allies, and the struggles of the work ers, peasants, youth, students and women that are being conducted by the Marxists and their allies.

Thus the Kerala Path stands exposed as a naked anti- Marxist path, a pro-ruling Congress party path and a path of open class collaboration and treachery tc the working class— a path of police and goonda terror against the common people and their struggles.

It is tragic that this is sought to be justified as a path for the building of India-Soviet friendship and co-operation, as the path of peace and progress against imperialism and U.S. imperialism in particular. Any criticism and opposition to this so-called Kerala path is being labelled and dubbed as anti-Sovietism, extreme Left-sectarianism, adventurism and what not.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), certainly, is of the firm view that this path of the Right C.P. is nothing but one of subordinating and sacrificing the interests of the Indian revolutionary movement to the temporary expediency of Soviet foreign policy; and it is nothing but joining a united front with the bourgeois-landlord Government under the false pretext of strengthening the friendship between the Indian Government and the Soviet Government.

Deadly Imitation

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union or for that matter any ruling Communist Party has every obligation and duty

first and foremost, to support the revolutionary working class and national liberation movement in every country, and also to forge friendly relations with as many Governments and countries as possible, in the cause of peace, progress, Socialism and against imperialism—no matter whether they are bourgeois Governments, bourgeois-landlord Governments of the newly independent countries or even developed capitalist States under certain circumstances.

But the Communist Parties which are still struggling for power, if they stupidly imitate the tactics of the ruling Communist Parties, end up in opportunism and betrayal of the revolutionary movement—under high-flown phrases of proletarian internationalism, peace, support of the Soviet Union, world Communism and so on. This is exactly what the Right C.P. is doing and what the Soviet leaders are supporting and encouraging.

The CPI(M) does not believe in this type of spurious proletarian internationalism—the "proletarian internationalism" that demands the crassest collaboration with one's bourgeois-landlord classes. Such spurious labels pass off as "genuine" in our times, the time as aptly described by Lenin once, "this is not at all surprising in this day of words forgotten, promises lost, philosophies overthrown, and resolutions and solemn promises discarded".

A Page from History

The CPI(M) draws its inspiration from a different type of proletarian internationalism. In the early 40's of this century a Mutual Aid Pact was concluded between the USSR and France, and it was accompanied by a declaration of Stalin who expressed "complete understanding and approval of the policy of national defence pursued by France for maintaining its armed forces at the level corresponding to the needs of its security."

But the French Communist Party then refused to vote for the military budget and continued its fight against the French bourgeois Government and issued the following statement:

"Gentlemen, you have signed a pact, a limited pact with the working class of the Soviet Union that has the power in its hands, but you have not signed any pact with the working class of our country, with us. We have no guarantee that you will not utilize your army, which continues to be a class army, against the working class of our country and against the colonial peoples, our allies in the struggle against imperialism. We have no guarantee at all that you will not make the poor, and not the rich, pay the necessary expenses for the organization of your army. We have no control over the manner in which your class Government and your reactionary and fascist General Staff will spend the money that you take from the poor in order to pay for the organization of the army. We have not even any guarantee when the decisive moment arrives, you will remain loyal to the pact that you are signing today.

"*For all these reasons, gentlemen, we can neither vote your military budget nor give up struggle against your Government.* But please note that this does not mean that we have no interest in the pact that you have concluded with the Soviet Union or that we are indifferent to the manner in which you give effect to it. We know that in your ranks there are those who are against this pact, that there exists a section of the bourgeoisie who would like to tear it up. We, indeed, will defend the pact with all our strength because it is an instrument in the struggle for peace and for the defence of the Soviet Union. We shall vote for the pact in Parliament and we shall expose any attempt to pursue a policy which is different from or in contradiction to the obligations ensuing from the pact." (Emphasis added).

The French Communist Party did support the Mutual Aid Pact between the USSR and France, but voted against the defence budget and openly declared its opposition to the French bourgeois Government unlike our Right C.P. leaders of today who have not only abandoned their role of revolutionary opposition to the bourgeois-landlord Government of India but are even concluding a pact of united front with the

ruling Congress party and forming United Front Governments along with it, in order to fight against the Marxist Party and its allies—all under the pretext of strengthening India-Soviet friendship and cooperation and transforming the bourgeois-landlord democracy of India into so-called "National Democracy"

They Began 20 Years Ago

We know that there are astute pundits and writers among the leaders and cadres of the Right C.P. who are past masters in confusing themselves and confusing others who are capable of advancing the false argument that M.B. is equating the bourgeois Government of imperialist France with the bourgeois-landlord Government of the newly independent Indian Union. No such equation is being made, and no mechanical parallel is being drawn, beyond the point of its application to our concrete conditions in India and in that context India-Soviet friendship and co-operation.

The present Government of the Indian Union, surely is not an imperialist bourgeois Government as that of France in the 1940s. But has it ceased to be a bourgeois-landlord Government building capitalism in alliance with landlordism and in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital ? No. Then how is it permissible to forge a united front with it?

The Right C.P. leaders have been working hard for full 20 years by now to transform by a sleight of hand the bourgeois-landlord Government of India into a national bourgeois Government i.e., a Government of the non-big bourgeoisie in which neither the big bourgeoisie assumes the leadership nor the landlords have any share. In their Tenth Congress they obtained a final seal over this utterly Right-revisionist class characterization of the Congress Government so that they might straightaway join the bandwagon of the ruling Congress.

The Right C.P. leaders have been striving their utmost for a line of united front with the ruling Congress party and Government since 1955-56, and they have finally succeeded

in putting the official stamp on this treacherous cla
collaborationist tactical line throwing to the winds all
"ifs" and "buts" of the earlier resolutions.

The Tenth Congress of the Right C.P. has laid bare
truth behind their highly deceptive slogan of Left and dem
cratic unity as a slogan of unity between the bourgeo
landlord Congress party and the class collaborationist Ri
Communist Party from which all the genuine Left and dem
cratic forces are excluded.

Whose Hegemony ?

The Right C.P. leaders have been revising and distorting t
Marxist-Leninist concept of proletarian hegemony, sometim
saying that "dual hegemony", i.e., the hegemony of t
bourgeoisie and the proletariat, is a transition to the esta
lishment of proletarian hegemony, at other times asking whe
Lenin had said that proletarian hegemony was necessary fo
the completion of the national liberation revolution, etc. Bu
at the Tenth Congress of theirs they silently got a seal of
approval to the acceptance of the concept of bourgeois he
gemony as a stepping stone for proletarian hegemony. What
else are Kerala-type Government and Kerala path but
acceptance of Congress hegemony, i.e., bourgeois-landlord
leadership both at the States and Central level? No fool
believes that the offer of Chief Ministership to the Right
C.P. nominee in Kerala is the acceptance of the Right C.P.'s
leadership of the Kerala Coalition Government, leave alone
the question of how far the Right C.P. represents the revo-
lutionary interests of the proletariat, and its leadership is to
be taken as the hegemony of the proletariat.

The Right C.P. had been shouting slogans of the so-
called National Democracy for India, which is supposed to
be neither the People's Democracy of the CPI(M)'s descrip-
tion nor of bourgeois democracy, but something of a cross
between the two. Now at their Tenth Congress this hybrid
National Democracy is virtually shelved, and a new slogan
thrust into the forefront, namely the defence of bourgeois

democracy, since it is facing the so-called double pincer, one from the internal Right reaction led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and the second, an onslaught against national independence by the U.S. imperialists abroad.

Their Tenth Congress reverberated with the scare of J.P.'s fascism, and the description of J.P. as the Hitler of India. One local daily wrote a sarcastic editorial warning the Right C.P. leaders, if J.P. is too often described and denounced as a Hitler in our country, many might begin to feel that Hitler might not be as bad as made out to be!

The Right C.P. leaders are openly boasting that they had started working to this end of Congress-Communist united front since 1955-56, and quote excerpts from the political resolution of the Fourth Party Congress, in April 1956, at Palghat. But, that resolution had clearly stated that the Communist Party "*must act as a party of opposition in relation to the present Government*". By the time of the Sixth Party Congress at Vijayawada, in April 1961, the then General Secretary, the late Ajoy Ghosh, with demagogic chicanery declared: "Comrades may ask: what will be the relation of our party to the Government? I am not in favour of the phrase 'party of opposition', as defining the general character of our party because it is essentially a parliamentry concept". Can you beat this kind of blasphemous bluff? Now, of course, the Right C.P., discarding all the nuances regarding the oppositional role of the party, has chosen to act as an integral part of the Congress establishment, reducing itself to "His Majesty's opposition" both inside the Legislatures and outside. Probably this, too, might become a difficult garb for them to don, and many may have to choose the role of a factional clique inside the Congress-Communist 'united front'. Such is the logic of the line worked out at the Vijayawada Congress of the Right C.P.

End of the "Long March"

Notwithstanding all the talk about the growth of Indian monopolies, penetration of the multinational monopolies,

the emergence of the rural rich and the crisis of the capitalist path chosen by the Congress party etc., in their resolutions including their latest Tenth Congress resolution, their "Long March" towards the ruling Congress party and the Government, a march that commenced as early as the year 1955-56, following the electoral defeat in the mid-term poll in Andhra, has reached its final destination at their Tenth Congress in Vijayawada. Thus the two-decade-old labour has given birth to the bastard concept of unity and united front between the bourgeois-landlord Congress party and the Right Communist Party.

The two big leaders of the Right C.P. who have been decorated with the "Order of Lenin" by leaders of the "party of Lenin", have triumphed one over the other in the deliberations at the Tenth Congress which pushed the Right C.P. right down the mire of Right revisionism for good.

As far as the tamasha goes, a big demonstration of over twenty-five thousand and a mass rally of over one lakh people, who were brought in ten special trains and one thousand special buses and lorries, was impressive—and it was more so for a town like Vijayawada. If these figures are multiplied by two, three, four and five, one can sympathize with their exuberance.

Appendix-XXIII

A Useful Seminar on Constitution Amendments*

The Association of Democratic Lawyers, West Bengal, conducted a Seminar on amendments to the Constitution of India, in Calcutta on April 25, 1976.

Dr. P.B. Mukharji, a former Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court presided over the deliberations. The participants included Sri Binayak N. Banerjee, a former judge of Calcutta High Court, Sri Somnath Chatterjee, M.P., Sri Banamali Das, Sri Sadhan Gupta, Sri Arun K. Datta, Sri Prithwis Bagchi, Sri Ajit Roy Mukherjee, Sri Pushpamoy Dasgupta, Sri B. Panda, Sri Salil Ganguli and Sri Sankar Gupta. Among those who sent papers were Sri Sudhir Bose and Dr. Buddhadev Bhattacharyya, Reader, Calcutta University.

Fundamental Rights vs. Positivism

The working paper presented on behalf of the Association by its Secretary, Sri Arun Prokas Chatterjee, referred to the two preliminary drafts on "Fundamental Rights" in the Constituent Assembly, and the present suggestions from the ruling party, to amending the chapter on fundamental rights and held that there had been a definite shift from respect for what were called inalienable human rights to an enthusiasm for the positive law doctrine according to which enacted law could not be questioned and represented the highest bliss for any country.

Since the Constitution was announced in January 1950,

*Report published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, May 9, 1976.

it has had many amendments but the amendments have further restricted the liberties and freedoms of the citizens. It is true that the right of property as given in Article 19(I) (f) and Article 31 has also become restricted but that restriction has been more upon individual than on corporate property as a result of which big monopolies have grown bigger in size and now some twenty of them have a dominating influence on the economic life of the country. Land has also not become available to the tillers of the soil and the present statistics would show that in the last 26 years the number of landless labourers have phenomenally increased and though old style of zamindari has been mostly abolished, a new style of landlords have come into being in whose hands large areas of land are concentrated.

Self–Defeating Controversy

Dr. P. B. Mukharji commented, "The nation is brought to the brink of a confrontation between Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary by the present controversy. (He was referring to the proposals for amending the provisions for judicial review.) This is a needless, frustrating and self-defeating controversy. The High Courts and the Supreme Court may have given wrong decisions on very vital points of the Constitution but the Government and Parliament were equally wrong in taking measures that they did and allowing such open confrontation between the Government and the Parliament on the one hand and the Judiciary on the other. It was unseemly and detrimental to the public interest. It did lasting damage to Parliament and the Judiciary in shaking public credit and confidence in the two great institutions under the Constitution."

Sri Binayak N. Banerjee noted that 'the present hullabaloo for far reaching Constitutional reforms comes from above. That causes nervous anticipations. In democratic countries such calls come from below. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru truly said that the making and changing of Constitution "cannot be done by the wisest of lawyers sitting together in conclaves,

it cannot be done by small committees trying to balance interests and calling that Constitution making; it can never be done under the shadow of external authority—it can only be done when the political and psychological conditions are present and the urge and sanctions come from the masses".

He also said, "an attempt was recently made by the Government to have Keshavanand Bharati's judgement explained or explained away by a reference before the Supreme Court. The attempt fizzled out. The Full Bench of the Supreme Court dissolved itself without considering the matter...nothing could be made out when the Government Counsel argued. He was himself present before the Court and saw how the Government efforts failed. Now, to try to explain away the judgement by resorting to Constitutional amendment by Parliament, which has outlived its normal life, is not acting in truly democratic spirit. A fresh parliamentary election should at least have been held before drastically changing the Constitution".

The question if the Constitution must be amended in the manner in which it is being sought to be done was also raised.

The Left Disregarded

The Constituent Assembly was certainly unrepresentative, it was elected indirectly by an electorate who were themselves elected by only 13 per cent of the population. The Constituent Assembly had an overwhelming majority of members belonging to the present ruling party. If the deliberations of the Constitution which resulted therefrom were not fully representative of aspirations of the people of the country, it was because parties and sections outside the ruling party and in particular the parties of the Left went almost totally unrepresented. These parties of the Left who were a force even when the Constitution was promulgated, as is obvious from the results of the first General Elections in 1952, have grown considerably more in strength, and the opinion of their following regarding the form of the Constitution no

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doubt deserves very serious consideration. But the amendments now being suggested are by no means what the Left wing opinion in the country desires.

Judicial Review

Referring to the proposal to curb the scope for judicial review, it was said that if the state is a state of the exploiting classes, the point of view of these classes is bound to be heavily reflected in the functioning not only of the Executive and the Legislature but of the Judiciary as well. The reason is briefly, that the laws are heavily weighted in favour of the exploiting classes and secondly the Judiciary with rare exceptions is manned by people linked with those classes by tradition and upbringing. Therefore, when questions of interpretation of laws arise or when the balance of convenience has to be judged in granting interlocutory relief, the exploiting classes naturally fare better than the exploited classes. This is no reflection on the independence or integrity of the Judiciary. This is a sociological phenomenon which must influence human behaviour in a class society.

Even so, in a democratic society dominated by the exploiting classes the Judiciary with all its limitations is the only safeguard against arbitrary action either by the Executive or by the Legislature. For example, though it may be that it is easier to obtain an injunction against interference with the right to property than an injunction against arbitrary dismissal, removal or compulsory retirement, yet there can be no doubt that in a class state the Judiciary is comparatively the most effective organ in the hands of the exploited classes for fighting arbitrary action of this kind, so far as it goes.

Supremacy of Parliament

Stress has been laid on the supremacy of Parliament in advancing the proposal for amendments. The justification for recognizing the supremacy of Parliament is stated to be that Parliament being the reflection of the will of the people

should be recognized as supreme and courts should not be allowed to sit in judgement over its actions.

This line of argument was held to be fallacious.

First, if supremacy of Parliament is established, the federal structure of our country will simply crumble down. Supremacy of Parliament and a federal structure can never go together.

Secondly, it is a fallacy to base the theory of Parliamentary supremacy in our country on the theory of representation of the will of the people in the absence of a system of proportional representation.

Thirdly, assuming that the theory of the representation of the will of the people is correct, it would apply not only to Parliament but to the State Assemblies also, so long as India is not a unitary state but an union of States. In that case, by parity of reasoning, the State Assemblies would also be regarded as supreme in their own spheres. This would, however, increase the importance of judicial intervention to settle conflicts between the will of Parliament and the will of the State Assembly.

Amendment for Progress?

Another argument is that certain amendments are necessary for the social and economic advancement of the masses.

Our Constitution has now been in force for 26 years. The ruling party which cries for the changes and presses the above argument in support thereof, has been in undisputed control of state power during the whole of this time. Had the political will been there, at least genuine attempts to use the directive principles for social and economic advancement could have been made.

What has been the obstacle in the way of securing the advancement of common people by carrying into practice the directive principles? Is it judicial review of executive action? Is it judicial review of legislative action? Is it the fundamental rights of the people and protection (however little was available) given by the courts? Is it the protection

given to government servants by the Constitution? Is it because the Union List does not include law and order?

Speakers at the seminar repeatedly said that the advancement had been prevented not because of the above, but because of the hesitation or refusal to interfere with those classes who are responsible for the social, educational, cultural and above all economic backwardness of the common man...namely, the monopoly capitalists and the big landlords. This hesitation is understandable. In any society dominated by them, these classes are bound to have a thousand links with the administration. If the social structure is not changed and these classes are not totally deprived of their economic power and are suppressed by redistributing the resources concentrated in their hands, they will always enjoy sufficient power and influence to defeat and throw into disarray every legislation or administrative instruction aimed at improving the lot of the common people.

Article 226

It was observed at the Seminar that a most important proposal which has been put forward by the Swaran Singh Committee is to restrict the scope and ambit of Article 226 of the Constitution of India and to take away the powers of the High Courts to issue directions, orders or writs for purposes other than enforcement of fundamental rights. Article 226 of the Constitution provides, inter-alia, that directions, orders or writs may be issued not only for the enforcement of fundamental rights but for any other purposes. During the proclamation of Emergency, therefore, the fundamental rights of the citizen are lost, being unenforceable and if judiciary cannot be approached by the citizens of India for the protection of their statutory and legal rights under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, an effective and comparatively cheap remedy available to the citizens will be lost.

To provide that an executive action should not be challenged except on the ground of violation of fundamental rights will be to rob Article 226 of the Constitution of a potent

power conferred on the courts by that Article of correcting executive wrongs and to concede to the executive a degree of infallibility, which is too dangerous even to assume.

It is unfair to allege, as it is done in some quarters, that there has been a great abuse of the power under Article 226 of the Constitution by means of frivolous applications made to courts by the citizens. To prevent possible abuse, one should not do away with the power. If it is contended that to prevent abuse of judicial power, the power itself should be obliterated, then how can one contemplate that there should be no check on the executive power, when nobody can say that the executive power is never abused?

People's Will Must be Asserted

It was stressed at the Seminar that any concentration of power in either of the three branches of Government would go against the interests of the people, given the present bourgeois-landlord character of state power in India. The people must assert their will in an organized and meaningful way. Parliamentary democracy cannot be saved by denying or curbing people's rights.

National Debate?

Referring to the talk of a national debate on the amendments, participants pointed out that there was no Constitutional guarantee or political assurance that there will really be a 'national debate'. As things stand there is little scope for people's involvement in the process of amendments, either in initiating them or in discussing them meaningfully.

The Swaran Singh panel recommendations are simply guidelines, and not concrete proposals. It is quite possible that such proposals will be raised and discussed only in Parliament.

The opportunity given so far to Opposition parties and groups as well as unattached individuals to project their own viewpoints has been very limited and inadequate.

Appendix-XXIV

Where is the National Debate on Constitutional Changes ?*

Ever since the imposition of the internal Emergency, the Establishment has been talking of the need to alter the Constitution of the country 'radically', to make it meet the needs and aspirations of the people better. Even people who had been emphasizing till the other day that the Constitution is too sacred a document to be touched, are now displaying a sudden awareness that it is primarily a dynamic instrument of social change. These same people, however, had displayed an infinite capacity for 'flexible interpretations' of the Constitution according to convenience, to meet the demands of ruling circles in different situations and circumstances.

Why such 'interpretations' do not suffice today, and why 'extensive and far-reaching changes' seem to brook no delay is a very interesting question, which will bring out revealing answers.

But that is another question, beyond the scope of this article.

It has been suggested by the Prime Minister and others that there will be an extensive nationwide debate on Constitutional changes. No signs of this debate are yet visible.

A meaningful national debate presupposes—(a) a set of concrete proposals relevant to the needs and aspirations of the people, (b) a mechanism to involve the people in the process, to record suggestions and criticisms at the

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, May 16, 1976.

grass-root level, and to transmit these to the decision-making bodies, and (c) enough scope to all political parties and mass organizations to make alternative sets of proposals and enable these to reach the people for discussion.

What have we seen so far, in the much publicized 'national debate'?

Initially, certain proposals were being circulated, but nobody would own up the authorship of these. Later, when these proposals were fiercely criticized even by the few people whom it had reached, these were quietly withdrawn. Now we have ministers and leaders of the ruling party, and in some cases leaders of another party which prides itself on being the conscience-keeper of the ruling party, making speeches on the need for amendments, what these should ideally achieve, but never on what the actual amendments would look like, on what specifically would be amended, and how.

The nearest to a set of proposals that have been allowed to be circulated have been the outlines prepared, not by the government, but by the Congress party panel headed by Sri Swaran Singh. But even these are far from being concretized. Moreover, that is an intra-party matter. Although some State cabinets are examining these outlines, these can hardly serve as the starting point of a national debate. In short, *we the people, do not as yet have before us any set of proposals put forth by the government in concrete terms which we can debate upon.*

On the other hand, Sri D.K.Borooah, the Congress president, has said in Thanjavur on April 16 that the AICC will not formulate specific proposals on the basis of the Swaran Singh panel recommendations, but will restrict itself, when it meets in May, to laying down general guidelines.

The next question: how the people are to record and register their own views meaningfully? There is no constitutional or political mechanism in sight which we can use to put forth specific suggestions or to register specific criticisms formally, either individually or through our chosen

organizations, in case some concrete proposals are eventually placed and debated. There is no constitutional or political assurance that such suggestions and criticisms will be carefully considered before decisions are taken. What are the people expected to do in the 'national debate'? Just stand by and applaud?

Thus what is now going on is a monologue, and that too, in a rambling manner and not a national debate.

It will be useful to recall that even as talk of a national debate was going on, the 38th and 39th amendments were rushed through in Parliament in record time, without any debate outside, and even without much of a debate inside. The 40th amendment was also similarly passed in the Rajya Sabha in record time, but, then, on some consideration which was never announced, it was not further pursued in the Lok Sabha.

To repeat a point, actually in the Constitution itself, there is not a single provision which can be stretched to mean that the people will essentially and meaningfully participate in the process of amendments.

To us an amendment involves (a) initiating it, (b) discussing and debating it, and (c) enacting it into law and ratifying it.

As regards initiating a proposal, and even discussing it, Article 368 says these can be done only in Parliament, and by its members. Even the State legislatures, singly or acting together, cannot propose amendments. There is no legal scope for formal proposals emanating from outside Parliament House. True, such proposals can be channelled through M.P.s but there is a qualitative difference between this, and the situation prevailing in countries where there are constitutional mechanisms for popular or provincial initiative.

For certain categories of amendment, a discussion in the State legislatures have been prescribed by the Constitution, but not for all amendments. The present Constitution, while it does not preclude public discussion if some people are keenly interested, certainly does not require it to be done.

In fact, it is quite possible that after another couple of months of talk of the need for a national debate, the actual amendment proposals will be raised straightway in Parliament, and whatever be the nature and extent of the discussion outside, it may altogether be ignored, and more reliance may be placed on two-third majorities in both the Houses and in some State legislatures. Sri A.R.Antulay, the new general secretary of the Congress party, has plainly hinted that Parliament will be supreme in the matter of amending the Constitution. What about the supremacy of the people?

It is needless to add that the system of amendment which does not encourage or require popular initiative or debate, (the term 'initiative' has a specific connotation in political science and in constitutional law) does not also lay down any procedure for ratification of Parliament's decisions in the form of a referendum, or for a plebiscite before vital changes are made.

If we take a look at the Constituent Assembly Debates, we shall realize that the question of involvement of the people in the process of amendment of the Constitution received virtually no attention of the framers of the document. The CAD was concerned primarily with an academic-legal discussion on the question of rigidity and flexibility, and whether the future Parliament should be bound by the will of the Constituent Assembly, or not.

This was nothing unexpected. The Assembly, which enacted the Constitution in the name of the people of India, hardly represented the masses of the people, outside the bourgeois-landlord classes. They were elected on the basis not of universal adult suffrage, but of a highly restricted suffrage, where the emphasis was on property and educational qualifications. One member, Sri Mahavir Tyagi, faced the question squarely in the debate. He said: "The Constitution is not given by the country as a whole. We have assumed that we are the representatives of the nation. Well, all of us have come through an indirect electorate, through the legislative assemblies of provinces which had been elected,

when the British were here. These assemblies were elect... in 1946. And we are making this Constitution in the ho... and with the claim that we are the accredited representativ... of India. ... Again, I am sorry that even as we were, in th... Constituent Assembly, we have not acted as independe... representatives—each one of us. It is the majority party ... the country which has given the Constitution ... others ha... not even been heard properly. Let us frankly admit that th... is a Constitution given by one party, be it the majorit... party. You might question it, but the fact remains unque... tioned. Other parties had little hand in it because we know it for a fact that the amendments emanating from other quarters or from unattached members had no value and were rarely accepted. So it is the Congress party alone which has given the Constitution."

So this is the tradition. And this is continuing.

In the whole discussion, only two members raised very briefly the matter of approval of amendments by the people, either before or after enactment. Sri Brajeswhar Prasad suggested a mechanism for referendum "in order to resolve a deadlock, when there is a conflict between Parliament and provincial governments", and saw it as "a strong weapon for curbing the absolutism of a party possessed of a Parliamentary majority". Babu Ramnarayan Singh suggested plebiscite instead of referring some amendments to the State legislatures. None of these suggestions were pursued, to the end.

Sri B.R.Ambedkar, the chairman of the drafting committee, though not a Congressman himself, reflected the opinions of the majority, and held conservative views on these issues. Replying to the debate on amendment provisions, he admitted, "it may be true it is not a representative assembly in the sense that members of this assembly have not been elected on the basis of adult suffrage. But he did not agree that an assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage would have greater political wisdom. On the contrary he agreed with one member, Janab Nazimuddin Ahmed, that "it might easily have been worse."

Now, if we are really interested in what involvement of the people can and should look like, we may turn to the experience of Cuba, where the first Socialist Constitution was proclaimed on February 24 this year. The draft Constitution was placed before a national referendum in which 96 per cent of the electorate based on universal suffrage, (the voting age being 16 and above) participated, and 5,572,867 or 97.7 per cent of those voting approved the draft while 54,066 or one per cent rejected it.

Before the referendum, nearly six million people participated in popular assemblies to discuss the first draft at the grass-root level, and as a result of the many proposals made by the people at these meetings, the Preamble and 60 of the 141 articles of the first draft were modified. Even the members of the armed forces, or the "people in uniform" as they are called in Cuba, had the scope for full and free discussions.

The outlook, behind the exercise of popular will was, in the words of Raul Castro, the deputy premier, "it is necessary to guarantee the ever-growing and ever more regular and systematic participation of the people in all areas of state administration and in decisions concerning matters of government. To this effect, it is imperative that the masses know all there is to know about the structure and mechanisms of the state; that they know the content of the Constitution and the law inside out; that they know exactly what their rights are and how they can exercise them...

Appendix-XXV

National Seminar on Change of Constitution*

An all-India seminar discussed the Constitution (44th Amendment) Bill and related matters for two days on October 16-17 in New Delhi. The consensus of the seminar, organized by the National Committee for Review of the Constitution, was that the ruling party was trying to abrogate to itself the supremacy that really belonged to the people, that the ruling party had no mandate to rush through drastic changes in the Constitution, that there had been no real 'national debate' on the issue and that the proposed changes might be used to erode fundamental rights of the people and wipe out the opposition.

Participants at the seminar were prominent political leaders, jurists, parliamentarians and academicians. Speakers were C. K. Daphtary, V. M. Tarkunde, H. V. Kamath, A. K. Gopalan, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, P. Ramamurti, Somnath Chatterjee, Tridib Chaudhury, Asoka Mehta, Charan Singh, Era Sezhiyan, Amar Chakravarty, S. M. Joshi, Satish Chandra, Soli Sorabjee, G. Swaminathan, Sher Singh, Lilly Thomas, John Manjooran, Rama Reddy, O.P. Tyagi, H.M.Patel, S.L.Saxena and Krishna Kant.

Printed below is the full text of the resolution adopted at the seminar as it appeared in THE STATESMAN, Calcutta (October 18):

The following is the text of the consensus adopted at the seminar :

*Report and Consensus adopted in the National Seminar published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', Calcutta, October 24, 1976.

"This national seminar is of the considered opinion that enactment of the Constitution (44th Amendment) Bill by the present Parliament should not be proceeded with on grounds both of procedure and substance. There is in the country, on account of the Emergency, a climate of oppression and fear in which no free and open debate is possible. Leaders of political parties and of public opinion are in jail, meetings have until recently been almost totally banned and are even now only allowed in restricted hall gatherings and the Press has been effectively gagged. The denial of the fundamental freedom of expression and of association and the erosion of judicial processes have created a situation in which it is impossible for the people to know, discuss and understand the sweeping and drastic constitutional amendments being proposed in their name, but certainly not to their benefit although this is so alleged.

"The ruling party sought no mandate in 1971 for the kind of changes now proposed, and statements to the contrary bear no relation to fact. Furthermore, the fifth Lok Sabha concluded its normal five-year tenure last March and is now serving as extended term under Emergency decree. For it to consider the making of what would virtually be a new Constitution on the basis of 43 per cent votes cast under very different circumstances six years ago would be a fraudulent exercise of power. The honest and democratic alternative would be for the Government to face the people, whom it claims to serve, in fair and free election which are in any case long overdue. Not to do so, and to rush the 44th amendment through what is a rump Parliament, in an atmosphere in which no free debate has been permitted or is indeed possible, would be to institutionalize the Emergency with added powers and present the people with a falt accompli.

"According to the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill, the 44th amendment is intended to remove the difficulties which have arisen in achieving the objective of socio-economic revolution 'which would end

poverty, ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity". The assertion will not bear scrutiny.

After the amendment to Article 31 the present Constitution has placed no impediment on genuine socio-economic reforms and the Government has failed to point out a single measure that it has brought forward during the past five years or would like to introduce in the future which could not or cannot be enacted and implemented given the political will. Nor is it true to say that the doctrine of the sanctity of the 'basic structure' of the Constitution propounded by the Supreme Court in the Keshavananda Bharati judgement has obstructed social and economic change. Indeed, the Supreme Court ruled in that case that the right to property is not a part of the basic structure of the Constitution. None of the provisions of the 44th amendment, however, seeks to restrict the Constitutional right to property as such, it is quite clear that the objective of the Government are very different and the adoption of the 44th amendment would in effect establish a constitutional dictatorship. It is pertinent to point out that the policies of the Government pursued so far have not helped the poor but the rich and led to concentration of wealth.

"It would be relevant in this connection to refer to certain of the other Constitutional amendments made after the proclamation of the internal Emergency on June 26, 1975. The 38th amendment places even a malafide declaration of Emergency beyond scrutiny of the courts. The 39th amendment, which was struck down by the Supreme Court, sought to place the Prime Minister's election beyond challenge even if it was obtained by resort to 'corrupt practice'. The 40th Amendment Bill, which has so far only been adopted by the Rajya Sabha, seeks to confer absolute and permanent immunity on the President, Vice-President. Prime Minister, Speaker and Governors against any proceeding even for criminal offences committed by them, either during their tenure of office or even prior to their assuming that office. Furthermore, several draconian measures having a bearing on free and fair elections, individual liberty and democratic freedoms,

and freedom of the Press have been given absolute constitutional immunity by their inclusion in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution.

"The 44th amendment would now practically abrogate the citizens' fundamental rights altogether by expanding the scope of Article 31C to place any legislation purporting to further any of the Directive Principles beyond judicial challenge on the ground of violating the right to equality and the other fundamental freedoms. The scope of the Directive Principles is all-inclusive, ranging from the welfare of the citizen to international peace.

Anti-National Activity

"The proposed new Article 31D, relating to so-called anti-national activities and anti-national associations, is again so wide as to pave the way for virtual one-party rule, any anti-governmental activity being treated as anti-national. Any laws enacted with the object of banning so-called anti-national activities or associations are proposed to be placed beyond judicial review even if they violate fundamental rights. The liberties of the citizen are sought to be further curtailed by prescribing a set of so-called fundamental duties.

"The effect of these proposals, in sum, would be to deprive the ultimate sovereign, namely the people, of rights and leave them only with duties. Conversely, the servants of the people, namely the executive, would be placed in a position of owning all manner of rights and owing no duties.

"The effect of the 44th amendment will be to eliminate the whole system of checks and balances provided in the Constitution and leave the way clear for the arbitrary exercise of executive authority to the detriment of the citizen. In a number of important matters such as taxation, labour disputes, elections, service matters, procurement and distribution of foodstuffs and other essential goods, land reforms, trade, foreign exchange, and urban property ceilings, the jurisdiction of the High Courts is sought to be substituted by that of tribunals which would be clearly amenable to executive pressures.

"This would deny the citizen impartial justice in these matters of deep concern to him while the right to appeal to the Supreme Court would be illusory for the common man in view of the prohibitive costs involved. The residual powers of the High Courts are further curtailed by the proposed amendment to Article 226 relating to writ jurisdiction.

"Moreover the High Courts are precluded from determining the validity of even a rule or a notification issued under Central Acts.

"Article 368 is sought to be amended so as to enable Parliament to alter even the basic structure of the Constitution including such features as democracy, republicanism, division of power and the federal character of the Indian polity. While the courts are totally precluded from considering the validity of any constitutional amendment, howsoever, draconian or anti-people, the ordinary laws may only be struck down by a two-thirds majority in a bench of seven judges in the Supreme Court and five judges in the High Courts. This would virtually mean that a judge deciding in favour of the Government would have twice the judicial power enjoyed by a judge deciding otherwise.

"Even the limited powers given to the President to caution and advise the Central executive against hasty or ill-conceived measures are to be taken away.

"The Central executive is also seeking to usurp Parliament's powers to modify any provision in the Constitution for the professed purpose of removing difficulties. This very wide power bears no comparison with the far more limited removal-of-difficulties power given to the President under the existing Article 392 of the Constitution.

"The federal character of the Constitution is also weakened by the 44th amendment, by enhancing the powers of the Centre at the expense of the States and more particularly by enabling the Government of India to deploy the armed or police forces of the Union in the State without the consent of the State Governments, 'for dealing with any grave situation of law and order in any State'.

"Other examples of the erosion of the independent authority of constitutional officers or agencies such as the Election Commission, the Union Public Service Commission and the Comptroller and Auditor-General are to be found in the transference of certain of their powers and initiatives to the Central executive or bodies subordinate to it under various proposed amendments. In particular, the manner in which the accounts of the Union and of the States shall be kept will, under a proposed amendment, henceforward be prescribed by the Central executive. This could open the door for financial manipulation to serve partisan interest. Even the amendment to preclude the production in any court of law of rules made for the transaction of official business at the Centre or in the States must be viewed with suspicion as being opposed to the salutary principle of open government.

"The net effect of the 44th amendment is to take away the rights and powers of the President, the Legislatures, the Judiciary, the States, the UPSC, the Election Commission and the Comptroller and Auditor-General. In each case, power is transferred not just to the Central executive but to the chief executive namely, the Prime Minister who emerges all-powerful and above the law. Such an enormous accretion of power in the hands of a single person is dangerous and liable to misuse. However, in view of recent experience of the arbitrary exercise of authority, such a total concentration of power cannot be regarded as innocent or accidental and would spell the end of individual liberty and democratic institutions which millions of Indians have unitedly struggled to win and uphold.

"The Government has ironically included in the 44th amendment a fundamental duty that enjoins the citizen 'to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom'. This national seminar would like to remind the Government and the people of those ideals and, in particular, of Gandhiji's injunction that the right means are as important as right ends. In the present instance, however, the attempted forced passage of the 44th

amendment constitutes an exercise in wrong means to attain wrong ends.

"Let the Government go to the people. Let there be fair and free elections in an environment free of fear and intimidation. At such an election it would be possible to place before the people for their consideration a number of constitutional changes and safeguards that will enlarge the democratic rights of the people and ensure that the country never again face the danger of the overthrow of democracy and liberty through apparently constitutional processes. Some of these matters are: 1. Restraining the conditions in which an Emergency may be declared; 2. safeguards for preventing an abuse of the Emergency provisions; 3. safeguards against the arbitrary suspension of State Governments; 4. the limits with which fundamental rights and other liberties may be suspended; 5. better ensuring of the independence of the Judiciary; 6. organization and constitution of the Election Commission; 7. provisions relating to preventive detention; 8. the Ordinance-making powers of the President and the Governors; 9. an impartial mode of appointment of Governors; 10. provision in Article 368 to preclude any amendment in the basic structure of the Constitution.

[**Note** : The corrections to be made, as indicated in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of 31.10.1976, have been fully incorporated here.]

Appendix-XXVI

Will the Right C.P. Respond to the Call of Left and Democratic Unity at least now?*

Harkishan Singh Surjeet

The National Council of the Right Communist Party in its resolution on the Lok Sabha election, released in New Delhi on April 8, 1977, has admitted that the line pursued by the party during the Emergency was wrong, though the admissions are far from adequate to meet the needs of genuine self-criticism befitting a party claiming to be Communist.

The leadership of the party still refuses to recognise that the line it pursued during the Emergency was a logical continuation of the line it had worked out long before the Emergency was imposed on the country—the line of alliance with the Congress and disruption of Left and democratic unity.

A Serious Mistake

Even today, the party refuses to state categorically that the promulgation of the Emergency itself was wrong. All that the National Council says is, "it was a serious mistake for our party not to have called for the lifting of the Emergency once its negative features had begun to come to the fore." What is worse, General Secretary of the party Rajeswara Rao at the Press Conference in New Delhi where he released the National Council resolution, "reiterated that the CPI support to the declaration of the Emergency was correct."

Too late in the day, the party leadership which has claimed

*Published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY', New Delhi, April 17, 1977 and April 24, 1977.

all along to be correctly following Marxist-Leninist teachings, makes the admission, "A proper understanding was lacking that vast Emergency powers could not be allowed to remain in the hands of the bourgeois State and its bureaucracy for a long time."

Here, again, is an attempt to justify the party's support to the promulgation of the Emergency by Indira Gandhi in June 1975.

Crucial Question Avoided

Even now, the National Council blames only "the monstrous misuse of the Emergency powers against the common people." Was not the Emergency itself meant for the suppression of the common people, their democratic rights and civil liberties ? Was this not the prime reason for the Emergency—clearing the path for a coterie dominated one-party dictatorship? The leadership of the Right C.P. still avoids this crucial question.

That is why the Right Communist leadership belittles the electoral verdict as only a massive protest against the gross misuse of the Emergency powers and violation of all democratic norms and rights, resorted to by the Congress Government in the recent period. It does not see it as a massive verdict for democracy, against the Emergency and one-party dictatorship of the Congress. They even give a reactionary character to the verdict when the resolution says, "In the absence of a viable Left and democratic alternative, the landed gentry opposed to all land reforms and other vested interests were able to utilize the legitimate discontent of the people."

There is no respect for the democratic instincts of the people, they are just masses swayed this way or that by this or that vested interest.

Series of Admissions

The National Council does admit "the suppression of the democratic forces which created a suffocating atmosphere, compulsory sterilisation and demolition of dwelling places,

large-scale arrests, harassment and persecution of innocent people", "the attack on the living standards and trade union rights of the working class, the heaping of tax burdens on the working peasants and oppressive methods of collection", "increasingly pro-monopolist economic policy and drift towards acceptance of the World Bank line of 'export-oriented growth' and wooing of the multinationals", "the blatantly anti-democratic partisanship of the censorship and official mass media", etc.

The National Council resolution then makes the amazing claim that "during the past nineteen months, the CPI exposed and fought the undemocratic steps of the Government, both inside Parliament and outside."

What was this exposure? And what was this fight?

According to the resolution, "the fight (was) against the attempt to set up a regime of personal power through the so-called Presidential system, against the extra-constitutional personal power centre, against the destabilisation of State Ministries by the caucus at the Centre, against the so-called Constituent Assembly move, as well as the anti-democratic provisions of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, against the attacks on civil liberties of the democratic forces, against the vicious misuse of the censorship and the official mass media". The resolution also claims that "the CPI exposed all attacks on the working class and toiling people" and so on.

Anticipating the question, why, then, the debacle in the election, the National Council advances the plea: "These activities of our party could not be made known to the people because of the gross misuse and distortion of the official mass media and censorship powers by the caucus as well as the anti-CPI bias of the monopoly Press."

This is, to say the least, burking the issue. The distorted mass media and censorship powers operated far more rigorously against the other Opposition parties than the Right C.P. According to Press reports, it is Right C.P. leader Bhupesh Gupta, who, in the Rajya Sabha, "had a word of praise for

the Chief Censor." If, despite that, the people gave such severe punishment to the Right C.P. at the hustings, it is not because the people who were being suffocated and were suffering did not know what the Right C.P. was doing, but because they DID know that the Right C.P. had joined hands with the enemy who was suppressing them.

Groping towards Truth

The resolution, so full of contradiction, itself gropes to the real reason in other places where it says: "In the minds of large sections of the masses our demarcation from the Congress became blurred"; "our mass support has been considerably, though temporarily, erorded in some places"; "our party underplayed this struggle (against anti-people aspects of Government policies) in order to avoid confrontation with the Indira Gandhi Government"; "it was insufficiently realised that the fight against the increasingly anti-people and anti-democratic aspects of internal policies of the Congress Government had to be given priority by our party even while supporting its anti-imperialist foreign policy as well as progressive internal measures"; "the progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi was over-estimated."

Though belated, all these statements are welcome. But a spirit of self-criticism would demand that the National Council state that from time to time many outside the party and some inside the party also had warned of all this, but every time it had been rejected as "Left-Sectarianism" and "blind anti-Congressism".

Our Party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), had on innumerable occasions, while appealing for joint actions in defence of the mass of our people, had stated that the policies which the Right C.P. leadership was pursuing would result precisely in these consequences—of the party being looked upon by the people as an ally of the exploiting Congress regime and of those who were bent on establishing a dictatorial regime.

Struggles against Anti-People Policies

It was so when the CPI(M) raised the question of united struggles against the anti-people policies of the Congress regime, while giving support to every anti-imperialist position of the Government of India's foreign policy. The CPI(M) never accepted that the foreign policy of the Congress Government was consistently anti-imperialist. But, for the Right C.P. leadership, as it said in answer to us, the foreign policy was consistently anti-imperialist and that out-weighed all the "negative features", making the Indira Gandhi Government "progressive" and any struggle against it "sectarian". Even when the Indira Gandhi regime was opening the door wider to multinationals and surrendering to the dictates of the World Bank, even while that regime was making more and more concessions to the monopolists and heaping further attacks on the working people, the leadership of the party stuck to this stance. Now the party admits that the priority should not have been support to foreign policy but for struggles against the anti-people policies of the Government, that the party "underplayed this struggle to avoid confrontation with the Indira Gandhi Government".

Also, the CPI(M) has all along held that whatever anti-imperialism was there in the Government of India's foreign policy was always in danger of being scuttled by the Government itself unless the democratic forces inside the country were strong enough to prevent it. Though developments in countries like Egypt and Syria had confirmed this, the Right C.P. leadership went on pooh-poohing it. It is only now in the National Council resolution that it grudgingly admits, "It was insufficiently realised that a progressive foreign policy cannot be eventually safeguarded and carried forward except on the basis of a corresponding internal base in terms of progressive and democratic home policies."

Unity of Left and Democratic Forces

It was so when we raised the question of building the unity of Left and democratic forces. The Right C.P. told us and

the people that the only task was to build a united front between itself and the Congress and that any talk of building Left and democratic unity was guided by "blind anti-Congressism". Though the slogan was of unity with the "progressive and democratic forces in the Congress", the real line of the leadership was whole-hog unity with the entire Congress, of joining a Coalition Government with the Congress in Kerala and holding it up as the model for the whole country—a Congress-Right C.P. Coalition in other States and at the Centre, shamelessly rejecting everything that Marxism–Leninism teaches the Right C.P. leadership averred that it was Congress-Right C.P. unity that would be the instrument of building Socialism in the country. When we characterised this as a caricature of Marxism-Leninism, the Right C.P. leadership flew into wild rage. Now the leadership admits that it overestimated "the progressive potentiality of the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi."

It was so, again, when we along with many others opposed the imposition of the Emergency and appealed to the Right C.P. to join in the demand for lifting it. The Right C.P. defended and justified the Emergency as necessary to repulse facist bid to take over the country and slandered us saying that we had joined hands with reactionary and fascist forces. Now, even though not prepared to admit that its support to the promulgation of the Emergency was wrong, the party leadership has come to "the opinion that it was insufficient to have merely opposed the abuses of the Emergency when the Emergency itself had become the most important obstacle for the mobilisation and action of the masses and all democratic forces. Our party under-estimated the sense of suffocation and fear that the continuation of the Emergency was creating among vast sections of our people".

Actions During Emergency

The Right C.P. leadership's claim that during the nineteen months of the Emergency, it "exposed and fought the undemocratic steps of the Government" and that it "exposed

all attacks on the working class and toiling and poor people" also does not stand the test of facts.

While the Right C.P. in Parliament moved some amendments to the Constitution Amendment Bill and voted against a few provisions, it did not vote against the Bill as a whole: instead, by voting for it, the party helped the Congress to put the black law on the Statute Book and institutionalise the Emergency.

While at a very late stage, the Right C.P. leadership began talking about a "caucus", it continued to demarcate the "caucus" from Indira Gandhi, the real inspirer and the power behind it. At one stage, after Indira Gandhi's attack on the party, the Right C.P. leadership became silent on the "caucus" also. Thus, while it claims to have fought the "extra-constitutional personal power centre", it was in fact helping to build up a far more dangerous dictatorial power centre.

While the leadership claims that it fought against the attacks on civil liberties of the democratic forces, the reality is that it refused to join or support the civil liberties movement that was rapidly growing in the country because of the intolerable suppression of all civil liberties and democratic rights.

As for the claim of exposing all attacks on the working class, the reality is that whether it was the question of the denial of trade union rights or the scrapping of bonus, the Right C.P. leadership and the AITUC led by it refused to join any action in defence of the working class. They were more interested in sitting with the INTUC in the National Apex Body, that instrument for endorsing the employers' offensive against the workers, than entering the arena of struggle against the Indira Gandhi Government's anti-working-class policies. The Right C.P. leadership dismissed all such struggle in defence of the working people as "economism" directed to sidetrack attention from the "crucial political struggle against reactionary fascist forces." The leadership took the next logical step when it said that the working class would make every sacrifice in the cause of the much-needed Emergency. No wonder,

the working class rejected the Right C.P. candidates in West Bengal, Jamshedpur, Kanpur, Bombay and elsewhere.

Let it not also be forgotten that months after the imposition of the Emergency, much after the Right C.P. leadership itself had begun talking about "negative features", it organised the Anti-Fascist Conference in Patna and got its own certificate to the Emergency countersigned by delegations from the Socialist countries. The Right C.P. had already brought discredit on itself, it brought into discredit the Socialist countries also in the eyes of our people.

Even after the elections were announced, what was the position of the Right C.P. leadership ? Its election tactics was one of alliance with the Congress despite all the crimes it as the ruling party had committed against the people. That the alliance came off only in three States is not because of any lack of efforts of the Right C.P. leadership. It made overtures to the Congress in all the States. The Bihar leadership of the party was called to Delhi to negotiate with the central leadership of the Congress. In Punjab, the unseemly bargaining for seats went on till the day of withdrawals. But the Congress was not prepared to give them the number of seats they wanted. But in West Bengal and Kerala, the Congress was prepared to give them even more seats than they demanded, while in Tripura the Right C.P. gave its support to the Congress in one seat and contested the other with the sole purpose of splitting the Left and democratic vote. The reason for the Congress generosity is simple: it is in these three States that the Left movement, specially the CPI(M), is very strong and the Congress required the Right C.P.'s help to try and defeat the Left in its strong-holds. The Right C.P. leadership committed an unpardonable crime when it joined hands with the Congress to facilitate this game. Its own candidates had no compunction in resorting to gangsterism to rig the elections in West Bengal in true Congress style.

It is only natural that with all this, the party's "demarcation from the Congress became blurred", that its "mass support has been considerably though temporarily eroded in some places."

After making all these admissions what are the conclusions that the National Council draws? One of them is that the Congress-led ruling front's victory in Kerala "has set a glorious example and indicated the line of advance to the whole country". Back to the old mutton!

This is not the place to go into the how or why of the Kerala election results. But the direction of the "line of advance" laid down by the National Council has to be seen.

Kerala today has as Congress Chief Minister a person who was the Home Minister in the previous Government and has become notorious for police repression on the common people before the Emergency, during the Emergency and even today, in the post-election period. The Right C.P. itself had the painful experience of police high-handedness under this Home Minister. These police attacks on them had forced the Right C.P. in Kerala to call a Democratic Rights Day—to be abandoned later under pressure from the central leadership which was mortally frightened of the prospect of the break-up of the Congress-Right C.P. alliance which it had so assiduously built up for sharing a few crumbs with the Congress. It was under this Home Minister that scores of agricultural workers had been brutally done to death, police torture and rapes in lock-ups had become frequent incidents. It is the foisting of this reactionary-to-the-core even in the eyes of the Youth Congress in the State as Chief Minister that the Right C.P. leadership points out as "a glorious example". The "line of advance" this "glorious example" sets is the line of alliance with the entire Congress, not just its progressive and democratic sections, of making the Right C.P. a partner in all the anti-people crimes of the Congress, of the Right C.P. itself committing crimes against the people as it did when its leader was the Chief Minister in Kerala.

In the Post-Election Period

In other ways, too, the Right C.P. leadership has shown its reluctance to break with what the party itself admits was a

mistaken past. To refer to only two developments in the post-election period:

In Uttar Pradesh, the Right C.P. has all along considered the present Chief Minister, N.D.Tewary, as a reactionary and part of what it calls the "extra-constitutional power centre". One would have thought that the Right C.P. would have been the gladdest to get rid of such a man from the Chief Ministership of the State. But no. When N.D.Tewary's Ministry was in danger of collapsing, the Right C.P. decided to and did prop it up by extending the support of its sixteen members in the Assembly to Tewary. What is this if not refusal to learn from the past and move in a new direction?

At the Centre, the Government moved the 43rd Constitution Amendment Bill to undo some of the mischief done by the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act. The three main provisions were to restore the five-year terms of the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies which had been illegally extended to six years, prevent the arbitrary banning of parties and organisations in the name of anti-national activities and to bring the Prime Minister and Speaker from the exalted status given to them back to the level of all other members of Parliament in regard to election disputes.

The Right C.P. had opposed the extension of the terms of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, it was against putting the Prime Minister and Speaker in a special category, it was also against the arbitrary powers that were being given to the Government to ban parties and organisations.

Every one in the country is anxious that all the illegal and undemocratic black enactments put on the Statute Book in the Emergency period are repealed as speedily as possible. The entire Opposition including the Congress and the Right C.P. showed they were aware of this when they voted for the repeal of the Publication of Objectionable Matters Act and restoration of the immunity in regard to publication of Parliament's proceedings. But when it came to the 43rd Constitution Amendment Bill, the Right C.P. followed the Congress lead and said that "it was not happy with the

manner in which the Bill was being hustled." What was this but playing the Congress game to thwart the democratic aspirations of the people of the country?

This is a suicidal path, this way lies the disintegration and destruction of the party.

The National Council resolution, on the whole, fails to pinpoint the mistakes the party leadership has been making and trace them to their source—their wrong programmatic understanding, an un-Marxist understanding of the character of the Indian State and the role of the various classes.

A Welcome Departure

Despite the inconsistency in the criticism of Congress policies and of its own understanding and actions and the lack of any effort to make any genuine self-criticism which would have really inspired the ranks and given new life to the party, the Right C.P. leadership has emphasised the importance of the Left and democratic forces coming together for the future. In fact, the resolution goes to the extent of saying that "the CPI and its units will be called upon more and more to take initiative in mobilising the Left and democratic forces in defence of the masses".

Here, again, the party and its units would have been enabled to properly shoulder this responsibility if only the leadership had examined how in the past it was its own positions that had come in the way of the Left and democratic forces coming together, how even in the recent elections, as stated earlier, in the three strongholds of the Left forces, West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, it had joined hands with the Congress to undermine their positions.

However, when the National Council talks this time of bringing Left and democratic forces together, there is a welcome departure.

For years together the Right C.P. leadership has proceeded on the basis that apart from itself, the democratic forces were all lined up behind the Congress and the unity of the two parties had become synonymous with unity of

Left and democratic forces. It had all along rejected our contention that there are democratic and progressive forces in the following of all the parties in the country. The Right C.P. leadership has now moved a considerable distance towards this position. The present National Council resolution calls for "vigorous efforts to establish unity of action wherever possible on mass and political issues with the CPM and the masses supporting it"; "to maintain and extend "unity with the Left and democratic forces in the Congress and the masses supporting it, as also of the CFD"; and "to take this line of unity to the vast masses who have voted for the Janata Party and to the democratic elements within the Janata Party itself."

Respond—in Words and Deeds

For a ling time, our Party has been appealing to the Right C.P. to retrace its steps and join the rest of the Left and democratic forces to defend our people, to rally them in the struggle to take the country firmly and rapidly along the correct path of advance.

The statement of the Central Committee of our Party on the post-election situation, emphasising again the urgent need for Left and democratic forces coming together, had stated:

"In these momentous times when quick events are taking place, when the mass of people are showing unprecedented initiative and sensitiveness to political changes, only the combined strength of the Left forces will succeed in guiding them firmly and decisively to inflict a complete defeat on the forces of dictatorship and authoritarianism."

It is our earnest hope that the Right Communist Party which has all along rejected such appeals from us will at least now respond to it—in words and deeds.

Appendix-XXVII

P. Sundarayya Nails Down a Right C.P. Canard*

Comrade P. Sundarayya, member of the Polit Bureau of the CPI(M), has released the following statement to the Press in Vijayawada on July 2:

The Right C.P. leaders in Andhra Pradesh and a group of Naxalites belonging to the Devulapalli Venkateswara Rao group are carrying on a vicious campaign against our Party that we were not in the forefront in condemning the repression on Naxalites since we were opposed to their policies and politics.

It is true that we were opposed to their politics, policies and actions. We appealed to them to give up their wrong policies and actions. We are glad that recently there has been some rethinking on the part of a large number of Naxalites and they have even issued statements that they are opposed to individual annihilation of the class enemy, and that they do not want to adopt violent means, but were forced to by the Government's violence against them.

Though we oppose their policies and actions and feel that they did immense harm to our party and to our cadres, we were in the forefront of all in repeatedly condemning the severe repression let loose on the Naxalites from the very beginning. We were the first to raise our voice against police atrocities, tortures and cold-blooded murders committed against them while announcing them as having taken place in so-called encounters.

Apart from public meetings and campaigns, I personally

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and on behalf of our Party, made representations to Sri Brahamananda Reddy, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and Sri Y. B. Chavan, the then Home Minister of India, as early as in 1969 and submitted a memorandum demanding stopping of these brutalities and killings.

It is the Right C.P. leaders who, allied and linked with the Congress of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and also partners in the Kerala Government along with the Congress under the Right C.P. Chief Minister Sri Achutha Menon, and linked with the Siddhartha Sankar Ray Ministry in West Bengal and with the Brahmananda Reddy and Vengal Rao Ministries in Andhra Pradesh, have to share the responsibility for these crimes of mass brutalities and killings by the Congress regime. It is reprehensible that they do not realise an iota of their enormous guilt and criminal responsibility. Even now they are not prepared to demand the dismissal of the Vengal Rao Government or disown their Kerala ex-Ministers for the many crimes committed. On the other hand, to cover up their own guilt, they are trying to pose before the public as if they have been always demanding the release of Naxalites and the stopping of their killings.

Today, the task of every democrat, and every lover of civil liberties is to demand that the Naxalites be released and allowed to rethink and adjust themselves to the democratic movement in the country and see that such brutalities, tortures and killings by the police never occur again in our country in future. Without doing this, the Right C.P. leaders' efforts and campaign of mudslinging on other parties, is nothing but trying to give an alibi to the Congress regimes who were wholly responsible for these atrocities.

I appeal to the ranks and cadres of the Right C.P. to raise their voice to stop their leaders from continuing the policy of giving alibies to the brutal deeds of the Congress regimes and join sincerely in the campaign for restoring fully civil liberties in our country and punishing those who are guilty of these inhuman and beastly atrocities.

Appendix-XXVIII

CPI(M) and the Right C.P.*

M. Basavapunnaiah

If the results of the Sixth General Elections signified the biggest debacle for the Congress Party which had its unbroken rule over the country for thirty long years, they proved to be an unremediable disaster to the entire political-ideological line of the Right Communist Party. The Right C.P. suffered a crushing defeat both in the matter of securing seats as well as votes in the Lok Sabha elections. This stunning blow threw the entire party into serious crisis and convulsions, restive party ranks confronting its leaders in a rebellious and defiant mood.

It had contested as many as 91 seats in 1977 as against 87 in 1971, but won only seven seats as against twenty-four it had held in the Fifth Lok Sabha. The toll in the forfeiture of deposits in the Sixth General Elections was more than doubled i.e., from 32 in 1971 to 79 in 1977! The percentage of votes as secured by the Right C.P. sharply dwindled, from 4.73 in 1971 to 2.82 in 1977. On top of this dismal record, the utterly unprincipled and opportunist election tactics of this party had become the topic of universal ridicule and derision.

The Left and progressive minded people in the country hoped that the severe shock that the Sixth General Election results had administered to the Right C.P. would awaken its leaders and make them do some serious rethinking and reassessing of their party's entire political line. But on reading its National Council resolution on Lok Sabha elections, all

*Published as a booklet in October 1977.

such hopes were shattered. It simply revealed how ossified and morbid their thinking had become, and how Right opportunism preached and practised over decades had completely corroded their elementary class outlook.

In a lengthy resolution of about 6500 words, this august body of the Right C.P. has performed some gimmicks of mock self-criticism. It unashamedly asserts that the party was completely correct in enthusiastically welcoming and supporting the emergency rule, but was wrong only in supporting it *too long*, even after the negative features had come to dominate. What positive features were there in this dark emergency rule ? When did the negative features come to the fore? Why did the leaders of the Right C.P. fail to react against the negative features for full seventeen months and demand the lifting of the emergency? There was no answer to be found to any of these questions since they did not want to give an answer, and were intent only on deceiving their party ranks.

The Right C.P. resolution admits that the party leadership was suffering under "the mistaken understanding that the Emergency could be used to bring about progressive shifts in the State power in a national democratic direction". Why and how could such an absurd and idiotic understanding be arrived at by party leadership which calls itself Communist, and which has a Chairman and General Secretary, both of whom were decorated with the "Order of Lenin" ? Neither did such a question arise in the Council's discussions nor could an answer be found by scanning every line of its resolution.

The National Council resolution assuming a serene tone rules that its leaders had overestimated *"the progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi"*. From where did this bankrupt assessment of Indira Gandhi and her Congress Party arise in June 1975, when these revisionist leaders were shouting from the housetops as early as in the middle of the year 1974 that she and her Government were shifting to the Right, surrendering to the monopolists,

wooing the multinationals and fiercely attacking the working people ? No such inconvenient questions were ever raised in the Council discussions.

The National Council resolution states that the Right C.P. was suffering from the serious ailment of a "wrong understanding" regarding struggle against anti-people policies, and "underplayed this struggle in order to avoid confrontation with the Indira Gandhi Government". Why this underplaying of the struggle aspect? And from where had this cowardice to confront the Indira Gandhi Government arisen despite the growing anti-people policies of the Government? No answers are available in the resolution, which makes every effort to cover up the crimes, and deceive its ranks.

The electoral line of the Right C.P., the resolution maintains, was completely correct since "no other electoral line was feasible in the circumstances". Then why was there a total debacle, more devastating than that of the Congress Party? The Right C.P., of course, has a ready-made answer, and that is : "It did not succeed because of the CPM's alliance with the Janata Party and the disruptionist, anti-Communist and anti-democratic activities of the most reactionary sections of the Congress." Such is the unashamed answer of the Right C.P. leaders. They argue that despite all the mistakes, blunders and even stupidities of their political line, they could evolve correct election tactics! And the reason for their party's debacle and their Congress ally's disaster has to be found elsewhere!

The Right C.P. resolution glibly welcomes the massive verdict of the people against the Congress misrule in the country as a whole. In the same breath it welcomes the defeat of the Marxists and their allies and the victory of the Congress and its hangers-on in Kerala! If someone were to point out the howling contradictions in their political-tactical line, the General Secretary of the Right C.P., Comrade Rajeswara Rao, is ready with the answer, "after all, life is full of contradictions".

The Right C.P. was the arch disruptor of the unity of the

Left and democratic forces in the country for a decade and more. It is indeed cheeky on its part to raise the slogan of Left and democratic unity in its latest Council resolution. It is frank enough to make it clear that its model of Left and democratic unity is a united front against the Janata Party and the CPI(Marxist) and a front along with the Congress Party and under the Congress Party's hegemony.

The leaders of the Right C.P., finding themselves in a fix, are unable to explain anything cogently. Their National Council resolution, at one place, grudgingly accepts that "the massive mandate (was) against the distortions and departures from democratic policies and institutions by the leadership of Indira Gandhi". It also states that "by the overall verdict, the people of our country have registered their massive protest against the gross misuse of the emergency powers and violation of all democratic norms and rights resorted to by the Congress Government in the recent period". "They have registered their massive protest against attacks on the working class in the form of bonus cut, imposition of CDS and suppression of all trade union rights, against heaping of unjust tax burdens on the working peasantry, against the indiscriminate suppression of civil liberties and freedom of the Press." Further, listing out the misdeeds of the Congress Government, the Right C.P. resolution accuses the policy-makers for "the failure to hold the price line and how it gravely hurt the majority of the people" and for adopting "the increasingly pro-monopolist economic policy and drift towards acceptance of the World Bank line of 'export oriented' growth and wooing of the multinationals led to justified grave apprehensions among many patriotic and democratic sections". It denounces the Congress Government for practising "blatantly anti-democratic partisanship of the censorship and official mass media" which "brought the Government into total disrepute and led to complete loss of credibility".

Having said enough to unhesitatingly characterise the policies and practice of the Congress Government as dictatorial and semi-fascist, the National Council resolution abruptly inserts a clause saying that "this mandate is not, however, a verdict against the nationally accepted progressive policies of economic self-reliance, strengthening of public sector" and so on and so forth.

The deceptive phrase "nationally accepted progressive policies" does not, of course, wash the sins of the Indira Gandhi Government which in practice blatantly violated these very same policies. What was left of these "nationally accepted policies" if the Government took to "the increasingly pro-monopolist economic policy", to the "working of the multinationals", to "the attacks on living standard and trade union rights of the working class" and to "the heaping of tax burdens on the working peasantry and oppressive methods of collection", etc.? What "progressive policies" were left to be implemented when "monstrous misuse of emergency powers against the common people, suppression of civil liberties of the democratic forces which created a suffocating atmosphere, the brutal assault on and atrocities committed particularly against the toiling people through compulsory sterilization and demolition of their dwelling places, large-scale arrests, harassment and persecution of innocent people" had become the order of the day?

The formulation that the massive mandate against the Congress Party and its Government is not a "verdict against the nationally accepted progressive policies" is deliberately made by the Right C.P. in order to cover up its own crime of collaboration and alliance with the Congress Government which imposed emergency rule and brought the country to the verge of a fascist dictatorial rule.

The Right C.P. resolution which said that "it is essential to examine the political line followed by our party (Right C.P.) in the recent period" neither dares to examine the political line, whether it is of the recent past or of the distant past, nor is it honest enough to admit its gravest mistakes in a forthright manner. In fact it still persists in the same old discredited political line.

A cold-blooded statement is made, saying that "the National Council of the C.P.I. supported declaration of the emergency in June 1975 taking into view the extremely serious situation prevalent at the time". A small tail was added to it, stating that the same National Council resolution warned that "under no circumstances must the emergency be used against the legitimate agitations and movements of the working people".

Did not the Right C.P. leaders know that the Government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi had already established enough anti-working-class credentials, when it was supporting the imposition of the emergency on June 26, 1975?

They knew it, and spelt it out, too, in so many words, when it suited them. In the report adopted by the Central Executive Committee in its meeting at New Delhi on May 22-25, 1974, the following observations were made on the issue of all-India railwaymen's strike and the role played by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her Government :

"The blow was struck against the whole thing by the arrests and breaking off of negotiations at the last minute just on the eve of the crucial negotiations.

"*...the Prime Minister had a direct hand in this.* The obvious aim was to precipitate a show-down with the railway workers as the first step towards extending this 'tough' line to the entire trade union front. The railway workers were to be the first victims of a blatantly reactionary policy towards the working class in order to appease the monopolists, internal and foreign.

".....the subsequent line of the Congress Government and its top leadership was to browbeat and terrorise the Left inside the Congress into submission to the Right and inveigle the C.P.I. into toeing the line of the bourgeoisie and betraying the working class." (Resolutions and Documents—July 31 to August 4, 1974, page 94, paras 3,4,5)

It is for the leaders of the Right C.P. to explain why the above assessment of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her Government and their hostile attitude towards the working class was conveniently forgotten by their party, and a completely

new evaluation was made of the entire thing—all between July 1974 and June 1975. It is obvious that the so-called warning in their resolution of support to the emergency, the warning that "under no circumstances must the emergency be used against the legitimate agitations and movements of the working people", was intended as a sop for the gullible among the working class to swallow the bitter pill of supporting the emergency.

Will the leaders of the Right C.P. explain why they could not and did not oppose the continuation of the emergency and demand its lifting for full eighteen months, even though the so-called "negative features had begun to come to the fore" soon after the imposition of the emergency. The Right C.P. election manifesto admitted that "within weeks of the proclamation of emergency the bureaucracy began to operate in an anti-people direction". And yet the Right C.P. leaders were heaping all-out praise for the gains of emergency, describing the draconic emergency law as a "pre-emptive strike" against reaction.

On the one hand the Right C.P. National Council resolution quotes a passage from its earlier resolution, supporting the emergency, which says that it had warned about the possible misuse of emergency in the hands of the bourgeois Government led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. On the other hand it puts out a bogus self-criticism that "a proper understanding was lacking that vast emergency powers could not be allowed to be retained in the hand of bourgeois State and its bureaucracy for a long time".

So the "self-criticism" finally boils down to the realization that it was completely correct to support the emergency, but it was incorrect to allow the emergency powers to remain in the hands of the bourgeois State "for a long time"! For a short time, how short one does not know, it is alright that a bourgeois State and Government enforces emergency rule on the people, according to our Right C.P. leaders ! Can anybody unravel the underlying dialectics of this special category of "Communist" leaders.

Do they stop there? No. They put forth another piece of atrocious 'self-criticism' saying that, "there was the mistaken understanding that the emergency could be used to bring about progressive shifts in state power in a national democratic direction". The using of emergency powers, in a bourgeois State, by a "Communist Party", to bring about progressive shifts in the State structure is really a masterpiece of 'creative' Marxism by Dange-Rajeshwara Rao and company. These Communist leaders contemplated utilizing emergency powers of the bourgeois-landlord State to transform that State into a national democratic State!

To cap these shocking and monstrous statements on the emergency powers of the bourgeois Government and the reasons for supporting it by the Right C.P., the National Council resolution solemnly declares that "the progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi was overestimated" by its leaders. Does this statement show their political honesty and truthfulness, let alone the correctness or otherwise of its contents?

As early as in the first week of August 1974, nearly a year before the imposition of emergency rule, the leaders of the Right C.P. were singing slightly different songs about Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her Government's policies. They were roundly denouncing her and her Government for making a shift to the Right. To quote the pertinent part of the resolution, it was stated that ".....the Congress Government, headed by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has been retreating before the counter-offensive of Right reaction and pressure of reactionary vested interests and giving dangerous concessions. The Indira Gandhi Government has reversed the policy of take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains, it is giving concessions and extending all facilities for expansion of monopolies bypassing the declared policies of our country. It has allowed the Indian monopolies to enter into collaboration agreements with foreign monopoly houses in a big way, thus permitting multinational companies to make

inroads into our country through these agreements. It has put the implementation of land ceiling and other progressive land legislations in cold storage. Finally, it has allowed corruption to take hold of all spheres of economic, political and cultural life of our country. Corruption is seriously undermining progressive trends and shaking people's confidence in the working of parliamentary democracy.

"On the other side, the Congress Government has been heaping heavy burdens on the masses of people and has been suppressing their struggles when they fight for their just demands with an iron hand."

In the same strain the resolution went on to state that "the Indira Gandhi Government has shifted to the Right in the economic sphere and is suppressing people's struggles with a heavy hand"; that "one of the most disturbing features of the present situation is that the Rightists within the ruling party are consolidating themselves with the direct encouragement from the leadership", and that "another feature of consolidation of Right reaction stands out in the enormous power top bureaucrats are allowed to wield in formulating the policies, sometimes bypassing even the Ministers and such concentration of power in their hands not only suits the monopolists and reaction, but undermines parliamentary democracy itself". (Resolutions and Documents, National Council, Communist Party of India, July-31-August 4, 1974, pages 6,7,8).

Such was the dark picture of Indira Gandhi and her Government drawn by the Right C.P. leaders in the July-August months of 1974.

May we know what big metamorphosis took place between July 1974 and June 1975 as to totally revise the above assessment made of Indira Gandhi and her Government, and lead the Right C.P. leaders to the stupid "understanding that the emergency could be used to bring about progressive shifts in the State power in a national democratic direction."

May we also know what miraculous changes occurred in Mrs. Gandhi and her Congress Party in which "the Rightists

are consolidating themselves with the direct encouragement from the leadership" between July 1974 and June 1975, so as to inspire the Right C.P. leadership into believing "the progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi ?"

There can be no sound and sensible explanation as to why such fantastic faith and trust in the emergency power of the bourgeoisie; the bourgeois-landlord State and Government, were entertained by the leaders of the Right C.P. The only explanation is that they had long ago abandoned the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, and took to unprincipled opportunism, Right-revisionism and a line of crassest class collaboration with the bourgeois-landlord Government and its political party, the Congress. It is really shocking to see a political party that still calls itself Communist, seeking to defend its support to the emergency rule of the Congress Government, even after the people *en masse* rose in revolt against the emergency rule and overthrew the Government that imposed the emergency. Thousands of honest Congressmen have begun to realise the enormity of the crime in imposing the emergency rule in June 1975 and yet the Right C.P. satellites of the Congress Party cling to their stand of supporting the emergency rule of the bourgeois-landlord State. Their blindness seems to have no limits.

When the Right C.P. leadership decided to shamelessly support the Congress Government and oppose all the class and mass struggles, it deliberately dubbed the leaders of these struggles as either Right-reactionary or Left-adventurist, and came forth with a different analysis and assessment of the Congress Party and Government. In defence of their dastardly support to the emergency, they put forth the following highly original, new treaties about the Indian bourgeoisie and its division into two, one revolutionary and the other counter-revolutionary. It was stated that the "point to be noted in this context is the fact that in India, as else where, the bourgeoisie is not a united whole. It has within itself a whole range of contradictions. In our context

particularly we do have the contradictory interests of the bourgeoisie : one section does have an anti-imperialistic national outlook opposed to the stand of the monopolistic section. *What we see in our country today is that one section of the bourgeoisie is using the State power against the most reactionary section of the bourgeoisie. This is a historic development, the parallel of which cannot be seen.* This became possible only due to the changed balance of forces not only on the national plane but also on the international plane. Put simply, if the Left and democratic movement in this country has not reached the present stage of development and if India had not established its close bonds of friendship with the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries but had remained as before linked up with the capitalist, imperialist world, we would not have witnessed this particular socio-political-economic phenomenon in our national body politic." (Fascism and the Politics of Power, a Right C.P. publication, August 1975, page 9,para 1)

Our readers will excuse us for these space-consuming quotations from the writings and publications of the Right C.P. We are compelled to do so in order to give no ground for the complaint that their viewpoint is either not fully given or is distorted. The above-cited passage of the Right C.P. publication speaks abundantly of its bankrupt class analysis of the Indian bourgeoisie, of the Indian State and Government and of the world correlation of forces all of which put together landed the party in a hopeless political-ideological mess. Even the ignominious electoral debacle of the Congress Party and its anti-people policies has not helped the Right C.P. ally to look at the living realities in the face and chart out a new path, abandoning the suicidal path of class collaboration and treachery to the cause of Socialism and Communism.

It may be of some use to the reader, if not to the Right C.P. leaders, to reproduce some pertinent formulations that gradually landed them in the present political soup from which they are unwilling to come out.

The political resolution of the Fourth Party Congress, in April 1956, had formulated the following :

"Democratic forces in India stand divided. The most important division is that between the democratic forces that follow the Congress on the one hand and the masses that follow the democratic Opposition parties on the other. Further, the democratic Opposition itself is divided mainly among the masses that follow the Communist Party, Praja Socialist Party and the Socialist Party."

For forging the broadest unity in the existing situation, "it has to be unity of the democratic and patriotic forces in all parties, of all those who are desirous of progress. It has to be directed towards the strengthening and acceleration of the progressive policies of the Government, while combating the anti-people and undemocratic policies and measures which still predominate in the internal sphere, with a view to modifying and reversing them."

Since "the Indian National Congress is the ruling party" and since the people have to fight against some anti-people policies "in these circumstances, *no question, therefore, arises of a general united front with the Congress*". "From this, however, it should *not be concluded that the democratic front will be an anti-Congress front.*" (Political Resolution, August 19-26, 1956, pages 26,29 and 30)

So it was neither for a general "united front with the Congress" nor an "anti-Congress front". This was the slippery formula evolved by the skilful architect of Indian Right revisionism, the late Ajoy Kumar Ghosh ! It had to be evolved because two-thirds of the delegates at the Congress firmly stood for the forging of the democratic front against the Congress Government and its misrule, while one-third of the delegates fought a determined battle for a democratic front along with the Congress Party and Government.

The results of the Second General Elections in March 1957 and the victory of the Communist Party and its allies defeating the Congress in Kerala, imposed some temporary hurdles to the onward drive to unity and united front with

the Congress Party and Government. But the drive of the Right revisionists inside the leadership for a tactical line of united front between the Congress and the Communist Party was not abandoned, though it was somewhat modified and slowed down for a while.

By April 1958, two years following the Fourth Party Congress, the Extraordinary Fifth Congress of the Party was held in Amritsar. It gave a long list of "activities of Right reaction" and noted how "parties of communal and feudal reaction, like the Jana Sangha, the Akali Party of the Punjab, and the Ganatantra Parishad of Orissa as well as separatist parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu" were utilizing the situation to consolidate their position.

To balance the list of activities of "extreme Right reaction" another big list of anti-people policies of the ruling Congress party and Government was made out, in order to push the Right-reformist line in the new conditions. What was that new tactical line? It was: "It is precisely these policies of the Government that have strengthened the position of these anti-national forces in our economic and political life and offered them opportunities to build their links with foreign monopolists and to resort to tactics of blackmail and pressure.The extreme Right, therefore, cannot be defeated without a *simultaneous battle waged with determination and vigour to defeat the anti-people policies of the Government" and also"to defeat Right-wing reaction".*

It concluded, "there is common ground for united activity between the masses following the Congress and our Party for defending and popularising India's foreign policy, realising the aims and targets of the Five-year Plan and ensuring that maximum benefits are secured for the people under its schemes and projects". (Resolution adopted by the Extraordinary Party Congress, Amritsar, April 1958, pages 6, 10, 17 and 18)

Why this advocacy of "simultaneous battle", and why discover a "common ground for united activity between" Congress masses and Communist masses alone, and why

not between masses under whichever party's influence they were ? It is anybody's guess.

In another three years, the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of India was held in Vijaywada between April 7 and 16, 1961. The Political Resolution adopted at the Sixth Party Congress marked another big shift in the direction of Right-opportunism, and Congress-Communist collaboration. What was the ground for the advocacy of this new Right-ward shift ?

It was stated that "the forces of extreme reaction have now established an open independent political party of their own, Swatantra Party, comprising within its ranks a number of big landlords and monopolists, ex-Generals, former Princes, disgruntled politicians and American lobbymen". "The Right inside the Congress feels emboldened and the Swatantra finds powerful allies among the Right inside the Congress." Hence it was found essential to build a broad united front to fight and defeat this menace.

How to build such a broad front ? Which were the political parties and forces that could comprise that front ? The following passages provided the answers :

"Our Party has always advocated close co-operation and unity between Left parties. But the leadership of some of these parties has become, in many respects, more Rightist than the Congress."

"The Congress has been and is an extremely important factor in the political life of our country"; "it is taking measures to consolidate independence under Nehru's leadership"; "the influence of the Congress.....is vast and extensive, and it extends to all classes, including big sections of the working class .....to the peasantry, the artisans, intellectuals, and others"; and "Nehru's influence is far wider and we cannot build the National Democratic Front by ignoring this big reality of the Indian situation."

Then what followed from all this ?

"From this it does not follow, however, that a general united front with the Congress is possible *today*—that is

with the Congress as it is. Our relations will inevitably be one of unity and struggle. The Congress is the organ of the national bourgeoisie as a *whole*—including its Right wing".

So the united front with the Congress was not possible in April 1961, since it was the organ of the whole of the Indian bourgeoisie, i.e., the monopolists and non-monopolists, and the C.P.I. had to work out a tactical line which eventually should lead to the elimination of the monopolists section of the bourgeoisie, and then pave the way for forging of the Congress-Communist United front. Such a perspective was, of course, opened up in the last half of the year 1969 when the Congress split took place, and the Congress (O) as the representative of the monopolists was thrown out of the ruling Congress Party.

Coming back to the point under discussion, what was the immediate line of action advocated in the April 1961 resolution of the Sixth Party Congress?

It was formulated in the following manner:

(1) "Policies and measures which are hitting the masses, giving rise to discontent and frustration are the policies of the Congress and its Government. It is this discontent that is utilised by Right reaction to mislead the masses and strengthen itself. At the same time, these policies cannot be fought effectively either by *our own strength or even only by the unity of the Left forces* : the broadening and deepening of the struggle against these policies requires the drawing into it of a big section of the people who are in the Congress and loyal to it."

(2) "A large part of the forces of the Right are inside the Congress. At the *same time,* the bulk of those who are our potential allies are *also* inside the Congress."

Consistent with the self-conflicting analysis made above, a curious sort of conclusion was reached : "We must look upon democrats inside the Congress and the mass of Congressmen as our friends and potential allies in the struggle for consolidation of political independence, defence of

parliamentary democracy, of foreign policy, public sector, agrarian reforms, etc. Ours must be a fraternal attitude."

Thus a highly slippery syllogism was built.

(a) The Congress policies are giving rise to mass discontent which is being utilised by the Right-reactionary forces to mislead people and strengthen their hand.

(b) Such anti-people policies cannot be defeated either by the CPI's own strength or the united strength of all the Left forces.

(c) In order to defeat those anti-people policies of the Congress, the CPI had to join hands with the mass of the Congressmen, treating them as our friends and political allies.

As pointed out in the above passages, the Right C.P. leadership had developed a pessimistic, cynical and hostile attitude to the unity of the Left as well as the Left and democratic forces, as in its opinion such a combination of forces was incompetent to defeat the anti-people policies.

It, at the same time, had arrived at the conclusion that such a reversal of the anti-people policies of the Congress could be effected only by an alliance with the mass of Congressmen.

In order to win the mass of Congressmen, the formula of unity and struggle, as an integral part of united front with the Congress was evolved.

The Right C.P. leaders were waiting too impatiently to plunge headlong into the above tactics. They found a godsend opportunity in the last quarter of the year 1969 ,when not only the Congress split came as a hardly excuse, but the ruling Congress Party was badly in need of an alliance with the Right C.P., particularly in Kerala and West Bengal, to disrupt the Marxist-led Left and democratic Government, and to replace them with Congress-dominated State Governments.

There was, of course, an interesting interlude during the period 1967-69 when the Congress Party had suffered serious reverses in the Fourth General Elections, losing its majority in as many as eight States and its majority reduced in the Lok Sabha drastically. The Right C.P. leaders, throwing aside

all their laboured thesis about the class character of the Congress Party and Government, joined hands with all the Right Opposition parties such as the Jana Sangha, Bharatiya Kranti Dal and Swatantra, and set up anti-Congress Coalition Governments in States like Bihar, U.P. and Punjab. This was the height of their opportunism, and no explanation has been given to-date for this political somersault and "blind" anti-Congressism!

The history of the last six years and more since their adoption of the anti-Marxist line in Kerala and West Bengal clearly demonstrated that the Right C.P. leadership while indulging in the deceptive talk of fighting against Right reaction, both inside and outside the Congress, was in practice viciously fighting against the CPI(M) and its Left and democratic allies. Having systematically disrupted the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country, having built the Congress-Right C.P. alliance as the substitute to Left and democratic unity, and having, in this process, built the authoritarian, semi-fascist and emergency Congress regime, which was later to be demolished at the hustings in March 1977, the National Council resolution, now, hypocritically bemoans that "the organised political forces of the Left and democrats have weakened generally" and "that in the absence of the viable Left and democratic alternative, the governmental power at the Centre has passed into the hands of the Right reactionaries."

Whether the power at the Centre has passed into the hands of those who are opposed to the so-called progressive policies of the Congress Party as the Right C.P. analysis lament, or it has passed into the hands of those who are opposed to the emergency rule and authoritarian regime of the Congress Party, is no more an issue to be debated. Whatever the political antecedents of the leaders of the Janata Party and in whichever direction they are destined to march in the *long run*, the historic victory that the Janata Party has scored in the election is due to its doughty championing of the cause of the people's civil liberties, democratic rights and

parliamentary democracy, against the Congress Party's drive to destroy democratic freedoms and set up a fascist dictatorship. The Right C.P. itself in its resolution on General Elections admits the same when it states : "*the main reason for this election result is undoubtedly the monstrous misuse of the emergency powers against the common people, the suppression of the civil liberties of the democratic forces.....the brutal assault on and atrocities committed against the toiling people.....large-scale arrests, harassment and persecution of innocent people.*"

Hence the main reason for the massive verdict against the Congress Party, on a countrywide scale, was the Congress Party's misrule, and in particular its misdeeds committed during the twenty months of emergency rule. Instead of seeing this stark reality and humbly drawing the necessary lessons from the election results, the National Council Resolution makes a shameless attempt to cover up the total fiasco of the party's Right-revisionist political-ideological line, and to teach perverse lessons to its ranks and following.

While on the one hand reeling under the stunning blow delivered by the Indian electorate to the Congress Party and its Right C.P. ally on a national scale, the National Council resolution, on the other, seeks solace from the electoral victories scored in Kerala and Tamil Nadu by the Congress and its allies, including the Right C.P. It has the temerity to gloat over the victory of the Congress-led front in Kerala against the Marxist-led front and observe that "it should serve as an eye opener to the CPM cadres and masses." It discovers one political reason for the all-India debacle, another for the West Bengal rout of the Congress-Right C.P. allies, and still a third different political reason for the victory of the Congress front in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Such is the ingenious logic born out of the superb political line of the Right C.P., evolved over years!

Now the wheel had turned its full circle. The Right opportunist analysis of the Congress Party, its Government and its policies, depicting them as basically anti-feudal,

anti-monopolist, anti-imperialist and national democratic by the Right C.P. has proved throughly bankrupt. Its rabid advocacy and blind practising of unity and united front with the Congress Party and Government did prove fatal to the party, bringing it and its political line into disrepute and ridicule among the people. Life and history have demonstrated that it is not the CPI (Marxist) that is suffering from blind anti-Congressism as the Right Communist pundits are systematically slandering, but it is the blind pro-Congressism of the Right C.P. and its factional hatred and hostility towards the CPI (Marxist) that inflicted great damage on the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country, and finally reduced the Right C.P. into a shambles.

The Right C.P., which has been for years denouncing all the Opposition parties as parties of extreme Right reaction and Left adventurism, went one step forward, during the period of emergency and some months before, to characterise them as fasicst forces, out to establish a reactionary fascist dictatorship. It looked to the Congress Party and its Government to defend democracy and to rescue the country from the impending danger of Jaya Prakash's brand of fascism ! But as irony has it, the Indian electorate trounced the emergency rule and semi-fascist regime of the Congress Party and its Right C.P. ally, and voted for the Congress Party and its allies to defend democracy and save the country from the clutches of the one-party authoritarian regime and its foul attempt of setting up a dynasty rule.

And yet, the Right C.P. spokesmen say that people in the Southern States see nothing in the Janata Party except a "combination of landlords and reactionary sections". Is it their contention that people there saw in the Congress candidates paragons of democracy and anti-landlordism ? Can they dare deny that scores of Congress candidates for the Lok Sabha in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and elsewhere, were big landlords, former zamindars and even former princes ? Why sidetrack the burning issue under debate, and bring forth the "genesis" of Right reaction in India,

deliberately white-washing the Right reaction of the Congress which came on top, and was running amuck until it was routed at the recent polls?

The Right C.P. stalwarts seek to frighten the Left and democratic forces with the potential threat from the hidden Rightist forces in the Janata Party, and appeal to them to come forward for united action along with them to fight against the "Right reactionary demon still in the womb". They are so oblivious to the present realities that the Janata Government, at the moment, is busy demolishing the demons and monsters created by the Congress emergency rule, and the defeated Congress is far from vanquished and is waging treacherous rearguard battles in a dogged defence of its defeated policies. Instead of joining such demolition operations of the Janata Government the Right C.P.'s leading lights are still engaged in preaching and practising alliance with the Congress Party, while crying wolf about Janata's "Right reaction".

The CPI(M) unlike the Right C.P. has never suffered either from the criminal illusion that the Congress led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi represents the anti-imperialist and non-monopolist national bourgeoisie or that the Janata and its components were nothing but the sworn champions of Indian monopolists and foreign imperialists. It never subscribed to the bogus Right-opportunist assessment that every fissure, rift and split in the former ruling Congress Party and its Government, was a split between the monopolists and non-monopolists or the anti-imperialists and pro-imperialists.

The CPI(M) is quite aware that the immediate cause of the rout of the Congress Party at the polls was its twenty-month-long emergency rule and its attempt to perpetuate it. However it alone will not explain everything. The question naturally arises as to why the Congress Government had to fall back on emergency rule, and why it had embarked on the path of destruction of democratic rights and liberties of the people, and even the parliamentary democratic institutions. It is obvious that the root cause of the crisis for parliamentary

democracy in our country will have to be traced to the bankrupt path of capitalist development and its deepening crisis. The defence of democratic rights and liberties of the people is not compatible with the defence of the profits of the landlords, big capitalists and foreign monopolists. The defence of democratic rights and liberties of the people, and for that matter the defence of parliamentary democracy, demands the decisive rejection of the capitalist path, and the adoption of the alternative popular democratic path.

If the Janata Government persists in the same discredited capitalist path, and the popular forces fail in forging necessary sanctions to defeat the capitalist path, there need be no doubt that the Janata Government too will have to encounter the same situation as its predecessor had to face, namely, curtail the rights and liberties of the people to persist in the path of capitalist development. The future alone will show how things will shape in our country, and how the popular forces, the Left and democratic forces in particular, will play their expected role.

It is in this context that the Right C.P.'s latest slogans of Left unity, the unity of Left and democratic forces, united action on issues between the Right C.P. and the CPI(M), etc., will have to be closely examined.

A peep into the history of the Right C.P.'s political line and its evolution at different turns reveals that it was taking contradictory positions from time to time on a number of issues that were coming up before the people. At different turns of events, whenever its political-tactical line was proving wrong and getting exposed to the sharp criticism of the party ranks and its mass following, its leaders pretended that they were seeing the realities and correcting the mistakes. In fact, there had been numerous occasions when the leaders openly admitted mistakes and promised to rectify them. But the reality was that all such self-criticism, admission of mistakes and corrections were repudiated at the next first opportunity that the leaders of the Right C.P. got. Under the pressure of popular reaction and in face of criticism

of the militant rank and file of the Right C.P., its leaders were compelled to confess their mistakes, and even to make several sharp and critical statements of the Congress Government and its policies, but they again and again reverted to the same old path of class collaboration and alliance with the Congress Party and Government. Such being the past, the half-hearted and superficial self-cirticism made in the National Council resolution on the election results would neither satisfy the people nor the ranks of the Right C.P. who are in a rebellious mood against their elusive leadership which has brought the party to the present plight.

A section of the Right C.P. leaders, as seen from their recent statements and writings, appears to have realised the enormity of their political mistakes and are inclined to rethink and revise their entire line. And yet they are afraid of the logical consequences of such owning up of the mistakes, and breaking away with the opportunist line. The other dominant section of the leaders is still utterly blind, and insists on pursuing the same old discredited line of cooperation and alliance with the Congress Party which still defends its emergency rule and the 42nd Amendment Act which has institutionalised the emergency provisions.

The Right C.P. leaders continue to proclaim that they are opposed to the extention of the term of Legislative Assemblies for six years, and yet they support the Congress Party to perpetuate itself in office in several States, even though their five-year term is long ago completed. They pretend to respect the people's verdict in the Lok Sabha elections, but continue to support the Congress Party and its rule in several States, even though the massive people's verdict is clearly against the Congress Party and its misrule in the entire country.

The National Council resolution of the Right C.P. puts forth the thesis that unity between the "CPI and CPI(M)" is the necessary first step in the struggle to forge the unity of all the Left and democratic forces in the country, but in practice it clings to the anti-Marxist Coalition Government

in Kerala. It shrieks the loudest against the so-called caucus of Sanjay Gandhi but had no scruples whatsoever in lending support to the Tiwari Government of U.P. till it was dissolved—a Government headed by the notorious Sanjay Gandhi's yes-man.

The Right C.P. while raising the slogan of united action, has always been in the habit of subordinating it to its political requirement of alliance with the Congress Party and Government. There are any number of instances, over years in the past that the unity in action proposed by the CPI(M) on trade union and kisan fronts was rejected outright, on one or another pretext.

The Central Committee of the CPI(M) is of the view that until and unless the leaders of the Right C.P. make a clean break with the Kerala anti-Marxist Coalition, and with the line of alliance with the Congress Party and its hangers-on, it is futile to talk of unity between the CPI(M) and the Right C.P.

The CC appeals to the leaders and ranks of the Right C.P. to unequivocally discard their suicidal policy of class collaboration, and join the mainstream of all other Left and democratic forces which are pledged to liquidate the legacies of emergency rule and remnants of the authoritarian regime. Once these are liquidated, the Left and democratic forces, to whichever political parties or mass organisations they might at present owe allegiance, have to shoulder the enormous task of defending and advancing the cause of various sections of our people, to uplift them economically, politically and socially. It is in the struggle to fulfil this task that the Left and democratic forces can unite and strengthen themselves and emerge as the real alternative to bourgeois-landlord rule. The CC hopes that the ranks of the Right C.P. would rise to the occasion and demand that their leaders make an honest break with the right opportunist policy, pursued for long and thus enable the party to overcome the grim crisis in which it is caught at present.

Appendix-XXIX

Right Communist Party Continues its Old Bankrupt Line*

M. Basavapunnaiah

The National Council of the Right C.P., meeting from July 9 to 12, passed a number of resolutions. Two of them—"Present Situation and Tasks" and "Assembly Election Review"—raise a number of topical questions which cannot but be of interest to the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

The two resolutions of the National Council of the Right C.P. have assessed the national political situation, analysed the class character and role of both the Janata Party and the Congress Party, raised the issue of Communist unity, i.e., unity between the CPI(M), Right C.P. and the Naxalites, projected the slogan of Left and democratic unity under the new changed conditions, made the proposal for unity in action between the CPI(M) and the Right C.P. and also come out with a new definition of the class character of the Left Front Government in West Bengal and the anti-Marxist United Front Government of Kerala.

Back to Old Positions

A study of these two resolutions would convince any unbiased person that the Right C.P. leadership, contrary to the eager expectations of the ranks of that party as well as several progressive and pro-Communist elements, has virtually gone back to its pre-general election political stand, giving a go-by to whatever small turn it appeared to be

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taking in a correct direction, in its resolutions immediately after the March Lok Sabha elections.

The Right C.P. leadership, which was somewhat uncertain and equivocal in its attitude to the Janata Party and Government following the rout of the Congress and its own debacle in the Lok Sabha elections, is now unequivocal in its denunciation of the Janata Party and Government as stooges of imperialism, monopoly capitalism and landlordism. The National Council resolution on "Present Situation and Tasks" says that "the victory of the Janata Party in the State Assembly elections represents a further consolidation of the power of the Rightist forces in our society".

The resolution, while making the passing observation that "during the few months the Janata Party has been in power, it has taken a number of steps to remove some of the grotesque distortions in our democratic system that were brought about by the Indira Gandhi Government during the period of Emergency", goes on to catalogue a long list of omissions and commissions during the last four months of Janata rule, and roundly denounces it as arch reactionary. In support of this contention the Right C.P. resolution states that "the Janata Government is being praised to the skies and backed to the hilt by the imperialist Powers, the monopolists, landlords and other powerful exploiters" and that "it is no accident that these sections of the vested interests and the Press who were vociferous admirers of the reactionary Congress caucus during the Emergency have become the outspoken champions of the Janata Party".

Inconvenient Question

The Right C.P. leaders, of course, do not raise the inconvenient question as to why the Congress Party which had an unbroken monopoly of power for full thirty years was routed in the March elections by the Janata Party, and why it was trounced a second time, in the course of three months, in the Assembly elections. It appears that the two big verdicts the electorate had given in favour of the Janata Party have

either no meaning to our Right C.P. leaders or they only want to draw the "lesson" that the illiterate and gullible masses were successfully cheated by Janata demagogy. The people's verdict against the Congress Party and its anti-people policies of full three decades has no wider meaning and significance to the Right C.P. than to see in them an expression of anger against Sanjay Gandhi's caucus and its misdeeds, particularly during the later phase of the Emergency period. The Right C.P. leadership is extremely sad because the same "Right reactionary forces" which were being repeatedly defeated and trounced in 1969, 1971, 1972 and on June 25, 1975—thanks to the skilful tactical leadership provided by the Right C.P.—are back again after the March and June elections, this time installed in power at the Centre and in most of the States.

Assessment of Janata

The Right C.P. leaders appear to draw comfort from the fact that the greater part of the Janata Party leadership comprises the traditional Right Opposition parties, that it essentially represents the big bourgeois and landlord interests, that its economic policies are those that defend and uphold the capitalist path, and that is what was being voiced by it for many years. They cleanly bypass the pro-monopolist, pro-landlord and pro-collaborationist role of the Congress Party and its Government during the last three decades, and try to argue that the historic defeat of Congress rule in India was brought about because of the misdeeds of the "caucus" and some "excesses" in the later phase of the Emergency.

Principal Target

In short, the Right C.P.'s principal target of attack as the main enemy of the Indian people remains the same, i.e., "forces of Right reaction", as was its contention since the middle of 1969. Events, according to it, have proved, and four months of Janata Party rule at the Centre has also confirmed the correctness of the political line of the Right

C.P. Hence, its demand on the CPI(M) to join the Right C.P.-Congress Coalition Government in Kerala, and make it the nucleus of Left and democratic unity in the country. It is also prepared to join the present West Bengal Left Front Government, to transform it into a "genuine" Left Government since "in West Bengal the CPM and some other Left parties have also established their Government" excluding the Right C.P. Thus in both Kerala and West Bengal the conditions are ripe, according to the Right C.P. resolution, to set up anti-Janata State Governments which will become the model for forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces, and also "give confidence to the masses and present the true alternative before the nation".

Total Disagreement

The CPI(M) is in total disagreement with the entire assessment of the Janata Party made by the Right C.P. and the tactical line it projects for building the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country. It considers the whole new line of the Right C.P. resolution as a crude attempt to sell the old bankrupt pro-Congress line, characterising the former ruling Congress Party as one essentially representing the anti-landlord, anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist forces.

While the Right C.P. resolution bemoans the rout of the Congress Party and the triumph of the Janata Party in the Assembly elections of June 1977, as a grievous setback to the democratic forces and as representing further consolidation of the power of the Right forces, the resolution of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) "On Post-Election Situation" greets the people in different States for inflicting the massive defeat on the Congress Party and thus delivering a further shattering blow on the forces of despotism and dictatorship.

The resolution of our CC further states that "this massive vote against the Congress once more reveals that it is not a temporary reaction to some 'excesses' but a calculated vital blow struck in defence of democracy and people's right".

While the Right C.P. resolution makes the Janata Governments at the Centre and in the States its principal and immediate target of attack on the plea that the Janata Party represents "extreme Right reactionary forces", the Central Committee of the CPI(M) assures these Governments that "it will support and co-operate in all measures for the advance of the democratic rights of the people and the satisfaction of their economic demands" while reserving to itself "the right to criticise and oppose measures which it considers detrimental to popular interests".

Why does the CPI(M) extend its co-operation to the Janata Party in its struggle against the Congress Party? It extends its support and co-operation to the Janata Party not because it looks upon the Janata Party and its Government as basically different in class character from the Congress and its former regime nor has it any illusion that the Janata Party will give up the capitalist path of development and adopt a progressive people's path.

Why Support to Janata

The CPI(M) does not support and extend co-operation to the Janata Party on the absurd plea that the Right C.P. was putting forward for supporting and collaborating with the Congress Party and Government, namely, that the Indian State is not a bourgeois-landlord State led by the big bourgeoisie, and that the Congress Party which was in power at the Centre and in most of the States represents the anti-landlord, anti-monopoly and anti-foreign capital sections.

The CPI(M) was and is supporting the Janata Party since it looks upon the Janata Party as the major political force in the battle for the defence of democratic rights and civil liberties of the people, and in defeating the dangerous forces of authoritarianism and dictatorship represented by the Congress Party.

The CPI(M) does not subscribe to the naive and misleading thesis that with the electoral defeat of the Congress in the March and June elections, the danger of a challenge

from the Congress Party and its political platform of authoritarianism and dictatorship has disappeared.

Congress Still a Force

Despite its devastating defeat the electoral strength of the Congress in many States is considerable. It is the most organised all-India political force; it commands the majority in the Rajya Sabha; it has a strength of 150 or so in the Lok Sabha which comprises 544 members; its leadership neither repents its Emergency rule nor is it willing to give up the political platform of one-party monopoly rule and authoritarianism; it has immense resources—material and political; and it has its class brothers in the Janata Party who act as its reserves—P.C. Sen of West Bengal and S.K. Patil of Bombay have already shown their disruptive hands. The MISA still adorns the Statute Book, and the 42nd amendment to the Constitution which has institutionalised the Emergency powers of the Executive has not yet been repealed.

The Janata Party is committed to the entire people to undo all these anti-democratic measures and to dismantle the entire dictatorial framework erected under the Emergency rule. It also has given solemn assurances to the electorate that it will introduce far-reaching electoral reforms to ensure free, fair and democratic elections.

The CPI(M) cannot afford to dismiss this struggle in defence of the democratic rights and liberties of the people as of no consequence; it cannot oblige the Right C.P. comrades who want us to dismiss it as unimportant, and take up the "fundamentalist" stand that the Janata Party and the Congress represent the same classes, that the Janata Party is more dangerous because it is in power, that many of its top leaders are from the former Right Opposition parties, etc.

In reality, this so-called "fundamentalist" class approach of our Right C.P. comrades objectively amounts to abandoning the struggle for allies in defence of democracy, and the continuation of collaboration with the Congress Party which has landed the country in the present economic and political

plight during its unbroken rule of the last thirty years. The CPI(M) could not oblige the Right C.P. leaders on this score in the past, and cannot oblige them as long as the democratic potentialities of the Janata Party are not exhausted, and as long as the Janata Party and Government respond to our Party's support and co-operation in this regard.

The struggle in defence of bourgeois democratic rights and liberties, and the struggle for allies in the battle for defence of democracy have acquired added importance in the present-day context because of the deep crisis that has engulfed the path of capitalist development and the consequent frequent temptations goading the ruling class parties to resort to dictatorial measures as the only way out of the crisis.

Break with Congress

That is how matters stand. That is how the two diametrically opposed assessment of the Janata Party and the Congress by the CPI(M) and the Right C.P. stands. Why hide this ugly reality and deceive those who keenly desire unity among "Communists" and those who earnestly want the unity of Left and democratic forces in the country to be forged? A clean break with the policies of collaboration with the Congress Party is what is expected of the Right C.P. leaders. It is no use branding this demand as "putting preconditions" for unity and united activities or saying that the CPI(M) is adopting a "high and mighty" attitude.

The resolution of the National Council expresses its sorrow at the present state of the Congress which "continues to be in a state of demoralisation and disarray". "The reactionary caucus is not only powerful in the leading positions of that party at the Centre and in many States, but is striving to establish its exclusive control and domination", and "the Congress *as a whole* has not broken from the reactionary policies and measures of the *recent past* which have led to its debacle caused by mass disenchantment and revulsion". (Emphasis added).

Deceptive Thesis

In the Right C.P.'s view it was the crime of being reactionary in the "recent past" that led the Congress to its defeat and debacle! In other words, this is nothing but echoing the shameless self-justificatory stand of the former Premier, Indira Gandhi, who doggedly maintains that the policies of her Government were correct, the imposition of the Emergency and the enactment of the 42nd amendment were also correct. Only there were some bureaucratic excesses in the later phase of the Emergency rule. It is a blatant attempt to justify the Congress-Right C.P. collaboration over the years, pleading that Congress policies and measures had been correct by and large, that the grievous mistakes were committed only in the recent past, that the responsibility for these mistakes rests with the "reactionary caucus", that the "Congress as a whole" has not broken from these erroneous policies, and that the bulk of the "Left and democratic forces within it are coming forward with the demand that their party break away from the caucus and its reactionary policies, and adopt Left-of-Centre policies and programmes and work together with other progressive and democratic parties and forces".

Nobody denies that some Congressmen express opposition to the caucus leadership and demand breaking away with some policies which had reduced their thirty-year-old rule to a shambles. Also, nobody denies that some progressive and democratic sections are there in the Congress at different levels of the party. But that is not what the Right C.P. leaders have been proclaiming since long. They were, first of all, highly exaggerating the strength of the so-called "Left and democratic forces" in the then ruling Congress Party, and secondly, they were treating the Congress Party as a whole as a progressive, democratic, anti-monopolist and anti-imperialist organisation, and thirdly, in furtherance of such an understanding of the Congress they were fanatically advocating and practising the tactics of collaboration and united front with the Congress Party and Government. If in the earlier period they were naming some Congress

leaders from time to time as reactionary and were urging the rest of the Congress leaders to isolate them, in the recent period they have been harping on the so-called "reactionary caucus" as though this caucus was something alien to the Congress leadership and the debacle of the thirty-year-old rule of the Congress was because of this caucus and its misdeeds alone. The thesis that the Congress minus the caucus and its reactionary policies is all progressive, Left and democratic, is a dangerously deceptive thesis providing an alibi to the entire misrule and anti-people policies and practice of the Congress Party and its Government over the decades.

Time-old Slogan

If some political leaders including Janata Party leaders are making statements that the removal of Indira Gandhi from the leadership of the Congress Party will convert the Congress into a democratic and progressive national alternative to the Janata Party, the Right C.P. leaders are advocating that the removal of the "reactionary caucus"—they do not even include in it the name of Indira Gandhi—would transform the Congress into a Left and democratic party, that a fight for this by the Left and democratic forces inside the Congress has already begun in a big way and it is going to "adopt Left-of-Centre policies and programmes and work together with other progressive and democratic parties and forces". This is the time-old Right C.P. slogan of "Congress-Communist unity", and it is being brought up-to-date to suit the changed conditions following the Congress debacle in the March and June elections in the country.

Bogged Down in Wrong Line

To conclude this point, the Right C.P. leadership is so bogged down in its totally erroneous and pro-Congress political line, practised over years that it is unable to boldly discard it even though life and history have proved the utter bankruptcy of that political tactical line. Any sharp criticism of this political line of the Right C.P. causes extreme irritation

among the leaders of that party. They react and say that the leaders of the CPI(M) are asking them to go before them in sack cloth and ashes, on bended knees, that the CPI(M) leaders are putting absurd preconditions for talks for unity and united action between the two parties, and they are offering support and co-operation to the "Right reactionary" Janata Party and its Government.

While in reality the Right C.P. is directing its main edge of attack against the Janata Party and Government, shielding the Congress Party and its three decades of anti-people rule by throwing the blame on the caucus and its misdeeds "in the recent past", it is putting forward a seemingly radical slogan of urgently forging the unity of the Left and democratic forces. It argues that "neither a Government of the Janata Party nor a Congress Government can solve the problems of the country" and hence the urgency of uniting the Left and democratic forces. To put it mildly, it is a dubious slogan intended to divert and mislead the dissenting Right C.P. ranks who are demanding a clean break with the pro-Congress policies of the past which not only proved politically disastrous for the Right C.P. and to the unity of the Communist movement in India, but also caused immense damage to the cause of the unity of the Left and democratic forces in the country.

Ganging up with Caucus

The Right C.P. leaders are eloquent in verbally decrying the so-called "reactionary caucus" in the Congress, but in practice they do not hesitate to gang up with the same caucus leaders in different States, if it only suits their opportunist tactics. Funnily enough they write in their Assembly election review that their Central Executive Committee "ruled out programmatic alliance with the Congress" and directed the State units to "have electoral alliance with the Congress in States wherever it is desirable and possible". Notwithstanding all their denunciation of the Congress caucus at the Centre and in different States, they have allied with the

same caucus leaders in the States of U.P., Bihar, Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi. Strangely enough in West Bengal, where the leadership of the Congress was supposed to be in the hands of anti-caucus elements, the alliance between the Right C.P. and Congress could not be forged! In Kerala the Right C.P. is a junior partner in the State's Coalition Government under the leadership of the Congress Party, a Coalition Government directed against the CPI(M) and its allies since October 1969.

In face of these facts, how can one take the Right C.P. seriously when it says that neither a Congress nor a Janata Government can solve the problems of the country, and a Left and democratic alternative alone is the real way out? It is evident that their concept of Left and democratic alternative includes the Congress Party—the proof positive of it being the present Kerala Coalition Government which is now being christened by the Right C.P. resolution as a "Left and democratic Government".

To quote the text of the resolution, "It is a welcome development that now alongside the Left and democratic Government in Kerala, in West Bengal the CPI(M) and some other Left parties have also established their Government".

The subtle difference shown by the Right C.P. in characterising the Kerala and West Bengal Governments cannot but be noted. The Kerala Government which is a coalition of the Congress, the Kerala Congress, Muslim League, the Right C.P., Kerala RSP, etc., is being recognised as a full-fledged Left and democratic Government, even though it is a coalition that has been in existence since 1969 in open hostility and opposition to the CPI(M) and its allies, and which is now dominated and led by the Congress Party.

But when it comes to the Government of West Bengal the Right C.P. resolution is unwilling to accept it as a Left Front Government, probably because of the absence of one Left party, i.e., the Right C.P. in it. It is unable to characterise it as a Left and democratic Government, maybe because the Right C.P. as well as the "democratic" Congress

Party find no place in that Left Front Government. Hence it is described as a Government established by "the CPM and some other Left parties".

Such is the ingenuity of our Right C.P. comrades.

The Right C.P. resolution while projecting its own concept of Left and democratic unity readily offers its co-operation to join the Left Front Government of West Bengal, maybe to transform it into a "full-fledged Left Front Government". In the same strain it extends its invitation to the CPI(M) to join the Kerala Coalition Government led by the "progressive" A.K. Antony, demanding that the CPI(M) respond to its call. If we ask the Right C.P. leaders why their party is functioning as an ally of the Congress in the Coalition Government of Kerala in utter violation of the party's stand which "ruled out programmatic alliance with the Congress", they have no answer except asserting that participation in the Coalition Government is not a "programmatic alliance" but only an "electoral alliance", and pleading that Antony who leads the Kerala Government is not an ordinary Congressman but a "Left-progressive-democrat". A long political bio-data of Antony will be given. With such queer reasoning of the Right C.P., it is rather impossible and useless to argue with them that their political line is opportunist and lacks all principle.

If the Right C.P. leadership persists in its alliance with the Congress Party in Kerala and other places, and insists on the CPI(M) giving up its opposition to the line of "Congress-Communist" alliance, and also demand that the CPI(M) join the Kerala Coalition, that is not putting any "preconditions" for talks between the two parties, and it is no impediment to forging a "front" between the Right C.P. and the CPI(M)!

But if the CPI(M) appeals to the Right C.P. to abandon its political line of co-operation and collaboration with the Congress Party, and also to break away from the anti-Marxist Coalition Government in Kerala, a big howl is raised that the CPI(M) is dictating terms and is putting impossible pre-conditions.

What Cannot be Ignored

To put it frankly, the CPI(M) is unable to agree with the Right C.P.'s assessment of the Janata Party Government and its role, particularly at the present stage, and cannot subscribe to the tactical line of making the Janata Party the main object of attack decrying it as anti-people, pro-imperialist and Right-reactionary under the pretext of a fundamental class characterisation of the Janata Party. The CPI(M) cannot ignore the historical role it is playing in defence of democracy and against authoritarianism.

The CPI(M) has always maintained that it is in total disagreement with the Right C.P.'s assessment of the Congress Party and its Government. It was and is of the firm opinion that the Congress Party is a bourgeois-landlord party, led by the big bourgeoisie and collaborating with foreign finance capital. Over and above it, the Congress was the staunchest exponent of its one-party monopoly rule, and was solely responsible for the imposition of the Emergency and bringing the country on to the verge of a fascist dictatorship. The CPI(M) cannot agree with the Right C.P. that the Congress is, by and large, Left and democratic, that it is essentially anti-imperialist and anti-landlord, and that its major leadership represents the non-big national bourgeois interests. It cannot also subscribe to the Right C.P. view that the role of the Congress Party has now changed into one of democratic Opposition from that of being the ruling party, and hence it will have to be considered as a party of the democratic Opposition. The CPI(M) while taking due note of the fact that the Congress Party is not in power and is in Opposition, and that it also may sometimes take up some democratic issues in opposition to the Janata Party, will neither forget its anti-people class role during all these decades nor will it ignore that it still persists in justifying the imposition of the Emergency, the enacting and enforcing of draconian laws such as the MISA and the Press Objectionable Matters Act, the dogged defence of the 42nd Amendment Act which has institutionalised the Emergency, the

drive for destruction of democracy and the establishment of a dictatorial regime, etc.— all of which put together constitutes a political platform of extreme reaction and counter-revolution.

It is rather amusing to hear from the Right C.P. its advice to the CPI(M) to treat the Congress *now* as a party of the democratic Opposition, in the face of its dogged adherence to its reactionary political platform. We may remind the Right C.P. leaders that they were making the Right Opposition parties and groups their principal target of attack even though the combined strength of these parties in Parliament and outside was not even one-fourth of the present Congress Party's strength and resources. Why this double standard, unless the Right C.P. has one yardstick to measure the reactionary role of the Congress Party and quite a different one to measure that of the other former Right Opposition parties? Let them prevail on the Congress to discard its dicredited reactionary political platform, and depose its leadership which was evolving and executing the policies of such a platform, before demanding that the CPI(M) treat it as a party of the Right Opposition or extreme Right Opposition or democratic Opposition.

The Right C.P. resolution states that it "is convinced that there are significant *Left and democratic forces* in the Congress" which can become partners of the Left and democratic front, that is projected and propounded by it.

In the same breath it says that it "is also aware that there are *democratic elements* in the Janata Party who are dissatisfied with the policies and measures of its Government", and they "must also be drawn into the scope of Left and democratic unity". (Emphasis added)

The CPI(M) fails to understand as to why this slant in favour of the Congress Party in which the Right C.P. discovers "significant Left and democratic forces", while it sees only "democratic elements" inside the Janata Party. As far as the CPI(M) is concerned, it is conscious and is always aware that a good chunk of the potential Left and democratic

forces are at present under the fold of the Janata Party as well as the Congress, and it does not have any instrument to weigh which of these two has got more. The dispute is not whether the Left and democratic forces are there or not in the Janata Party and the Congress ; the issue is what are the policies and practices of these two bourgeois-landlord parties, and what was and is the concrete role of each at different stages in the past and in the current period under review.

A biased and prejudiced attitude either towards the Janata Party or Congress will not enable us to make an objective and correct assessment of them, enabling us to have a right and constructive approach to the slogan of unity of the Left and democratic forces inside both. If the Right C.P. wants us to follow its biased and bankrupt analysis and assessment of the Congress Party, the CPI(M) can only say it cannot oblige it.

Question of "Communist Unity" and Unity of Action

The foregoing part of this article where various aspects of the slogan of Left and democratic unity was discussed and the differing views of the CPI(M) and the Right C.P. were elaborated makes it evident that a big gulf exists between the two on this crucial issue. These will have to be thrashed out through patient and fruitful discussion, if there is genuine interest in approaching this vital question with a view to moving forward in the direction of solving this problem. However, if, as the Right C.P. does, one upholds the declaration of the Emergency and the authoritarian rule of the Congress Party, only expressing opposition to the "excesses" in the later phase of the Emergency, then that very outlook will stand as a roadblock to the progress of Left and democratic unity.

In this connection we have to draw the attention of the Right C.P. leaders to the question why Left and democratic unity has not materialised to any appreciable extent during the last ten years, let alone its progress to the point of becoming a viable national alternative; and why the unity of

Left and democratic forces which was forged in some measure during the 1967-69 period was totally disrupted.

Question Cannot be Avoided

In raising this question we are neither interested in digging up the past nor are we eager to apportion blame. But since it is germane to the present discussion, we cannot avoid it altogether. As a matter of fact, Rajeshwara Rao, General Secretary of the Right C.P., has already dug up that part of the past and denounced the CPI(M), holding it responsible for the disruption of the Kerala and West Bengal United Fronts of 1967-69. Writing in his party organ NEW AGE of May 15, 1977, Comrade Rajeshwara Rao observes that "the entire responsibility for the break-up of the 1967 United Front Government in Kerala and 1969 U.F. Government in West Bengal rests with the CPM leadership, as it dashed the hopes of the Indian people".

According to Comrade Rao, *first,* "these U.F. Governments broke up because of the hegemonistic and disruptive methods of the CPM"; *second,* the CPI(M) had "worked under the wrong thesis that not much can be done in these States so long as the Central Government is manned by the Congress," thus making "the confrontation with the Central Government" as the principal task; and *third,* the CPI(M) in West Bengal "formed action squads which included even anti-social elements and attacked C.P.I and other Left parties in the front, and many cadres of these parties were physically eliminated, and the Naxalites who split away from the CPM also met the same fate."

This is what the Right C.P.'s General Secretary writes in the middle of May 1977, after the Congress-Right C.P. alliance had its March election debacle, and a month before another round of rout in the June election was in the offing. This is nothing except vomiting venom on the CPI(M) by one of the topmost leaders of the Right C.P. which was in alliance with the Congress Party and Government in West Bengal, when they murdered as many as eleven hundred

cadres and militants belonging to the CPI(M) between the years 1970 and 1975. No Right C.P. leader who is genuinely interested in forging unity and united front with the CPI(M) can utter such unutterable lies and slanders.

Assessment of Congress Split

The truth is that Comrade Rao and his party assessed the Congress split of 1969 as one between the monopolist bourgeoisie and anti-monopolist national bourgeoisie, defining the Congress and Government led by Indira Gandhi as representing the non-big national bourgeoisie. In furtherance of this Right-opportunist estimation of the Congress split of 1969, the Right C.P. leaders had worked out a full-fledged line of allying with the ruling Congress and thus realising their programmatic slogan of National Democratic Front. It was this bankrupt estimation that prompted them to break up the Kerala and West Bengal U.F. Governments and gang up with the Indira Gandhi Congress and Government against the CPI(M) and its other Left allies. It is to hide this unpalatable truth that Comrade Rao is dishing out concocted stories of the CPI(M)'s "bossism" and "attacks" to justify the breaking up of the Left-oriented United Front Governments of the 1967-69 period.

We intend to leave it at that without expatiating further this tragic episode.

Right C.P.'s Charge

Rajeshwara Rao had climaxed his Left and democratic unity theme with the words: "If these Governments (the two Left-led State Governments of West Bengal and Kerala during the 1967-69 period—M.B.) had survived and gone forward with the implementation of progressive programmes the course of Indian history would have been entirely different. The United Front Governments would have acted as the spearhead of progressive forces throughout the country. The toiling people would have rallied behind the Left and democratic forces. The Left and democratic forces would

have posed as the real alternative to the *Congress,* not the combination of reactionary parties." (Emphasis added).

Anti-CPI(M) Hysteria

A close study of the recent writings and speeches of Rajeshwara Rao and his colleagues would reveal that the Right C.P. leaders are intent upon whipping up anti-CPI(M) hysteria in their restive ranks, by slandering the CPI(M) as responsible for every failure of the Left and democratic movement in the country, including the election debacle of the Right C.P. and the emergence of the Janata Government.

Why did the split in the Communist Party of India take place in 1963-64? The answer of the Right C.P. leaders is that it was because of the Left-sectarian line of the CPI(M) leaders, who acted under instructions from the Communist Party of China!

Why did the Naxalites emerge in the year 1967, and why did the Naxalites break away from the CPI(M) in May-June, 1968? Their answer is that it was because the leaders of the CPI(M) fed them with false promises of imminent armed revolution, but, in practice, they were participating in the elections for the State Assemblies and Parliament.

Why did the Kerala and West Bengal Governments of 1967-69 get disrupted? Again, their prompt answer is, due to the bossism and big brotherly attitude of the CPI(M).

Why is there no "Left and democratic alternative" in the country to the Congress and why did the Janata Party emerge as the national alternative? The answer of the Right C.P. leaders is that it is due to the "blind anti-Congressism" of the CPI(M) and its "backdoor collaboration" with the Right-reactionary parties and forces led by Jaya Prakash Narayan.

Why was the Emergency imposed in June 1975 by the Indira Gandhi Government and why did the Right C.P. wholeheartedly support it to the end? The answer of the Right C.P. is that the "fascist J.P. movement" and the support it was getting from the CPI(M) extremists were threatening Indian democracy and national independence.

Hypocritical Slogan

Such instances can be multiplied, and voluminous evidence can be adduced in support of our statement from the writings and resolutions of the Right C.P. over years. We are not very happy nor are we eagar to take up all this. But the trouble is that the Right C.P. leadership, on the one hand, hurls all these wild criticisms and charges against the CPI(M) and, on the other, it repeatedly offers united front with it, unity of action and even unity between the two parties.

It is, of course, for the leaders of the Right C.P. to clear the suspicion that these slogans of united front, unity, etc., are raised as a clumsy manoeuvre to cover up their recent electoral and political debacles from their party and mass following. Or are they really assessing the political and ideological line of the CPI(M) in the manner they have been putting before the public and their party ranks? If the latter is the case, then it would be hypocritical to raise the slogan of unity of the Indian Communist movement as an immediate and realisable slogan of action.

Beguiling Well-Wisher

The National Council resolution on "Present Situation and Tasks", after laying thick on the issue of unity of Left and democratic forces, as the Right C.P. conceives it, raises the far more complex and difficult question of "Communist unity". To quote the resolution: "The CPI is convinced that building unity between it, CPM and the Naxalite groups is an essential part of building the unity of all Left and democratic parties and forces." The resolution concludes by saying that "the CPI stands for unification of the Communist movement in India on a principled basis".

These, undoubtedly, are laudable sentiments reflecting the urge of several well-wishers and sympathisers of the Communist movement. Many of these well-wishers and sympathisers who ardently and sincerely desire such unity in the Indian Communist movement, are particularly impelled to think in this direction, when they are confronted

with the phenomenon of two bourgeois-landlord parties, the Congress and the Janata Party, emerging as the national alternative to each other, and the Left forces, and the Communist movement in particular remain very weak and badly divided after half a century of existence on the Indian soil and are nowhere near a position to offer themselves as the real national alternative, with a genuine alternative people's programme. But most of them, perhaps, are not fully acquainted with the ideological, theoretical and political differences which led to the divisions and splits in the Indian Communist movement. It is the elementary duty of all the different segments of the Indian Communist movement to take this mass of well-wishers and supporters seriously into confidence and place before them the actual political-ideological differences that divide them, instead of simply shouting about unity to beguile those who have the well-motivated and good-intentioned urge for Communist unity.

Central Issue

We fully agree with the Right C.P. when it says that it "stands for unification of the Communist movement in India on a principled basis". This is to beg the question, what was the central issue, if not all the issues, that was at the root of the differences and splits. The central issue, in the opinion of the CPI(M), on which differences arose and that finally led to the split, is the issue of the State and revolution, i.e., how each segment, the CPI(M), the Right C.P. and different Naxalite groups assess the class character of the present Indian State and Government, and what class strategy and tactics they work out to gather all the necessary forces for the revolution and lead the revolutionary movement to triumph.

CPI(M)'s Stand

The CPI(M) has held the firm opinion that the Indian State and Government, since Independence, has been a bourgeois-landlord State led by the representatives of the big bourgeoisie who collaborate and compromise with foreign monopoly

capital, notwithstanding conflicts and contradictions that arise from time to time between the Indian big bourgeoisie and the imperialists.

The Right C.P. is totally opposed to this class assessment of the Indian State and Government made by the CPI(M). It maintains, *first,* that it is a bourgeois State, but not a bourgeois-landlord State; *second,* the main leadership of the State and Government is in the hands of the non-big national bourgeoisie; and *third,* the monopolists are not in the leadership of the State and Government but only exert powerful influence on the State and Government, while the landlords are not partners at all in the State power.

From the class assessment of the Indian State and Government by the CPI(M), it follows that the Communist Party will have to play the role of revolutionary opposition. A different course will be opened from the class assessment made by the Right C.P., namely, that of essential co-operation and collaboration with the "national bourgeois State and Government" in order to abolish landlordism and liquidate monopoly capitalism and its ally, foreign finance capital.

Two Different Lines

The two totally different class evaluations of the Indian State and Government had naturally led the two sharply contending schools in the once-united CPI to part ways with each other, after a decade of inner-party struggle, and the Party split into the CPI(M) and the Right C.P.

The Right C.P. has been implementing its line since 1963-64, and the CPI(M) has been implementing its line and understanding during the last twelve years and more. If life and events have proved that the political line of the Right C.P. has been wrong, it should say so, and then move forward to forge principled unity with the CPI(M), of course, if it accepts the political line followed by the CPI(M) has stood the test of time. Otherwise, the mooting of the idea of "principled unity" between the two parties will be devoid of content, and objectively amount to playing to the gallery.

The CPI(M) has no reason to think that its political line has proved wrong, and hence no question arises of its giving up its class assessment of the Indian State and Government. It also has no material before it to presume that the Right C.P. has come to realise that its political line is totally mistaken and will have to be revised or abandoned. As such, the CPI(M) does not deem it correct to make a move for Communist unity under the given conditions, nor does it think that such a move will be a principled one, when the two parties hold on to their respective lines as "principled" political lines.

It is for the Right C.P. leaders to properly formulate the issues and seek exchange of views with the CPI(M) instead of simply airing their views in public resolutions and proclaiming their desire for Communist unity between the CPI(M), Right C.P. and different groups of Naxalites.

Naxalite Assessment

Then coming to the viewpoint of the Naxalites, it is next to impossible to size up the actual position of the different groups at the present moment. But when they broke away from the CPI(M) in the middle of 1968, they had come to a different, third, assessment of the State and Government, demarcating themselves from both the CPI(M) and the Right C.P.

They were characterising the Indian State and Government as a neo-colonial State and stooge Government. They were of the view that the Indian bourgeoisie, which was placed at the helm of the State by the imperialists, was a compradore bourgeoisie, living as a parasite on the crumbs thrown by the imperialists. They declared their adherence to the 'Thought of Mao Tse-tung' characterising it as Marxism-Leninism of the contemporary era. Lastly, they came to believe in the thesis of an imminent revolutionary situation in India, and declared adherence to the concept of "People's War" as expounded by the late Lin Piao.

We do not think that any of these assessments is correct,

and ten years of our experience since middle 1967, when Naxalism had risen, has not convinced us that there is any need for the CPI(M) to change its assessment of the Naxalites.

Nor does the CPI(M) have any reliable information to assess whether one or several of the Naxalite groups have discarded their political line, as it was expounded in 1967, 1968 and 1969. Hence it would be improper, rather inopportune, to straightway give the slogan of unity between the CPI(M), different Naxalite groups and the Right C.P., as the Right C.P. has done in its National Council resolution. But the CPI(M) will seek every possibility to further the cause of Communist unity in India, on a principled basis.

The Right C.P. resolution, from the issue of "unity between it, the CPM and the Naxalite groups" proceeds to the question of united action between the Right C.P. and CPI(M) and also between the mass organisations under their influence. It says that such united action is now possible, and necessary, and that political and ideological differences should not stand in the way. The statements are correct and the stand of the CPI(M) on the question of united action has always been on these very lines. This issue of unity in action, in the opinion of the CPI(M), is not to be confined to the Right C.P. and CPI(M) and the mass and class organisations led by them only but is to be extended to all mass organisations under the influence of various parties, since such a correct stand and practice on that basis alone can forge the unity of the masses to fight for the realisation of their demands, and in defence of their rights and liberties.

But our experience is that it is the Right C.P., and its close alliance with the ruling Congress Party that had inhibited its thinking, that stood in the way of the materialisation of united actions on a number of occasions and on a number of issues. We hope that necessary corrections will be made by it in its thinking in this regard and unity of action can be realised on as wide and extensive a scale as possible on the trade union, kisan, student and other class and mass fronts.

Atrocious Untruth

It is very sad that the Right C.P. resolution slanders the CPI(M) saying that it is not taking a "positive attitude", that it is "setting wrong and impossible preconditions such as that the United Front and Government of Kerala be broken up" and that a "campaign is being conducted by the CPM to invoke Central intervention for the dismissal of the U.F. Government in Kerala".

Every one of these wild charges and insinuations against the CPI(M) is ill-motivated and factually wrong.

First of all it is an atrocious untruth to say that the CPI(M) is invoking Central intervention to dismiss the Kerala State Government. On the contrary, whenever occasions arise and there are opportunities either to meet the Central Janata leaders or to write on the subject, we express ourselves against Central intervention and imposition of Governor's rule, whether it is in Jammu and Kashmir, Goa, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu or Kerala where there are duly elected Assemblies and Governments. Can the Right C.P. leaders show from our statements, speeches and writings in our Press one such instance? They cannot.

In Andhra Pradesh

We are certainly demanding this in cases like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka where the five-year mandate has expired and where the Assemblies and State Governments are perpetuating themselves through the Black Act of 42nd Constitution Amendment. It is the Right C.P., in league with the Vengal Rao Congress and Government in Andhra Pradesh, that is refusing any united action for the demand to dissolve the illegitimate Assembly and to dismiss the Vengal Rao Government. It is again the Right C.P. which is hostile to any united action in Kerala on the just and democratic demand that those Ministers who were there in the former Ministry of Sri Achutha Menon during the Emergency period, should not be in the present Ministry during the pendency of the enquiry into the atrocities committed under the old Ministry.

In fact, it is the Right C.P. that is putting forth a pre-condition for united action on such a democratic demand, the pre-condition that any such action should not disturb the "bhai-bhai" relations between the Congress and Right C.P. in Kerala.

It is quite a different thing when the CPI(M) asks the Right C.P. to break away from its alliance with the Congress Party since the Right C.P., day in and day out, proclaims the slogan of *Left and democratic unity and united front between the CPI(M) and the Right C.P.* In so far as united action is concerned, it is decided on the merit of the issue, but no pre-conditions are ever put forth by us, whether they are "wrong" pre-conditions or "impossible" pre-conditions. That is where the CPI(M) stands.

Appeal to Right C.P.

We continue to look upon the Right C.P. as a significant Left force in the country, even though it was and is following a Right-opportunist political and tactical line, the line of collaborating with the Congress Party.

We appeal to its leaders, members and mass followers, to realise the enormity of the harm done to the Indian Communist movement, to the unity of the Left and democratic forces, and also to the Right C.P. itself due to the ten-year-long alliance and unity between the then ruling Congress and the Right C.P., a unity essentially directed against the CPI(M) and other Left and democratic forces in the country. We do hope that the discussions before their party Congress will enable the party ranks, cadres and leaders to self-critically review their entire political line and discard the erroneous and harmful line of political alliance and unity with the Congress, of certifying the Congress as essentially anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist and anti-landlord and pro-Socialist, pro-Communist, etc.

On our part, we assure them that we will guard against our Party pursuing any Right-opportunist line, no matter whether it is towards the Congress Party or the Janata Party.

Our continued and unrelenting struggle against the ruling bourgeois-landlord party and Government during the last several years, steering clear of both Right-opportunist and Left-adventurist political lines, gives us enough confidence in this regard, and enables us to correct shortcomings and mistakes if there are any.

Epilogue

We have assessed and analysed the two Right C.P. resolutions in detail, one passed by its National Council, immediately following the election debacle of the Right C.P. and its Congress ally in March 1977, and second, after the second round of defeat for both in June 1977 Assembly elections. On the former our criticism is published as a separate pamphlet under the caption, "CPI(M) and the Right C.P." in June 1977. The latter is published as an article, in two instalments, in our Party's weekly, *People's Democracy*. However, one of the slanderous accusations against the CPI(M) by the General Secretary of the Right C.P. was not rebutted in the said article of ours, and it will have to be done here.

Comrade Rajeshwara Rao, who was piling up "reasons" and arguments to thrust the blame on the shoulders of the CPI(M) for the shameful disruption of United Fronts and Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal during the period of 1969-70, had been writing: "The CPM worked under the wrong thesis that not much can be done in the States so long as the Central Government is manned by the Congress. Hence according to the CPM leadership, confrontation with the Central Government was the idea on the basis of which the U.F. Governments should carry on their activities." (NEW AGE, 15th May, 1977).

Rajeshwara Rao, no doubt, has established the name for masterly distortion of the CPI(M)'s views, and in presenting them to his readers in a most perverted manner. He makes bold to state that the CPI(M) was working on the basis of a wrong thesis of confrontation with the Central Congress Government during the years of 1967-69, while not realising

that he is, thereby, acting as the unashamed apologist of the then ruling Congress leadership which was bent upon organising defections from the Opposition parties, toppling the duly elected and constituted State Governments, imposing President's Rule, and resorting to any and every means to perpetuate its one party monopoly rule. It was against this frontal assault by the Central Congress Government on the autonomy of States and on the non-Congress State Governments, the non-Congress United Fronts and their State Governments were fiercely resisting. Why this truth is being hidden by Rao, and why he is carrying this smear campaign on the CPI(M) and its alleged vaunted confrontation with the Central Government?

Has our friend Rao forgotten that he and his party were in furious search for berths in every non-Congress State Ministry of 1967-69 period, including those where Jana Sangh, Swatantra and B.L.D. of Charan Singh, etc.—all under the banner of opposition to the one party monopoly rule of the Congress? In order to set the record straight and pin the lie as a lie, we shall reproduce the pertinent passages from the Political Report of the CC, CPI(M) in April 1967. Referring to the Centre-States relations, that is Centre manned by the then Congress rulers and the States ruled by non-Congress front Governments, it stated: "It is so because the ruling party in power at the Centre has ceased to be that-strong, powerful, and holding monopoly sway as to frontally and immediately challenge the opposition parties and their non-Congress Governments in eight states; the opposition parties, too, have not yet acquired the requisite strength and necessary mass sanctions to frontally and immediately challenge the authority of the central Congress Government. Both mark time, avoid head-on conflicts for the present, and move cautiously and with circumspection in formulating and practising the respective governmental policies. To give any other meaning to the slogan of 'Centre-states harmony' is deceptive in the extreme, and it is all the more so with the non-Congress State Governments.

"The so-called Centre-states friction and conflict is not merely, as some try to explain away, some abuses of authority by the central Congress Government to deny the autonomous rights of the states or its attempt to convert the federal structure into a unitary one. The reality is that behind this apparent Centre-states friction lie furious class and national contradictions, which, of course, can neither be satisfactorily resolved within the big bourgeois-landlord social framework nor can they be smoothened, at least for a time, since the outmoded and bankrupt path of capitalism is pursued. Any facile idea of establishing smooth relationship with the existing centre, its Government and its class policies is nothing short of trying to fit a square peg into a round hole."

Then coming to the accusation of Right C.P. Secretary that the CPI(M) was guilty of saying "that not much can be done in these States as the Central Government is manned by the Congress", let us quote from the same source as to what exactly was stated:

"The defeat of the Congress and the coming into existence of several Opposition parties Governments in States have *roused big hopes and expectations* among our people. But 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." "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 to the people." (Pages 67-69, New Situation and Party's Tasks).

The above passage stands self explained. But Rajeshwara Rao finds fault with the CPI(M) "thesis" of limited scope of State Governments which were manned by the non-Congress parties while the Central Government was manned by Congress Party. To make our point more clear, we also stated that "the governmental power in the States has got to be

understood in clear class terms and with all its limitations. The essence of State power, we know, lies in the army, police, bureaucracy, judiciary and jails, and all this machinery belongs to the bourgeois-landlord State...A good and essential part of State power resides in the Union Centre, and the Congress Central Governments possess, under the provisions of the country's Constitution, will have to be exercised within the confines of this overall central power". (Pages 62, 63, Ibid).

If Rajeshwara Rao thinks that "great things" can be performed by one State Government which is manned by one or several Opposition parties, and the lack of such "confidence" or "vision" was one of the basic causes for the fall of the U.F. Governments of Kerala and West Bengal in 1969-70 and the consequent disruption of the unity of the Left and democratic forces, he is at liberty to do so. To us such notions appear to be emanating either from sheer political illiteracy or deliberate hypocrisy unworthy of any one who calls himself a Communist.

Appendix-XXX

P.B. Resolution on Elections*

Released to Press on August 30, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) notes the statement made by the Minister for Law in the Rajya Sabha on August 23 that the election to the Lok Sabha will not be postponed, as is alleged in certain circles.

The CPI(M) along with many other democratic parties opposed the extension of term of the Kerala legislature in September last, for the Lok Sabha in February this year and for all other legislature for which elections were due. It has also resolutely opposed the proposal of the government that this parliament whose term was extended in the teeth of Opposition from the democratic forces in the country should bring about drastic amendments to the Constitution.

It is however found that at the very time when the Minister of State for Law was declaring that elections will not be postponed, the Government had already finalised the bill for extending the term of the Kerala legislature for the third time. It was also proposing to introduce a controversial Constitutional amendment Bill containing the most undemocratic features arming the executive with extra-ordinary powers and rushing it through, without giving any opportunity for the people at large to have a free discussion on its provisions.

The P.B. notes that the Minister of State for Law in his

*This is an authentic version of the 'P.B. Resolution on Elections'. Refer Document under Item No. 56 of this Volume which covers a censored version of this Resolution published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of September 12, 1976.

Rajya Sabha statement claimed that it was the privilege of the Prime Minister to fix the date of the election. It, however, wants to state emphatically that under any standard of the democratic parliamentary system, neither the Prime Minister nor anybody else in the Executive has the "privilege" to indefinitely postpone election as is now being done in Kerala. The claim being made regarding the Prime Minister's "privilege" of fixing the date of election is the cover behind which either the Lok Sabha election will be indefinitely postponed, or the farce of a surprise election will be held without giving any opportunity to the Opposition to prepare itself for contesting the election.

The P.B. expresses its serious concern at the several statements made by the spokesmen of the Government that election can be held under the Emergency. Their justification for this is that the 1965 mid-term election in Kerala and the country-wide election of 1967 were held under the Emergency. That Emergency however was the result of certain external developments, while the present Emergency has been declared with a view to meeting what the Government considers the internal threat posed by the Opposition. The Government's claims that the Opposition parties posed a threat to the nation and that the Emergency was declared to meet this situation are themselves being challenged by the Opposition. The Opposition therefore should have every opportunity to go to the electorate with full freedom to explain why the threat to democracy in the country is posed not by the Opposition but by the Government. Such an issue was not present at the 1965 and 1967 elections. Furthermore, the very Emergency declared in 1962 and continuing till 1969 did not operate with its full rigors as the present Emergency is now operating. There was, for instance, no pre-censorship either in 1965 or in 1967 nor were public meetings, rallies and demonstrations banned as they are now. It will be the height of sophistry to claim that free elections can be held with the present Emergency and the various restrictive measures adopted by the Government continuing.

The PB cannot but express its strong disapproval of the proposed amendment to the Companies Act enabling the companies to pay donations to political parties to the extent of Rs. 50,000/- or 5 per cent of the profit whichever is higher. It has been calculated that at the rate of 5 per cent of the profit, the top 200 industrial giants alone would be entitled to pay donations exceeding Rs. 17 crores. It is obvious that the beneficiary of this new amendment to the Companies Act would be the ruling party which, it is well-known, has already collected several crores out of the black money accumulated by the capitalists. The use of such big money by the ruling party, combined with its monopoly of the press, radio, and other media of publicity from all of which the Opposition will be excluded, will make the elections held under the Emergency nothing but a mockery.

The P.B. wants to draw attention also to the fact that even when there was no Emergency, the ruling party in West Bengal resorted to large-scale gangsterism and rigging in elections. It also unleashed a reign of semi-fascist terror leading to the murder of large numbers of the CPI(M) and other Opposition activists, forcible occupation of their offices, etc., preventing the members and cadres of the Party from living and functioning in several areas. No election can now be free and fair unless this is put an end to in West Bengal and the effort being made to repeat the same in Kerala is stopped.

For elections to be effective in enabling the people to assert their will, it is necessary that the following prerequisites are created :—

1) Elections to the Lok Sabha as well as to the legislatures of those States whose terms have already expired or will expire in February/March 1977 be held without delay;

2) A minimum period of 4 months be given to Opposition parties to prepare themselves for the election;

3) To this end, the Emergency be immediately withdrawn, all the MISA detenus and other political prisoners be released forthwith and all restrictions on the freedom of speech,

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press rallies and demonstrations, etc. be withdrawn without delay.

4) Such repressive legislations as the MISA which existed even before the Emergency and new repressive legislations like the Press Objectionable Matters Act passed during the Emergency period be repealed;

5) The legislations adopted during the Emergency placing the Prime Minister and other dignitaries above criticism and above judicial proceedings be annulled;

6) The proposal to push through the present parliament the amendments to the Constitution which arm the Executive with unlimited powers be dropped; and

7) The proposed amendment to the Companies Act providing for the payment of donations to political parties be dropped.

The Polit Bureau appeals to all democratic parties, organisations and individuals to build a powerful movement around these demands.

Appendix-XXXI

P.B. Resolution on Talks with Right C.P.*

Released to Press on August 30, 1976

The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) earnestly urges on the members and followers of the Right C.P. to ponder seriously over the fact that their leaders have rejected the CPI(M) proposal for united action on the burning issues affecting the living and working conditions of our common people.

The reasons advanced for this rejection would not deceive any impartial observer. Our attitude on international and national questions is well-known and needs no reiteration. It is also well-known that the Right C.P. holds on a number of issues views different from ours.

Despite these ideological and political differences however, the CPI(M) thought and still thinks that it is possible for the two parties, along with other democratic forces to jointly resist what even the Right C.P. characterises as the "negative features" of the Congress Government's policies. While it would be unrealistic to attempt the forging of any political united front so long as these differences continue, it is practicable in our view to start united actions on such burning issues affecting the lives of the people as bonus, dearness allowance, compulsory deposit, lay-offs, etc. in relation to workers; effective implementation of land reforms in the interests of the poor peasants and agricultural

*This is an authentic version of the 'P.B. Resolution on Talks with Right C.P.' Refer Document under Item No. 57 of this Volume which covers a censored version of this Resolution published in 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY' of September 12, 1976

labourers, relief from the fall in the prices of several agricultural products, increasing burdens of taxation, etc. in relation to peasants; similar economic problems affecting other sections of the working people; and above all, the use of Emergency and other repressive measures against any expression of democratic protests against the ruling class policies. Joint actions by the T.U., Kisan Sabha and other mass organisations in defence of the interests of the working people are, according to us, the need of the hour.

The P.B. considers it regrettable that the leaders of the Right C.P. have rejected our proposal for united actions. It, however, hopes that the members and followers of the party would exert pressure on their leaders to abandon the suicidal policies which they are pursuing. In the name of the millions of industrial and agricultural workers, of middle class employees, of peasants and all other sections of the people who are subjected to increasing poverty and misery due to what the Right C.P. leaders themselves call the "negative features" of the Congress Government's policies, we appeal to them to organise united actions in the defence of the rights of the common people.

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