

# Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movement in India

*Analysing the root cause of agrarian problems and those facing the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, Comrade Ghosh elaborately discussed in this address to the delegates of the Twelfth West Bengal State Conference of the All India Krishak O Khetmajur Sangathan, how in a backward country like India, capitalism, and capitalist land relation stand in the way of modernizing and mechanizing agriculture and creating alternative employment opportunities without which agrarian problems cannot be solved and rural uplift achieved. At the same time he brought home that land reforms by themselves – projected as the panacea to all the ills of peasants' life by the self-styled Marxist parties in this country — cannot bring to an end the problems and abject misery of peasants, and how the question of alleviating their plight, of solving the burning problems of their lives is inextricably linked up with the task of anti-capitalist socialist revolution. He charted the way for building the truly revolutionary peasant movement to achieve the goal of emancipation.*

Comrades,

You requested me to address this concluding session of the three-day long Delegates Conference of the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation<sup>1</sup>. You are assembled here as delegates from different villages, different police station areas, different parts of this district of Birbhum<sup>2</sup> and other various districts of West Bengal. Many of you, those present here, are aware that more than seventyfive out of one hundred of India's population live in the villages. These millions of common people in rural areas have a thousand and one problems in life. But the issue I need to point out to you in the first place is that the problem of getting jobs for the whole year for every able peasant is the one which comes foremost among all the problems of rural life today. Providing jobs for the rural poor throughout the year, it may be farming the land or any other type, so that as wage of their work their minimum income is such that they can live a healthy social life, which means, in plain terms, they could make both ends meet all through the year, feeding their children, getting them medicine at times of illness, at least giving them a minimum of education which ought to be given to all — just this stands out today as the main problem facing the rural life.

You should know, recovery of *benam*<sup>3</sup> lands grabbed by jotedars<sup>4</sup>, making fallow lands cultivable, and distributing lands vested in the government among agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants on the principle of equitable distribution — all this is vital no doubt, but is not the main problem. Because, considering the minimum amount of land that needs to be allotted to a family for its sustenance and meeting the other necessary expenses throughout the year, there is dearth of that quantum of land needed for distribution among the whole population in the villages today in India. This means, the character of today's rural problem is not such that by simply carrying out the task of distributing land to the rural masses we can put an end to the destitution of agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants in the villages. You have to particularly bear this in mind with respect to peasant movements.

**Distribution of recovered *benam* lands, vested lands and fallow lands made cultivable among peasants is an important task of peasant movement**

It does not mean however that by saying this I am disregarding the need or am trying to underplay the importance of effecting the one task of peasant movement which calls for recovering and distributing among agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants all *benam* lands above ceiling limits which are illegally kept under occupation by big jotedars or former zemindars<sup>5</sup>, or allotting those lands which are vested in government but have been appropriated by others, depriving agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants through deceit in connivance with government officials. I maintain, on the contrary, that recovering vested and *benam* lands, making fallow lands arable, and distributing all these lands among agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants are indeed an important task of your peasant movement. All I need to emphasize is that even if you did allot all recovered vested and *benam* lands and all the fallow lands made arable to agricultural labourers, poor and landless peasants, you just could not give to most of them that minimum of land with which they can just make ends meet for a peasant family. It is because, as we had calculated it at an all-India conference some twenty years ago, the minimum land with which a peasant family could make both ends meet, or what is called an economic holding, works out to be 12 bighas<sup>6</sup> — by now the figure must come up to 15 bighas, considering the ever increasing price-level till now. But even this I am leaving aside. Say, all *benam* lands of the country are recovered, all fallow lands made cultivable, and these along with all the vested lands are distributed equally. Even so, considering all available lands and the total population engaged in rural economy, that is, the total population of agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants taken into account, it is hardly possible to allot even 7 to 9 bighas of land to each of the families of even half of this population of India — although in my estimation this size of land does not make the holding economic today. In any case, it means, the other half of people will not be recipient of any land at all. As a result, even after allotting all these lands, so many in the villages will have been left unemployed, or will be going without job the year round. Neither could you give them land, nor are they getting jobs. What happens then? If they do not get any job in the village, they have to leave home and hearth and move to the town anyway. Many village people are thus crowding towns in search of jobs as wage-labourers. There too they are turning destitutes. Some may be working as porters, who could anyhow make it. Or, some such means they take to and live on streetsides in subhuman existence. After some time, many go back to their village home and swell the ranks of the rural unemployed and semi-employed. Thus, distributing land cannot in itself save the peasant.

**Problem of peasants cannot be solved only through distribution of recovered *benam* and vested lands and fallow lands turned arable**

Examining the issue from another angle will also help you grasp that even by distributing the requisite land among peasants the problems of the agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants cannot be solved. In the first place, because, as I did point it out earlier, carrying out the task of land distribution will not make land available to all agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants. Secondly, those getting land cannot hold on to it. Because, as you know, members in each family and in society keep on increasing in numbers but land does not grow in size. Land remains as it is. There is a finite limit to available land, like there is a limit to enhancing land's productivity. Whereas, the number of members in each family keeps on increasing. Say, you are a peasant and you have got nine bighas of land. You thought, you could manage your household with this. Then, say, five children are born to you. Or, if you went by government's prescribed

norm, you had then, say, three children. Now divide your land among the three. If one or two of the issues are female, even then your land will have to be divided equally among the three. Just because, in India at present sons and daughters have equal right to parental property. It may be that women in many families, weighed down by age-old convention as they are, do not assert their claim. But when awareness dawns on them, women will claim their due shares. Anyway, nine bighas divided equally among three leave three bighas to each as share. Afterwards, if these three get married and each has three issues then the share of each will be one bigha of land. To a family it hardly makes a difference whether it owns or does not own a bigha of land.

Secondly, in the case of a poor peasant having land of the measure of a bigha is of little use. Even if a land of three bighas is allotted to every family, it will not turn out to be really effective. Because, even if a poor peasant is allotted that amount of land, he will be forced to sell it out the next year. He cannot retain it simply because he cannot manage his household with a land of three bighas. As a result, the land will get sold up to buyers who have the money for it. Indeed this way most of the poor and lower-middle peasants have been dispossessed of their lands. Just think how the lands which these poor and lower-middle peasants had in possession till twenty years back went out of their hands. The elderly among you are aware that during the famine of fifty<sup>7</sup> in Bengal poor and lower-middle peasants had to sell out many lands. At that time, jotedars and moneylenders took advantage of the extreme privation of the poverty-stricken peasants to cheat them, grabbing their lands virtually at no price. Again, as the peasants were incapable of repaying the loans they had taken by mortgaging their lands at times of dire want, or when under duress, times of illness, or to meet expenses at times of family ceremonies, they could not recover their lands and were thus dispossessed of all the many lands of theirs. Therefore, even if the peasants received two or, say, three bighas of land, could that solve the problems of their lives? Could that either nullify the grounds for which peasants and agricultural labourers are waging struggles? Can a landless peasant hold on to two or three bighas of land he might be allotted? If the able sons in the family have no alternative employment and the peasant cannot add more land to his possession of land with savings from his sons' earnings and maintain the farming adequately, he will be forced again to mortgage his land at times of want, illness, ceremonies, or to sell it out and become the landless peasant he was before. This is an inevitable destiny in the capitalist rural economy in a backward country like ours, and it is thus that the ranks of agricultural labourers and landless peasants are swelling by the day at growing rates.

Whereas, many in this country believe that the problem could be resolved by enacting a law to bar sale of land by poor peasants. What they fail to realize is that, let alone bring benefit to the poor peasant, such legal bars to the sale of land in the capitalist system will hamper the agricultural production itself. Because a land of two or three bighas does not make an economic holding for a family, that is, a holding not adequate as a means for subsistence, the peasant cannot farm this land the way it should be. It may be that at times he will be even circumscribed to leave the land uncultivated. In that event, as a consequence, a food crisis will break out in the country, agricultural production will get hampered, and its retrograde effect will have repercussions on the entire national economy. For the sake of economy itself in the present capitalist set-up, legal bar to sale and purchase of land is not viable therefore. Although, it has been suggested by many that following the example of socialist countries purchase of land by individual owners be barred in the present circumstance and the state instead buy these lands. But what will the state do after buying these lands? The government has to undertake state farming in that event to cultivate these lands. Today it is not possible that the government in a

backward capitalist country like ours will buy all these lands and set up large-scale state farms to cultivate these lands as there is no way then to provide alternative employment to the millions of peasants who will be thrown unemployed if mechanization is introduced in agriculture in this country at the state's initiative.

The urban areas are already teeming with the army of the unemployed and semi-employed, their numbers soaring up at increasing rates. Therefore, any attempts to mechanize agriculture in the present condition, that is, to modernize agriculture with tractor-machines will throw millions in the villages out of employment at a single stroke. The urban unemployed in hundreds of thousands added to the surplus millions in agriculture thus thrown unemployed will create a situation under whose weight this capitalist system will be on the verge of collapse. With the unemployment problem already acute and ever more aggravating, capitalism cannot undertake this task for the sake of its own survival. If modern tractor-machines are introduced in the land to which thousands of agricultural labourers, sharecroppers and poor peasants in the village remain somehow attached — maybe like half-dead souls subsisting somehow on this land — they will all become surplus labour. In a country where unemployment is constantly proliferating even before introduction of tractor-machines has begun in land farming, and these peasants cannot be given employment in mills and factories, where the situation is such that even those employed in the industries are getting retrenched or laid off and so many factories are closing down, people from villages are flocking into towns because they have no employment scope in the countryside, capitalism can by no means somehow maintain its existence if attempts are made for modernization of agriculture with tractor-machines. This is why, in their bid to extend the lease of life of this moribund, reactionary capitalist system as long as they can, the ruling bourgeoisie are administering a host of palliatives like Green Revolution, Japanese way of cultivation, Tai-Chung, IR-8, and so forth. So many diverse attempts are going on with purport to work magic with how many different crops could be grown and how much more could be harvested in piecemeal lands by various plannings. And every year crores<sup>8</sup> of rupees are being spent for all this. However, they cannot pluck the courage to come up with plans for big land farming or state farming with tractor-machines. Therefore, with the capitalist economic order and capitalist state machine remaining in place, this road cannot lead to the solution of the problem. From this angle too it can be seen that the question of completing the task of the half-baked agrarian revolution in our country is indispensably interwoven with the task of accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution.

From this discussion you could then see that simply by distributing land the sufferings in the rural life cannot be ended and the peasant cannot survive unless provisions of employment could be made for each able individual of the poor peasant families in the villages. To provide employment is the basic issue confronting the rural life today, whether by allotment of enough lands, or by other means. Had there been provision of job all through the year for every individual in the village to earn sufficient wages, their privation would not have reached the present dimension in that event. In my consideration, the minimum wage prescribed by the present bourgeois government of India for industrial workers in some sectors has not been fixed on the principle of social justice. Had it been so, the prescribed wage would have been much higher on account of today's ever rising price-level. Let us leave aside even this. If every able individual in a family, which does not own, say, two bighas of land, could be given employment round the year carrying a salary of rupees two hundred and fifty to three hundred, his distress would not have been so much acute. On the other hand, a family owning even ten to twelve bighas of land but having eight to ten members, who have no alternative employment, cannot

arrange for two square meals all through the year, let alone meet expenses for medical treatment, or for education. It does not mean however, and I emphasized it earlier too, that you have no need to build movements to recover and distribute all those lands which are either held in *benam*, or are vested lands not allotted properly, or are lands lying fallow and not made cultivable. Nor do I mean to underplay its importance in the present phase of peasant movement. These movements are necessary to build up as it will mitigate to a certain extent the sorrows and sufferings and the rural people's purchasing capacity will also improve, even if by a whit. But my point is that this will not solve the basic problem.

**Basic issue of rural life today is round-the-year employment provision for every able individual by opening the road to unhindered industrialization**

So, no doubt, distribution of recovered *benam* lands, equitable redistribution of vested lands and proper allotment of arable lands previously fallow is an important issue of peasant movement but is not its central and pivotal issue. The pivotal issue of peasant movement in today's context is to develop the rural economy through mechanization and modernization of agriculture and to open up side by side the road to industrialization in order to provide employment to the surplus population in the villages and the rural unemployed and semi-employed. That is, to provide employment to all those of the village people who could not be allotted land in the course of distribution of the requisite minimum lands to agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants in pursuit of a programme of just and proper allotment of recovered *benam* lands, fallow lands made cultivable and equitable redistribution of vested lands. Now the question is, how to provide employment to every able individual in the village? Who will provide? The only way to create such kind of employment is to open the road to continuous industrialization. If factories and mills could be set up and development of industries could go on unhindered, if, in other words, the road to full-scale industrialization could be opened up, then attempts could alongside go on also in agricultural economy for modernization and mechanization. Ancillary and auxiliary industries in agricultural economy could start developing in the rural areas making possible rapid growth of agricultural production. In that event, in the industries that would come up in order to cater to the very need of modernization and scientific development of agriculture, a section of all those could be absorbed who will have been left over landless following allotment of requisite minimum lands to other peasants. After this, those still left over unemployed could be absorbed if industrial development could be carried on in the neighbouring urban areas. With the situation so developed, no able individuals in any of the families would be left unemployed, everybody would be absorbed. In that event, whatever land a family might have, they will cultivate it and whatever necessities cannot be fulfilled through that cultivation, for that those in the family not engaging in cultivation will take on other employments. Thus, with the earnings of all, agriculture will develop, its mechanization and modernization can be made possible, agricultural production will grow, the look of the village will radically change. Electricity will come to the villages, roads will be built, schools, parks and hospitals will be set up, there will be provisions for sports and games, cultural functions will be held. If all these can be realized, then the present condition of the villages — these haunts of ghosts, as others call it, where snakes and frogs inhabit, and with them you also inhabit — this condition will change altogether. Then the villages will become fit for human habitation. The incomparable gap between rural and urban life will diminish. So, you see, for the uplift of villages in order that they become fit for human habitation and to bring about mechanization and modernization of agriculture, you have to solve the problem of the country's

industrial development and provision of employment to all able people. You should bear in mind that the solution to this problem is inextricably linked with the resolution of the crisis that stems inexorably from the Indian capitalist state and capitalist economy. Unless you could establish the socialist state and the socialist economic system by doing away with the present capitalist state and capitalist economy, you cannot open the road to unhindered industrial development in the country simply by effecting the programme of distribution of land at present. And unless you can carry this out, no provision can be made for employment to all able people in the villages, their poverty and sufferings cannot be removed, uplift of the present condition of the villages cannot be made possible.

### **Capitalist economic order stands today as main hurdle on road to unhindered industrialization of the country**

Because India's production system runs on capitalist production relations, that is, production takes place here, whether in agriculture or in industry, under control of private ownership with the motive of earning maximum profit, there is no growth in industrial production, though the problem is not so acute in agriculture. Private owners determine the prices of all industrial products of mills and factories on the basis of maximum profit and, you know, the owners sell these products in the market only when there are people who have the purchasing power for buying these. But by far the majority of people in the country do not have the capacity to buy the goods at these prices. Because, in the first place, of the seventyfive to eighty per cent of the total population of our country who are attached to land in the rural areas, fiftyone to fiftyfive per cent, on an all-India count, are landless peasants and agricultural labourers. This is a highly conservative estimate though. The figure is much higher in reality. Of them, the majority are unemployed and semi-employed, people who do not have employment round the year. Moreover, the number of poor peasants, that is, those who own land from two or three bighas to six or seven bighas, is fifteen per cent. Besides, the lower-middle peasants, who own six or seven to fifteen bighas of land, also number around fifteen per cent. It means, these eightyfive per cent of rural population are proletariat to semi-proletariat — people who have no employment all through the year. They cannot arrange for two full meals a day. These eightyfive per cent of the rural population have almost zero purchasing power, or so we may say. To get some clothings, the barest to wear, a few rags for the women, and two bare meals — for this little just they are burning out. How could they afford to buy the industrial commodities they need so badly? Where is their purchasing power?

Secondly, in the present economic system, taking into account the increased price-levels of all articles of necessity, the real wages of all who work in mills and factories in urban areas and get pay at the end of the month have gone down much compared to what they earned previously. In terms of figures, of course, that is, in terms of money, their wages have gone up comparatively. But considering the case in terms of comparative price-levels, one could not deny, unless one had his eyes and ears shut or had some ulterior motive and vested interest, that the real wages have come down a lot. Comparing how one did manage things earlier with an earning of a rupee a day, say, does he feel better off now though his wage has gone up today? No, he doesn't. This is because, in our country the minimum wage a labourer is to be paid is not calculated by taking into account the prices of all articles of necessity to live a life as befits man. In this country, the minimum wage to be paid is fixed at a level at which the labourer could have bare sustenance and gasp on to turn the wheels of the owner's machine, he could seek out a shelter in a stenchy slum where one might easily contract tuberculosis, managing there to live

with a woman, and for that matter his wife. The minimum of pay with which a labourer could manage to meet the barest of necessity is reckoned as his wage, whereas the minimum wage should have been determined in consonance with prices of essential commodities in order that even a very ordinary family could meet the expenses of living a healthy life, whereupon a nation could be built up. But in no capitalist country is this norm followed to fix the wage of a labourer. The situation is even worse in our country. As a result, the majority of people working in mills and factories of our country do not own the capacity to buy necessary industrial commodities. Besides, the millions of educated and semi-educated unemployed people crowding the urban areas, whose numbers are swelling at galloping rates, do not have any purchasing capacity at all. In this situation, naturally, because the majority lack the purchasing capacity and whatever little capacity they have is continuously on the decline, the market is squeezed in very much for the industrial owners, each day this market gets squeezed in further. On the other, no vast market abroad remains now to which the industrialists could export their products for sale. Because, in the first place, following the emergence of the world socialist system and the world socialist market after the second World War parallel to the world capitalist system, the old traditional world capitalist market has become squeezed in drastically. Moreover, the newly independent Afro-Asian countries like India, for instance, whom the imperialists used to exploit by establishing their absolute rule over them — with the emergence of these countries as new competitors in the world capitalist market after they had restructured their economies, breaking free from the imperialist chain and colonial slavery following the second World War, the already squeezed-in world capitalist market has suffered further squeezes, this in turn having led to further aggravation of the crisis of the world capitalist market.

Thirdly, keep in mind, the character and nature of the crisis into which the world capitalist market plunged at the end of the second World War is different in essence from all its previous crises. Prior to the second World War, in all of its crises at different periods, the world capitalist market enjoyed a relative stability. But the nature of the present crisis is such that this relative stability of the past exists no longer. The crisis has now turned into a daily, an hourly affair. You can understand therefore that whereas the advanced capitalist countries fought no less than two world wars among themselves in their bid to capture the market even while the whole of the world market was under their control, in the present condition of an extremely squeezed-in world capitalist market the situation is no longer such that the industrial owners of a backward capitalist country like India could at will sell their industrial products in competition with the advanced capitalist countries.

### **Task of completing agrarian revolution in our country today is intertwined with the task of accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution**

Thus, this being the condition of the world capitalist market, the Indian capitalists do not have a market for even the small volume of production they make, let alone go on increasing the production continuously. As I told you before, this absence of the market does not mean however that the people of the country don't have any needs, or that they don't want to buy. The type of clothes most of the poor peasants of this land wear — don't they feel like wearing better clothes, don't they wish to dress their children nicely ? Don't they wish to provide good food for their children ? When somebody around eats *rasogollas*<sup>9</sup>, doesn't a poor peasant feel like eating *rasogollas* himself ? Doesn't he wish to give some to his child ? They do, but what of it ? How could they have the means ? To be relieved of the pangs of this inability they invoke their fate, call it the will of God, or seek consolation in senseless utterings. Else, they try to satisfy the child

giving it a lump of sugar or gur<sup>10</sup>. How could they have the ability to buy good things ? In this condition, how could the market within the country expand, how could the development of industries go on unhindered ? How could new industries come up ? On the contrary, not to speak of new industries coming up, even the existing factories and mills are closing down, one after another, owing to the market crisis of the capitalists under the present capitalist economic system. In the given situation, whereas for a backward country like ours the need was to carry on industrialization with ever new initiatives, it is the prevailing production system in the country with its motive of earning maximum profit on the basis of capitalist production relations, in a word, the prevailing capitalist economic system which stands out as the main obstacle today to unhindered industrial development. This in fact is giving rise to the crisis in industry despite ours being a backward country. It can be seen, therefore, unless this obstacle can be removed we cannot open the door of uninterrupted industrial development. And so long as this task remains unfulfilled, we cannot complete the half-baked task of agrarian revolution — which means modernizing and mechanizing agriculture and providing employment to the entire rural population all through the year.

Therefore, to resolve the basic problem of the rural life and to bring about unhindered industrial development, we need to put an end to the present economic system, that is, the capitalist system, in a word — the system which runs on the capitalist production relation with the object of earning maximum profit. Doing away with the present capitalist state and the capitalist government, the rule of the workers and peasants has to be established, and in the place of the capitalist economic system the socialist economic system has to be established. That is, in a word, in order to accomplish this very task you have to organize anti-capitalist socialist revolution. But among the parties claiming to be Marxist-Leninists, neither the CPI(M), nor the CPI, in fact no one except our party, the SUCI, does openly stand for anti-capitalist revolution. What they say is that the main struggle of the exploited masses of India, that is, of the workers, peasants and the lower-middle class is against monopoly capital and feudalism. Let us now see what this anti-monopoly capital, anti-feudal struggle in a capitalist country like India means in real terms.

Bear it in mind, while it is the capitalist system as a whole from which stems this exploitation, then those who put the onus of this capitalist class exploitation as a whole on a handful of monopoly capitalists instead of taking the stand for overthrowing the capitalist state and the capitalist order as a whole are actually seeking to hide the character of the capitalist exploitation itself. Because, monopoly capitalism is but a form of capitalism itself. Therefore, if these people do not have the programme of anti-capitalist revolution then all their task of fighting monopoly capital reduces into an empty slogan, it is a fake slogan. Indira Gandhi<sup>11</sup> too delivers speeches against monopoly capital. The Chhatra Parishad<sup>12</sup> and the Youth Congress<sup>13</sup> too raise voice against monopoly capital. They also try to shield the bourgeois class as a whole from people's wrath by shifting the onus of all misdeeds of the bourgeoisie as a whole on to the shoulders of a few monopoly capitalists. So, flying the banner of Marxism, whether in the name of people's democratic revolution or of national democratic revolution, if some people engage in shielding the capitalist class as a whole, shifting the onus of bourgeois class exploitation on to a handful of monopoly capitalists, their real motive must be then like Indira Gandhi's.

Secondly, a little reflection also reveals that the slogan of these two parties for fight against feudalism is no more than an empty talk. Whatever the shape of capitalism in our country, howsoever backward it may be, but that capitalist exploitation is the main feature and that the



exploitation perpetrated on all engaged in the agricultural economy is capitalist, too, is brought out clearly by analysis of the agricultural economy in this country. Just for the sake of argument if we accept, for the time being, that feudal relations continue to hold in the agricultural economy of our country as maintained in the analyses of these parties, even so, as every student of Leninism knows, the moment the national bourgeoisie of this country usurped the state power, India became a bourgeois state. Therefore, the main object of revolution becomes overthrowing the bourgeois state, no matter whether feudalism continues in agricultural economy or not.

### **Agricultural economy of our country is capitalist economy**

Now let us see what is the nature of the agricultural economy of our country. From the preceding discussion we could gather that about eightyfive per cent of the rural population of our country have been reduced to the level of proletariat and semi-proletariat — they have lost all their land holdings, or are losing the same gradually. Adding to this the number of the somewhat well-off middle peasants, that is, those who own land from above fifteen to fifty or sixty bighas, who make up about ten or eleven per cent, it comes out that in the hands of the remaining five or six per cent of the rural population some fiftyfive to sixty per cent of the total lands of the country have become concentrated. This feature that, on the one side, most of the lands of the country have been concentrated in the hands of a few people, whereas, on the other side, most of the rural people, that is, eightyfive per cent of the rural population are reduced to the level of rural proletariat and semi-proletariat — what is the reason that it became so? All with a modicum of knowledge of economics will understand that this came about following the inexorable law of the capitalist economy.

Secondly, you should realize and constantly bear in mind that it is the capitalist state of India and the capitalist economic system which is the root cause of the exploitation and oppression perpetrated on you. Whether in the factories of the towns or in the lands of the villages, production is being carried on everywhere on the basis of the capitalist production relation. Everybody understands it easily that the character of the production relation as the basis of production in the factories in the urban areas in our country is the owner-wage labourer. In the rural economy, too, in this country this character of production relation is basically that of the owner-wage labourer. Though in India, as a backward country, the form of this owner-wage labourer relation in the rural areas differs from place to place depending upon specificities of localities and regions, peculiarities of the people, still its basic character everywhere at present is that of the owner-wage labourer. In some places the labourer is a monthly wage earner, in some other places he is a daily wage labourer. It may be that in some places a section of the agricultural labourers even own land from one to three bighas each. But they are wage labourers. Some of them are paid the wage — part in money, part in food. Some others receive a share of the crop in place of wage in money. In this country we call this type of labourers share-croppers, maybe some of them even own land of a bigha or two. But all these are only different forms of the same owner-wage labourer relation, depending upon the specificities of a region and peculiarities of the people in a backward capitalist economy of today. Because, all of them work as wage labourer in others' lands. And, this very relation of owner-wage labourer in the sphere of production is called capitalist production relation.

Examining the issue from another angle also will help you realize that in the rural economy in our country production takes place on the basis of the capitalist relations. What is it we call capitalism ? The fundamental economic law of capitalism is that, based on capitalist-wage labourer production relation, capital grows by investment of capital — whether it is investment in land or in industry — that is, to grow capital through production by investing capital. In the

capitalist system, the capitalists invest capital and produce goods in mills and factories. By selling the goods in the market they come out with profit which is the amount in excess over the invested capital. This profit they garner by exploiting the worker, exploiting the labour-power of the worker, depriving him of his due wage. This is what we call capitalism. Let us examine now the character of our rural economy. Is it the character of the rural economy today that like in the feudal system the owners of the lands produce mostly for their own consumption and, to meet the other necessities of living, they sell part of this produce in the local market as per the law of this local market ? Or, whether the land owners produce in the lands with an eye on the demands of the national market ? Moreover, is the price of the agricultural produce in the village fixed in terms of the law of the local market, or is the agricultural commodity transformed into commodity of the national market today ? Turn on the radio set and you can listen to that all the agricultural produce is being controlled today by the share market, wholesale market and the stock exchange. The land owners are selling their produce in the market as per the prices fixed by them and they are increasing their capital thereby. Thus, today, the land too is transformed into a means or instrument of capital investment like the factory is. Thus, it is seen, that through investment of capital in the land capital is growing. Besides, I pointed it out earlier, the production of agricultural commodity by land owners through investment in land also takes place on the basis of the owner-wage labourer relation, that is, on the capitalist production relation itself — whatever its form depending upon the specificities and peculiarities of regions and people.

Therefore, all these features — the concentration of most of the lands in the hands of a few, the continuous decline of most of the village people to the level of the proletariat and semi-proletariat, the transformation of the land into a means of capital investment, agricultural production taking place on the basis of owner-wage labourer relation and, above all, the transformation of the agricultural produce into commodities of the national market — they go to demonstrate that the Indian agricultural economy is wholly capitalist economy. However backward and underdeveloped Indian capitalism is, except as hangover of feudal habits, conduct and behaviour in the cultural life of the country and in the rural relationships, nowhere in land relation or in agricultural production relation does feudal relation linger to be present. The capitalist agricultural production relation has taken its place, whatever may be its form on account of differences in the specificities and peculiarities of regions and people, and trade and commerce in agricultural commodity too run according to the laws of the capitalist national market.

However, on the grounds that farming in our country is not carried out with tractor-machines, or that there are the hangovers of old feudal habits and practices in the Indian cultural life and in the rural relations, those who deny that the agricultural economy of our country is capitalist economy actually display utter ignorance of how capitalism makes inroads into agricultural economy in a backward country in this era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. In the eighteenth century, when capitalism was progressive, world revolution was in the stage of capitalist revolution, capitalism was making strides through uncompromising struggle against religion, on the one hand, and the feudal system, on the other hand, a revolutionary transformation of production and industrialization on extensive scales was taking place on the basis of capitalist relation itself, capitalism made inroads into agriculture with tractor-machines for supply of raw materials to meet the requirements of industrialization and create surplus labour out of the majority of the village people for absorption in the industries. But in this era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, when capitalism has not only turned reactionary but is in

its third intensive phase of world market crisis and let alone creation of employment made possible through setting up new industries, production in the existing industries is coming down or has to be closed down because of absence of the market and this is leading to further aggravation of the unemployment problem, capitalism can no longer effect modernization and mechanization of agriculture with tractor-machines in its own interest.

On the grounds that in the interest of capitalism itself the capitalists cannot go about modernizing agriculture with tractor-machines, it cannot however be concluded that the rural economy in our country is not capitalist economy. It is by breaking the feudal relation that capitalism is making inroads into this backward or underdeveloped economy. In its own interest, however, capitalism is engaging in the bid to tie down the majority of the rural people to the land in order that the unemployment problem did not assume such dimensions under whose weight this order could collapse and the revolution for the overthrow of the existing state could materialize. If millions of people in the villages are thrown off unemployed in just one stroke, then this vast army of the unemployed would explode in towns and villages and no kind of state machinery could save the situation. That is why, under this capitalist system in our country, full-scale modernization and mechanization of the agricultural system conducive to industrialization is no longer possible. Hence this capitalist conspiracy to tie down the majority of people to the rural economy in a half-clad, half-starved state. The land reform programme of the Congress, the agent of the ruling bourgeoisie, and the approach and programme of the votaries of national democratic and people's democratic revolution on the issue of land reform, are just revelations of this conspiracy.

Secondly, you should bear in mind, since in this era of imperialism and proletarian revolution capitalism developed in our country in the period when the bourgeoisie at the international level had become extremely reactionary, this capitalism grew up in compromise with religion and feudalism. Because of this, ours being a backward country, feudal hangover in habits and practices persist as admixtures in the basic capitalist relation and exploitation in the process of agricultural production, just like an impurity mixing up in gold. In this case, whom to deal the blow ? The hangover, or capitalism which is the root cause of exploitation ? In these circumstances, people who advocate dealing the blow to whatsoever feudal remnants persist as admixtures in the capitalist exploitation in this backward country instead of advocating for the overthrow of capitalism, are in reality pleading for the capitalist exploitation itself, no matter the rhetoric they employ against the bourgeoisie. You should grasp this point clearly. You should realize, the main enemy of the revolutionary struggle of the workers, peasants and the lower-middle class is the bourgeoisie of our country who are in state power. People who seek to create confusion over this issue in particular, who try to mislead on this matter and highlight the minor issues, much less important issues relatively, in order to hide the real truth and distract attention from the main enemy thereby, are actually subverting the people's cause even as they claim to be Marxist-Leninists.

So, from every angle we find that of the three problems in the peasant's life one concerns provision of adequate employment to the surplus population whose numbers will be growing every day, to those who cannot be allotted land and will be the surplus numbers after distribution of the recovered lands. Another problem concerns modernization and mechanization of agriculture. And the solution to both these basic problems is inseparably linked with the issue of industrial revolution and opening the door to unhindered development of industries. And unhindered progress of industries we can achieve only when we can free production from the

capitalist production relation and profit motive, overthrowing the capitalist state and capitalist economic system with the force of the anti-capitalist revolution.

But if it transpires that a party calling itself Marxist-Leninist has also adopted 'land to the tiller' as the basic and the sole programme of its land reform policy, it follows then that they too seek, in a different verbiage and a different approach though, to tie down the majority of the rural people to three bighas, one and half bighas of land in the half-starved and half-clad condition of primitive uncivilized men. This could only be the task of the political agents of the capitalists who seek to extend the lease of life of capitalism — this is no task of the Marxist-Leninists. The Marxist-Leninists would want development of agriculture, they would stand for modernization and mechanization of agriculture. They would seek to demolish the whole moribund system for that matter. They would do away with capitalism because this capitalism stands out as the main hurdle to carrying out this demolition. At the same time they would voice the slogan of 'land to the tiller', they would also raise voice for scientific method in agriculture. Indeed it strikes me when I hear these Marxist-Leninists call for 'stop introduction of tractor-machines as this will go to aggravate unemployment'. I find it in the programme of some of these parties that in respect to the peasant movement it is their policy to resist introduction of tractor-machines and to unite this movement to resist tractor-machines with the revolutionary line to overthrow feudalism. What a self-contradiction<sup>14</sup> ! I just cannot make head or tail of it. Why to unite the anti-tractor-machine movement with the struggle to overthrow feudalism ? It is the introduction of tractor-machines which is to go to overthrow feudalism in the rural economy. That is what happens. Is introduction of tractor-machines getting obstructed by feudalism ? See, this is the same policy-plan like that of the bourgeoisie to oppose tractor-machines — the bourgeois politics to guard capitalism against the thrust of unemployment, something like the bourgeois land reform policy. In the situation where, say, in the course of a peasant movement, peasants become unemployed as a result of introduction of tractor-machines, then while rallying them in the movement against that particular move, I will explain to them that the people are not against introduction of tractor-machines. The peasant, in fact, favours introduction of tractor-machines. How could uplift of the rural economy be otherwise possible ? How could the rural life improve ? How could the woes of agricultural labourers and poor peasants come to an end ? How could the market expand ? How could the door to industrial revolution open up ? How could production of agricultural commodities or raw materials for the industry be made possible ? And the food problem of the country be solved ?

So, for the cause of progress, for ending the sufferings of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, to remove darkness from the rural life, modernization and mechanization of agriculture is a necessity. But in today's situation this cannot be achieved under the capitalist system. If attempted, a very vast section of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants will be thrown off unemployed in one single stroke. Even the small provision for sustenance they have will come to cease. Hence, before overthrowing the capitalist state and economic order and installing the socialist state and economic system in its place, it is not possible to lay hand on this task. Whereas, without modernization and mechanization of agriculture, the sufferings and woes of and the darkness that prevails in the rural life at present cannot be eliminated too. Therefore, for the sake of survival and in the interest of uplift of the rural life, the agricultural labourers, landless peasants, poor peasants, lower-middle peasants are all to come together without further delay and join forces with the industrial proletariat and other working masses to engage in the task of accomplishing the anti-capitalist revolution. So, they are to prepare for replacing capitalism and till the time they could replace capitalism, the right slogan on the issue of

introduction of tractor-machines should be : Give us alternative employment, else we will not allow tractor-machines. We, the agricultural labourers and peasants, we are for modernization of agriculture. It is introduction of tractor-machines which is exactly what we want, and exactly for that we need to overthrow capitalism, because overthrowing capitalism will ensure unhindered progress of industry, modernization and mechanization of agriculture will be made possible, opening the road to all-out uplift of the rural life will be possible, and thus it will be possible to change this face of the rural life.

You must have realized from this discussion that this question of completing the half-baked agrarian revolution in our country, that is, modernization and augmentation of agricultural production and the question of providing permanent employment to the surplus population in land is deeply interwoven with the question of accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution. This being the real problem, those in our country who are voicing the slogan of national democratic or people's democratic revolution instead of taking to the programme of anti-capitalist socialist revolution, who are agitating the peasants with firebrand revolutionary slogans are in reality staging mock fights for certain reforms only within the existing capitalist economic order. By this act, indirectly though, they are only helping to strengthen the present capitalist rule. Remember, until and unless you can overthrow this capitalist economic order with the force of revolution, the order which this capitalist state protects and keeps going with its police, military, judiciary, and until you can establish in its place your own police, military, court and judiciary, that is, your own state, you cannot bring about industrialization in accord with your needs, nor can you change the face of the village. There will be no solution to the basic problems of the peasant life. This is indeed the main problem confronting at present the movement for the peasant's emancipation.

### **Peasant cadres should give up reactionary, superstitious mentality and practice revolutionary politics**

To accomplish this anti-capitalist revolution, which great task devolves upon you, you should grasp a few things more in the first place. Bear it in mind, if in your thoughts and outlook you remain victim of the reactionary and superstitious mentality of the old society, you cannot bring this great revolution to success. But you will notice, the same attitude still prevails in some measure in many of you. For instance, most of you carry the mentality that when you are in want, you have no means to pull through, you cannot pay the usurious interest to the money-lender, you come together then and make protests. If your immediate demands come to be realized, you think you have achieved everything, nothing remains to be done. You come to believe, by organizing yourselves and waging some fights and all that, sparing no means whatever, you could evade to pay the interest to the money-lender. You can never convince yourselves to think that you have not evaded to pay the interest. Because, the money-lender has no right to charge you usurious interest. You never think that by charging you in this way the money-lender was committing a crime and you resisted it by fighting against him. You think on the contrary, you have evaded paying the interest. Your enemy resides in the recess of your mind — it is the wrong sense of religiosity which the owners inculcate in your mind to undo you. They tell you : 'Don't you obey God ? Is it the bidding of your faith that you won't pay the interest for the loan you took ?' And you nod to agree. I would ask : Is the religious sense to be invoked only when it comes to charging the interest ? Has it no other meaning than just this ? If that be so, then this religious sense had better be gone. If religion has nothing to do in matters of ending the sufferings and woes of people, in stopping perpetration of injustice upon them, resisting police

repression, providing jobs to people, then better bid farewell to that religion. The religious sense which teaches merely to pay interest to the money-lender brings ruin only. Anyway, this sort of religious sense prevails in you. With this religiosity you won't be able to accomplish revolution. Revolution and this religious sense do not go together. Those who want to win freedom from subjugation, who want to change the face of the village, who want this capitalist exploitative system replaced, if they remain in so narrow a world — victims of the canons of scripture, bigoted habits and superstitions — can they accomplish revolution ? Is it possible for them to liberate the country from the shackles of capitalist exploitation ? Remember, those workers and peasants would be capable of running the industries and the agriculture of the country under their own control, running their own state, own police force and judiciary after demolishing this vast and overbearing capitalist state, who are free from superstitions and from this religiosity — peasants who are upright, who have the spirit to wage struggle, who have rectitude and are capable of laying down their lives. Those peasants can achieve it who realize that to live like humans, to build the road for their children to live like humans, they have to struggle against all oppressions, all injustice and superstitions. To acquire this make-up of mind you will have to practise the revolutionary politics.

### **Give up mistaken attitude to rural gentry**

In this connection I need to discuss yet another aspect. It is, you have in you so many wrong perceptions about the rural gentry. Exploiting others they are quite enjoying themselves in this exploitative social system, and most of them who have left the village to reside in the town are having a good time. Occasionally they visit the village when they dole out some money and maybe they will donate for a make-shift bridge, hand out some funds for the school committee, and with all this they get themselves accepted by you as noble-hearted donors. Parting with a few silvers from the millions of rupees, from the vast riches amassed in their troves by sucking your blood, they contrive each to present himself as a noble donor. And you come to think, the master landlord is noble-hearted. You receive them with garlands when they set foot in the village. For, you think the master has done a lot for the village. Not for once you pause to think wherefrom came the money into the master's pocket which he doled out. Or, why he did need to donate. Why should you accept charity from him who robbed you of your money by cheating you ? The selfsame man who looted your money by fraud doled out a very petty sum out of it and had himself received as a noble donor. So weak-kneed are you that just because you need seeds for cultivation, you need a road bridge in your village, no sooner the master obliged than you became his purchased man. Those whose fleecing brought ruin to the village got themselves looked upon by you as noble-hearted great souls, setting foot in the village once and sinking a tubewell, laying a road, once constructing a make-shift bridge, or setting up an elementary-level school. And you too started thinking that the master is indeed a good soul, he has a very magnanimous heart. A rogue actually who cheats you to bring ruin to your life played the tricks to get himself reckoned by you as a noble donor, and in this way exactly you are getting yourselves cheated through the ages. You got yourselves fooled by this circumstance because you lack revolutionary consciousness, thoughts, education and a firm base of your own organization, everything in fact. You must give up this mentality which still persists in you.

### **Interest of revolution and organization should be regarded as far greater than individual interest**

Other than this, you will notice, because of the lack of correct revolutionary political consciousness while leading the peasant movements, the sense of individual interest sometimes raises its head very dangerously under impact of daily privations, and this harms the revolutionary movement. As is the case with the owners of big land holdings who have greed and avarice for property and for which they cheat each other, the mentality in you too which is born of greed for private property spits venom during allotment of land amongst yourselves. As the owners of big land holdings are afflicted with immense greed for property, the same poisonous vice thrives in you too. Notice carefully, you will feel that so strong is your fascination for land and so deep your attachment to property you often get embroiled in bitter quarrels among yourselves during distribution of land as to who will receive allotment and who will not. Seldom you spare a thought to realize that all cannot get land at once. Even if you distribute equally the lands you recovered together, not everyone can get land. So, preserving the unity of the organization you the people of the village should sit together first to settle who are the ones among you who need to be allotted land in the first place. After allotment to them first, if any land remains to be allotted then others will receive. Whereas, what happens, without first settling it among yourselves, everybody joins in the scramble to get land first. You start scrambling among yourselves for just two or three bighas of land, which perhaps you won't be able even to retain in the end. This tussle leads to infighting among you and as a result unity among people becomes its victim. Among the cadres of the organization not having that level of consciousness this even creates envy, bad blood and infightings. With what outcome? Thereby you weaken your own organization.

To resolve the problem arising from land distribution and allotment, you should attend to two measures. First, since the land you recovered by your struggle falls short of what is required by all who need land, so instead of undermining your organization by fighting among yourselves you should first sit together in your village under the leadership of the party or the leadership of the local committee of the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation to settle whose needs among you come foremost. Say, for example, the case of an able-bodied poor peasant. He has a holding of one katha<sup>15</sup> and he can anyhow make some earnings by his labour. Another peasant residing next to him is old and incapacitated, he too has a holding of one katha. Both have want in their families. But of the two the one who is able-bodied somehow does some sundry jobs, he can somehow run his household even by carrying head-loads if needed. Whereas, the old man is without the same capacity. If now the question of land allotment arises between these two, then if he were a conscious peasant cadre, a revolutionary, the able-bodied peasant would offer on his own that the old peasant should receive first and he will get if land in excess is available. Such should be the attitude of everyone. If all of you have this attitude, no agent of the enemy can succeed to drive a wedge into the organization, no one from outside can create a division within you.

### **Problem of land distribution is to be resolved by keeping intact organization's unity**

Secondly, you have got it in the Report here that in many places during land allotment poor and landless peasants sat together and with the help of the leadership they have resolved the issues democratically. Maintaining their trust and confidence in the party and the party leadership they have preserved the organization's unity like the apple of the eye. For no reasons whatsoever, at no one's instigation either, did they allow the unity and solidarity to suffer.

Because, you have witnessed how in such cases not only the counterrevolutionary parties but even those who masquerade as revolutionaries and by the red banner confuse the poor peasants, they too instigate poor people to fight against poor people. Say, you have recovered three bighas of *benam* land by your struggle, while another party came up flying the red banner and they instigated some peasants by stoking up petty self-interest in them to come to fight against you and seize the land. You should know, by inciting petty self-interest no noble task can be accomplished. What happens when a party goes after confusing you in this way, with such unfair conduct and reprehensible acts ? The poor masses become divided among themselves. Divided under banner of this and that party, the poor peasants start fighting each other. Due to sheer opportunist politics of these sham red flag-waving parties, the jotedars who are the bourgeoisie of the rural society get the opportunity of watching these infights among you and they merrily enjoy this. Even more, these jotedars, when they find it expeditious, themselves pay some money to some poor peasants to send them with the red banner in hand, so that they shout a few militant revolutionary slogans, gather up a few bighas of land from this or that corner and having misguided the poor peasants they set up a separate organization among them. How do they carry out this act ? Say, some lands were recovered and from these some peasants got land while some others did not get anything. Immediately after, an agent of the jotedars or someone from a counterrevolutionary party came up to mislead those who received no land : ‘Just see, they gave land to the others but not to you. Join our party, we will snatch away those lands’. Because they had not received land, so these peasants thereupon left their organization to join this agent. This manoeuvre amounts to treachery within one’s own home. Thus, at every turn of issue, at minor turns and passing issues, the focal point of your base politics, that is, the revolutionary preparation for transforming the capitalist state and capitalist economy is getting undermined. With the organization so loosely knit, its cadres shifting from this to that organization for self-interest, revolution cannot come about. With the poor peasants engaging in infights over allotment of land, they cannot accomplish revolution. They cannot be revolutionaries, after all, who instigate some poor people to seize the lands of other poor people. These are some common but pertinent considerations — you must be alive to them.

### **Sad history of forcible conversion of social property into individual property**

Remember, it is true the peasant is to wage struggle to get land, but he need not indulge in greed for land. To get land is a just demand of yours. Because, it was your ancestors who fought ferocious animals, cleared forestlands and dug up rocky wastes to make land cultivable. ‘God created cultivable lands and made the landlords owners of these lands’ — no, nobody became the owner that way. All members of society together made land suitable for cultivation. Long past, all men in society lived together divided into clans and they wandered from one place to another in quest of livelihood. Thus wandering they came to settle in different places in the course of that quest. Then it was almost humanly impossible struggles they had to carry out against tigers, say, and many other ferocious animals, against nature as a whole, and with inhuman toil they cleared forestlands and turned rocky and barren lands suitable for cultivation. After making the land suitable for cultivation when they settled down permanently and started raising crops then some chieftains among them who had greater muscle power and could use force in their interest became the owners of land, depriving others through sheer force. Who did thus forcibly appropriate the wealth which was created by the labour of all the people together ? They were the forefathers of the zemindars you know today.



The big owners with their sleek look you witness today — some hundred or thousand years back their ancestors did not have so shapely, graceful feet, say, as today, they were not as gentlemanly then. They lived off muscle power, the gang leaders of robbers. In the initial stage they lived together with your forefathers, they struggled together. Afterwards, through sheer force they became the masters, the ruling elite, the feudal lords. Thereafter, during the British rule, they served the British and became the zemindars. So it happened that the lands which all people had one day collectively made fit for cultivation with hard toil and over which all the people of society had an equal right, the same lands were subsequently usurped through sheer force by a band of men who deprived you criminally. Therefrom came the monarchical system, feudalism from it, the zemindar system thereafter during the British rule. Now they have established individual ownership over lands. Now they are instilling it in you that these are all the properties of the owners and you are the slaves of the owners. So, as slaves, your sacred duty is to protect your master's property. That you are born slaves is the consequence of your sins in the preceding life. Whereas, the masters are born the owners as a reward for the virtuous work in their preceding life, so they drink and outrage women as they desire. On the other hand, for all your many commissions you have turned out to be their slaves today. For thousands of years they have been teaching you that the king is on a par with God. The king is God himself whether the king is a tyrant, he is given to drunken revelries, is an outrager of women. You are obliged to serve him. Driving this into your head they have even turned your mind servile. For, you have forgotten a history of thousands of years. There lies behind a sad history of how a handful of men became the owners of all lands and you became their slaves. You who will take on political activity, if you will just keep to struggling on the demand for land, wage-rise and relief, you cannot have fostered in you that sustainable strength to draw upon for that struggle. You ought to know this history. Leaders and cadres of the party will relate to you this history. As you will come to know of it, it will spark off a fire in you. How come you are slaves today in the same land which your ancestors had all collectively made fit for cultivation, together you had owned it collectively. And even if someone has belief in the existence of God, it has to be presumed that he by no means made anybody master or owner of the land. How were you dispossessed forcibly of the lands ? Later, when the owners set themselves up as the rulers in order to retain the ownership over this land, they made it the law and you came to submit to it, obeying the law as you went about, forgetting the sad history of how you got dispossessed of the lands.

Later, towards the end of the British rule, under the Rayatwari Act<sup>16</sup> ownership was allowed to those who held tenancy of land. But, these land-tenants could hardly avail of this provision because of their ignorance, their lack of awareness and the weakness of the organization. The big landowners deprived them by fraud on legal provisions and, in connivance with officials, they usurped those lands. Afterwards, during the rule of the Congress government, when the Abolition of Middle Proprietary Act or the Zemindari Abolition Act was enacted — I told you about it earlier — poor peasants were deprived and others appropriated most of the lands in connivance with officials. Even so, the very few among you who got whatever land, could not retain the same land. How did that land go out of your hands ? It became the grist of the grinding mill of capitalist exploitation which in fact stands out at present as the main obstacle on your way to survival — the one without overthrowing which you have no prospect of emancipation. Should you now want to secure a firm base for your struggle against this prevailing capitalist social system, you should know the past history to some extent. Only in this way will you be able to sustain strength in this struggle. Only then could you free yourselves from the deceit of the religious sense, from the guiles of sense of property. Long back your ancestors were

overwhelmed by muscle-men, by the might of chieftains, and they made you slaves. Grabbing the lands by force they became the masters. But the same poisoned blood runs in your veins too. For which you start scrambling among yourselves over possession of three meagre patches of land, or one patch of land — just that. This is the same poisoned blood as flows in the veins of the zemindars. They battle over big lands, you too are victim of the same illusion centring round land. Just for, say, two or three kathas, eight kathas, or a bigha or two of land, even poor peasants are fighting poor peasants over possession of land. On the contrary, it should have been your task that you will recover all *benam* and vested lands and you will distribute these lands first among those who are the most needy, the poorest and the most helpless by comparison, and ensure that no ill-feeling ensues among you by any means over this distribution. Because, ill-feeling will undermine the unity among you. Consequently, the ultimate struggle against capitalism will suffer.

**Abjure your individual interest for the cause of  
revolution and organization, learn revolutionary politics**

I said earlier, to grasp all these you are to learn the revolutionary politics. Only then you can realize all these. From whom will you learn the revolutionary politics and how ? Remember, to learn the revolutionary politics it is the prime requisite that in the first place you will recognize the revolutionary party and develop voluntary submission to that party. In the second place, learn the revolutionary politics, as you engage in day-to-day struggles, from those political workers equipped with the revolutionary politics who can reveal layer by layer the truth of everything around. But the fact is, you are just not following this. You do not participate in the organization to learn politics. Rather, you look for something or other from your organization. Or, you ask them to look after your court case. If your need could not be fulfilled, you get into a bad mood. I might ask you here whether the need to organize your revolutionary political party is to plead for your court cases. What is your necessity for the leader ? Remember, the leaders are the commanders of the people's army. They guide you in two ways. Firstly, they give you counsel, wise guidelines, help you build revolutionary character and teach you how to attain the right outlook to judge each problem. On the other, they acquaint you with the intricacies and concrete form of the struggle against your powerful enemy, its police-military organs, all its diverse means and trickeries. But, as things go, you do not learn these from your leaders. You would rather like them to work as pleaders for your case. To that I say, a pleader can be hired with money — what is the need of a revolutionary party for that ? You take the party workers to be your pleaders for free. You seem to think, since you have cast your vote for the party, you participate in the processions they organize and lend your voice for the slogans raised, so they will do the pleader's job for you for free. The truth is that they do it but not in return for something. To do it for you is part of their work. But you should realize, if you keep them busy this way for all the twentyfour hours a day, when are they going to teach you politics ? When will they organize you ? When will they build up your volunteer corps ?

Another mentality is also noticeable in the ordinary-level peasants among you. Facing a problem, they would rather go straight to a leader of high level, if they get him close at hand, rather than go to the village committee. Their idea is that with a big leader his capacity to get them some concession is also greater. For this, they do not feel happy unless they approach the big leader. If this way thousands of peasants keep the high ranking leaders busy every day with their day-to-day problems, how could the party leaders get time to effect big plans for developing the organization, building party committees in the villages and larger areas, and imbue thousands

of people with the revolutionary ideology to develop a steel-strong organizational base ? If you would persist in your practice of pleading with the leaders only for getting you a land, asking them to plead with the court offices in favour of your case, get something for you from the BDO<sup>17</sup>, arrange something for your son, and if you argue that some one else has got what he had asked for and so he can stay in the organization but why you will stay if you do not get your needs fulfilled, then you will be gravely harming your own cause. You need to remember, all this thinking goes against your revolutionary movement, your united struggles. Because, as a result of this mentality and mode of thinking, self-interest becomes more dominant than the greater interest of keeping the organization alive. As a result, the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation, the instrument of your day-to-day struggle, gets weakened. With the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation getting weakened, your collective interest comes to suffer in the end. You must therefore wage a resolute struggle against this mentality and train the peasant cadres with proper political education.

There is another important issue in this regard which I intend to discuss with you. I explained firstly that so long as the capitalist state exists some of your problems might be solved through reforms within its framework or by realizing some demands in the course of movements. But unless this capitalist state could be overthrown with the force of revolution and seizure of power by workers and peasants did materialize, all the problems in the peasants' lives will not be solved, these cannot be solved. You should as well grasp clearly what this seizure of power by workers and peasants means. You should remember, that workers and peasants seizing power does not mean securing ministerial positions by formation of a government through elections within the framework of the present state. Workers and peasants seizing power means workers and peasants establishing their own state by overthrowing this capitalist state, workers and peasants setting up their own police-military organs in the place of the capitalist police-military organs, installing a system of justice conducive to the interests of workers and peasants in the place of the present judicial system of the capitalist state, that is, completely restructuring the judiciary anew on the basis of the socialist ideology and principles, this new system being conducted by those who are from the ranks of workers and peasants — in a word, workers and peasants themselves running their own state. Till creation of this situation, even though it may be possible to realize some demands in the course of movements or by way of negotiation with the authorities, the real problems of the poor people cannot be solved. Politically conscious peasant cadres will explain this point to others. Because, it is often seen that whenever an issue is not resolved and remains unresolved, some elements from an agent party of the owners come in to create division among you. They say many adverse things to sow confusion in you about your organization. Pointing to a leader of the organization they would say : 'Well, he is now an MLA, a minister at that, but what has he done for you ?' That leader did a lot for you, as far as possible, or, maybe, he could not do many things, and you can understand that it is not possible either to solve all the problems before revolution. So, it comes down to knowing which party it is which has taught the poor to stand up with head high for the cause of revolution — the revolution without which all your problems cannot be solved, which party it is which has taught the peasants to rally in their organization for the cause of revolution. This shall be the moot point with you. Whereas, over this issue at different times, even over trifles, serious confusions are seen to prevail among you. Taking full advantage of this, your opponent party and the agents of the enemy undermine your organization, the one which is the prime instrument for your struggle. So, you must give up this mentality in the interest of the struggle for your own emancipation.

### **What should be the character of the organization**

Now I should discuss a few aspects concerning the organization. You should first realize what should be the character of that steel-strong organization which I am urging you to build up — I mean, in a word, the kind of organization at one whistle-call of which, a bugle call, a beat of drum, or a stroke on a dhol<sup>18</sup> all people in the village will at once rush out with anything handy as weapon. Say, the village party committee gave a call with drum-beat for rallying in a procession — at once all the youth, boys and girls together rose to their feet. They left aside the other jobs to be done later. For, they have understood, the organization is like the apple of the eye. If the eye is lost, man turns blind. Likewise, if the organization becomes weak then the collective strength of people becomes weaker too. Thus, such like shall be the character of the organization that on a single instruction from the party you can rise to your feet all prepared, be it for a meeting, a procession, a battle with the opponent, a contingency to proceed to a place, a rally in the locality or elsewhere. This ability to take a decision collectively on the basis of the party's ideology and base political line, this ability to move collectively is what we call the organization. You should remember that some people merely assembling under the signboard of the party, or gathering around some leaders and together engaging in activity under the direction of the leader — just these do not add up to be called a political organization. As is often found, in different areas each one of the cadres sits out waiting for instructions to come from leaders and when the instruction comes from above they probably try best to put the same into effect. But collectively on their own they cannot take a decision on the basis of the party's ideology and base political line, they cannot take initiative on an issue. Even if a number of people come together into a kind of loose structure, that cannot be called a proper political organization, let alone a revolutionary organization.

Keep in mind also to resolve whatever bickerings arise among yourselves with the help of the party's local leadership — such should be the nature of the organization. Should it happen that you cannot agree to the decision of the local leadership then you will appeal to the higher committee or to a higher leader. But you must not move the court of law over issues involving yourselves, you must not disrupt the organization having developed bad blood, must not weaken the organization. Why do you need to go to court ? If the owners get you entangled in a court case, then of course you have to approach the court. But as poor people you should never go to the court over feuds among yourselves. You will resolve all your feuds at your own village committee, local party committee, or the local committee of the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation. If any disagreements persist at this level, you will appeal to the higher committee. No expending money here, no hassle, no fear of getting trapped by touts or unscrupulous lawyers. You don't have to be afraid of becoming destitutes, or of any divisions coming in between you. Even when you are going to die you leave behind your unity intact. Remember, to go against the party or the organization over personal antagonism or animosity under any circumstances is against the grain of a revolutionary, an ideologically imbued worker or peasant. Also you should remember, because the allegiance of the members of the organization to the party committee and the party leadership is voluntarily inspired so it remains unquestioning in the interest of revolution. The party shall be at the helm of the mass fronts. To belittle it is to undermine the base line of struggle itself. These are teachings you ought to take to heart and propagate and spread among others.

## **Two types of organization — mass and party organization**

You should know, the organization in which you rally to build up your struggles collectively are of two types. Consider, for instance, that together you take out processions, you do *gherao*, submit your demands, hold meetings, at times you get into direct clashes with the jotedars and the police — all these you do from an organization which we call the own class organization of the agricultural labourers and peasants. As for example, the poor peasants' and agricultural labourers' own class organization of your village is the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation which brings together all the poor peasants and agricultural labourers into its fold for waging struggles. Besides, there are the other various organizations of the peasants — for example, the co-operative, the village defence force, the volunteer corps, etc. You should however realize, simply with these organizations you cannot carry out the big task, you cannot make much headway. What can you achieve at the most only with this type of organizations? You come out together in order to realize those few demands with these organizations which you feel will stall your life unless these are won immediately. When these demands are realized, or when repression comes heavily down upon you in the course of your movement to win these demands, or if repression is brought to bear heavily upon the organization, the organization faces disruption, it starts disintegrating completely. Some people flee the organization out of fear. Maybe some others turn into agents. Some start deserting, some others are afraid to show up. Maybe they will not say as much in words that they are scared, in reality though they flee from fear. In this type of organizations many betray such attitudes. These happen because the activists of these organizations lack revolutionary political consciousness and political organizational strength.

There is a different type of organization which is built with those political workers who are tempered with revolutionary education and are from the mass organizations. It is the party organization. Within the mass organizations, those who are politically most conscious, who all have knowledge of the sad history of the lives of the workers and peasants, who know how man emerged in a long history after the origin of the earth, how agriculture came thereafter, how society was at that period, how did the lands collectively reclaimed turn into private property, what was the origin of private property in society, how arose the monarchy, the feudal lords, the babus, the usurers in the village community, the birth and development of capitalism, the capitalist state, the development of the industries, the proletariat class, the growth of the unemployment problem — that is, who know and understand the entire history of the woes and sufferings of the common people, and at the same time who know how to tackle all these, how to establish the workers' and peasants' state by overthrowing the present capitalist state, to run that state, to organize the army of the people, organize the police system, conduct the judiciary, and conduct the ideological propaganda as well as the ideological and theoretical struggle, in fact, those who will unitedly wage the battle against the present capitalist state and its police and military, staking their lives in this battle, never to betray its cause, never conducting themselves in debased and mean culture but possessing higher ethical and cultural standard, who are capable of performing the roles of commanders in the revolutionary struggle of the masses — it is comprising them that the party organization develops. So, we, the Marxist-Leninists, the revolutionaries, call them the members of the party organization who carry out the task of revolution having mastered revolutionary politics, who will transform the social order, change the world.

You should also know that within the party organization, in every locality, the higher party organization takes concrete shape in the party committee, the committee under which you work. Can this party committee be formed picking up anyone and everyone? No. The party committee

has to be formed with those from among the party workers who are capable of politically analysing all local problems whatsoever from the party's angularity and resolving them by maintaining party leadership over the common people. They lead the common people in their movements, at the same time they keep watch on the propaganda of the opponent party and expose the real character of these propaganda so that peasants and labourers are not misled. They also remain alert so that no agents from outside get an opportunity to carry out factional activities among peasants and labourers. They should have the ability to take care of all the problems of the agricultural labourers and peasants of the locality — for instance, the problems of fixing the minimum wage of the agricultural labourers, availability of round-the-year job, wage-increase in keeping with price-rise, the problem of irrigation, getting fertilizers and seeds at cheap rates, problems relating to lands, those arising from day-to-day struggles, keeping peasants and labourers ever alert against all trickeries and misleading propaganda by the opponent parties. They should be capable of taking appropriate steps to maintain the unity and solidarity of peasants and agricultural labourers against any attempts of the hostile agent party to disrupt their unity. They are to be equipped so as to be able to take political classes of the peasants. In plain language, the party committee is the body which is capable of conducting all these tasks, acting in unison. From time to time they will approach the leaders to get an understanding of the plans and programmes, but every day they do not send the common peasants to the leaders. Rather, they themselves meet the necessities of common peasants and labourers.

I should tell you one more point here. Poor people in the village who become members of the committee, or members of the party, often ask a question. They argue : 'We are poor, at home we have problems of providing food for the family, or problems relating to farming, in fact a thousand problems in the family concerning wife and children. Where is the time to attend to the party work ?' Thus, whatever the party work assigned, it remains unattended. In situations like this the party committee becomes a party committee in name only. Remember, you are members of the party committee, which is to say, you are the most conscious section of party workers, you are the ones who are most eligible to be party volunteers. If you cannot come forward upholding the mentality and mental bent to go ahead disregarding all sorts of personal loss then all those around, those who are weak in mind, who lack revolutionary education and revolutionary political consciousness — they will become further weakened. All the more, this way of rationalization and posing of individual problems obviously will have greater retrograde effect on them. You should therefore understand, for the class conscious revolutionary worker this is entirely a wrong line of thinking. Because, the necessity to accomplish revolution with a view to overthrowing this exploitative capitalist system is greatest for the proletariat and semi-proletariat. If you are to win emancipation, even in the midst of these all too many wants and troubles flowing from your sufferings under capitalist exploitation, it is for you to come out, it is for you to take the initiative. Those in this society who live in ease and comfort, they will not do it for you. In all countries where revolution has been successful, if you will read the histories of these countries, you will gather that it was because the workers and peasants there, thousands in numbers, could rise above their personal needs and sufferings, and singularly they devoted themselves to carrying out the task of revolution — so revolution could succeed there.

### **Class correlation in the background of anti-capitalist revolution in India**

Now try to understand clearly who is the main enemy of the revolution you are to accomplish in order to overthrow the Indian capitalist state, and who are your allies. In a word, understand

clearly the correlation of classes in this society. Remember, the capitalists, the owners of *benam* lands, the big jotedars, big businessmen, the usurers, and the political party of theirs — the Congress — also the police-military of this state, and the bureaucrats and officials — these are the enemy of this revolution. Whereas, the life-force of the revolution is the industrial workers of the urban areas and the landless peasants, agricultural labourers and poor peasants of the villages. Besides, you are to draw into the fold of revolution the middle class and the lower middle-class in towns and villages so that they do not become counter-revolutionary and join the enemy's camp. With respect to the middle peasants and lower strata of the middle peasants of the villages you will have to conduct yourselves with such an attitude and ideological approach. Remember, not to speak of the urban lower-middle class, even the rural lower-middle class do not always stand against the class struggle unlike the police, the military, the officials of the judiciary, other reactionary officers, the capitalist class itself, big businessmen, big jotedars in the countryside and the reactionary upper-middle class who are all outright opponents of the communist movement and the emancipation struggle as well as class struggles of the workers and peasants. True, the rural middle-class, even the lower-middle class also, have a common tendency to oppose the class struggle. Since however they are also under attack, they are also victim of exploitation, peace is wanting in their families too, so if you pursue a realistic and effective approach in regard to them you can win them over to your side in the struggle for emancipation — though not as steadfast and unfaltering fighters, but as vacillating allies. If you can strongly organize the poor in the villages, if you can raise a strong storm of mass movements, movements of peasants and labourers against rich peasants, if you can build party committees in all rural areas and under the leadership of the party committee give birth to a steel-strong organization of landless peasants, agricultural labourers and poor peasants so that all the poor people in the village rise to their feet at one call, its impact is sure to fall upon the rural middle-class, and, in that event, it will be easier for you to rally them in your struggle.

### **Rally the rural middle-class and lower-middle class in the anti-capitalist revolutionary struggle**

There is another point which too you should explain to the middle class. It is that the poor peasants of today have come from breakdown of the middle-class families. Young members of middle-class families do not get employment. They cannot move up the ladder to become bigwigs, they cannot take to big business and earn fabulous riches. When the crop is harvested, the middle class too has to sell out their produce to the traders at low prices. How many middle class peasants are there in this Birbhum district, who like Baidyanath Banerjee the owner of thousands of bighas of land and owner of coal mines, can store their produce in cold storages in their individual capacity ? And the owners build cold storages for business purpose, not for their own consumption. But a middle class peasant cannot store his produce even for the purpose of his own consumption. They have to sell out all their produce at the time of harvesting. The price at which they sell out to the traders is one, and the price at which they have to buy the same articles from the traders is one-and-a-half times to two times that. So, the condition of the middle class is not good either. It started from them that by the process of economic disintegration the poor peasants, agricultural labourers and landless peasants have arisen. If the middle class who own today, say, forty or fifty bighas of land have to live on land only, then under the impact of price-rise and due to growth of the family they gradually turn into lower-middle class peasants, then poor peasants, finally agricultural labourers. Therefore, unless the capitalist social system of

India is demolished, the dominance of the village jotedars and owners of benam lands brought to an end, the absolute control over the rural commodity by businessmen and the stock exchange broken down, that is, the rural economy rid of their control, the problems of the middle class too — problems concerning improvement of cultivation, modernization of agriculture, necessary education and employment for the young members of their families — these will not be solved. Then why should they hang around the babus, the big landlords, the owners and go against the poor peasants and labourers and thus make both sides hostile ? To grow bigger, the high and the mighty do not only exploit the agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants, they also deprive and exploit the middle class. Continually grabbing the lands of the middle class the big rich peasants concentrated vast lands in their hands and thus they became big jotedars. The village usurers cheat the middle class and the poor peasants and thus they run their money lending business. You should explain it to the middle class that they do not belong to the rich and it does not serve them to stay close to the babus. Explain it that in the given situation if they stay close to the rich and oppose the poor, how could the poor protect them from the rich ? Therefore they should not unnecessarily embroil themselves in conflict with the poor. On the contrary, if poor peasants and agricultural labourers have the middle class as allies in the battle against capitalism, the main enemy, against the big jotedars and the oppressive government of the country, then the local minor issues of conflict between the middle class, on the one hand, and the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, on the other hand, could be resolved easily under the leadership of the party committees. The local party committees can see to it that the middle class suffers less and the poor peasants demand less from them. However, in that case, the middle class must come to the help of the struggle of the agricultural labourers, poor and landless peasants. You could thus persuade the middle class and rally them in your movements.

### **Isolate the enemy from the broad masses**

On your part you should realize too that winning the middle class over to your side is, to be sure, in the interest of your broadest struggle against the enemy. Because, if the middle class, the intermediary between you and your enemy, join strength with your enemy because of your wrong handling, that will only go to strengthen the hands of your enemy. On the other, if you can draw the middle class to your side by treading the correct line, you can thereby isolate the enemy from the broader masses and it will be easier for you to build your struggle stronger. So, you understand well, it is not wise for you too to conduct yourselves with unnecessary hostility towards the middle class. Unless the middle class themselves invite conflict, you should not turn them into your opponents in your main struggle against the big capitalists and the jotedars. If they, regarding themselves as the high and the mighty, do not treat you in an inimical way you should not get into conflict with them. Because, to win the battle, it is as much a task of yours, on the one hand, to create division in the enemy camp, as is, on the other, isolating the enemy from the broader masses as far as possible also a task of yours. That will make the battle less tough for you. But keep in mind here that if you try to get the middle class on your side by appeasing them, allowing indulgence to their opportunism due to their vacillating character, you will never succeed in your bid. Only if you can build your organization on the firm foundation of revolutionary political consciousness of all the agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants of your village, will it be possible for you to effectively hold the middle class in the fold of the revolutionary movement. You should be vigilant also about another nature of the middle class. In regard to this keep always vigil on them even as you will be trying to draw in the middle class as



an ally of your movement. Keep in mind, even as they may join your movement as an ally, they are the vacillating ally. They always move with a babu-like attitude. There is very much a tendency in them to despise the poor, the ploughman, farm workers, the landless peasants and agricultural labourers. Not that everyone has this attitude, but many have it. Because they have this tendency, and they have an inclination to rise to upper levels and be rich, they may inflict harm to the movement from within as and when the opportunity may come their way, even while they are fighting alongside you. So, at the same time as you will try constantly to draw the middle class into your movement and rally them with you, you will also be watchful about them.

If you are class conscious, you should also realize that to win your battle, and this is a common tactics in a battle, you will try to create division in the enemy camp in your own interest, should that be possible, and you will take advantage of any possible antagonism within the enemy camp. For example, in the antagonism between one jotedar and another, if you can handle one side a bit, that is, if you can tactfully handle one side and can manoeuvre to engineer a clash in the enemy camp itself, you get some advantage to crush the enemy. This is a common tactics in every battle. Often, however, it is seen that if an attempt is made to handle the antagonism between one rich person and another, some among you immediately get agitated over it. Because, they think a close liaison is perhaps being maintained with that rich person. You should give up this sort of foolish attitude. Remember, the more you could widen the rift in the enemy camp, the more you could foment contradiction and conflicts among them, the less severe would be their attack on you and the stronger will be the impact of your counterattack on the enemy. But in this regard you must constantly keep vigil so that no one could ever take recourse to it from personal fascination, personal consideration, keeping the party in the dark about it. It has to be undertaken always under the party committee's directive and party guidance. Else, this in itself will beget opportunism in the active workers of the organization. These are things to be understood very clearly.

### **Build workers' and peasants' own powerful volunteer corps**

And, you have to build up your own powerful, disciplined and ideologically tuned volunteer corps. In this regard you should realize, first of all, that wearing a volunteer badge or participating in drills for some days does not make one a volunteer. A volunteer is one who serves a cause on his own will, which means he serves not in lieu of a payment. If you offer money, could there be a dearth of men willing to put in service ? So, one who argues : 'That person is an MLA, so I am serving him in the hope he will do something for me,' he cannot be a volunteer. He who serves for a reward, or does it hankering after something or in lieu of a remuneration is not reckoned a volunteer. Who were volunteers in fact ? Those sannyasis<sup>19</sup> of the past — Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, for example — and those of the freedom struggle — revolutionaries like Netaji Subhas, Kshudiram, Chandrasekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukdev, for example — who all laid down their lives for the cause of the country. They did their work or courted death not in lieu of money from anyone. These were the men whose names immediately come to mind when one talks of volunteers, men who are revered by all — like the religious preachers of the past, later the social reformers, then the fighters of the national liberation struggles. Volunteers are those whose job is to work for others selflessly like these noble men, forsaking homes, families and kins, enduring scolding from every corner, sparing all consideration for own comforts. This is the same country however where today many of you enquire, if approached for enrolment as a volunteer : 'How much you say is the allowance to be paid to become a volunteer?' To such a low level have people of this country been induced to

stoop in their thinking that they ask as to how can they be volunteers if no remuneration were paid even for some snacks and pocket money. You see this is the way they are accustomed to think. The bourgeois parties and the pseudo red flag-waving parties of this country contributed no less in creating this mental attitude among the people. Not to speak of the bourgeois parties, even the socialists and the pseudo red flag-waving parties have introduced the practice of engaging cadres in exchange of money in such a widespread manner that its harmful effect seems to escape notice of all. Because of the role of these parties, this degenerate mentality is gradually taking grip on the people and the party cadres, and also because of this the idea of a noble ideology ingrained in the word volunteer, prevailing at a time, has been obscured and muddled up today. For this, even many among you have no prick of conscience and quite easily you grow accustomed to thinking as to how you can undertake to do anything without being paid. I would put in : ‘Why do people who think in these terms need to be volunteers ? They better go and enrol as police constables.’ Remember, they are to be volunteers who have the consciousness grown in them that they will transform this society, they will usher in a new world. They will be the volunteers, those youth, who take on willingly this great responsibility, no matter whether they have to go with or without the barest of necessities, those who feel proud that they bear this responsibility.

Consider, for example, the instance of the peasants and workers of China who fought against the mercenary army of Ziang Ky-shek that received assistance from the different capitalist countries, especially from America. That mercenary army had the privilege of full military dresses, arms, vehicles, etc., together with regular salaries and also various illegitimate means of earning lots. Whereas, those peasants and workers who fought these mercenaries backed by capitalism and imperialism had none of these. Some wore a pajama, some wore lungis, some others half-pants, some had a vest to wear, some others a shirt to put on and even these were often torn — again some wore cloth-shoes, and some without this benefit even, went on fighting barefooted. Such was the look of the People’s Liberation Army there. But it is the People’s Liberation Army which ultimately inflicted a crushing defeat on the mercenary army paid by America and Ziang Ky-shek and drove them out of the country. What was the source of the strength with which they achieved this ? On the strength of dresses ? Or, was it on the strength of arms ? Look at how people in the jungles of Vietnam are fighting today. Children from peasant families, some twelve or thirteen years old, those whom we call kids, they too carry rifles on their shoulders. Even while they are doing chores at home, farming lands, as soon as they hear the bugle sounding for battle they leave aside the work on hand as it is, they even put down their food, get up from their beds, in whatever state they are they rush out with their rifles. It is for this that so big a power as America which has razed down that country by pouring down bombs, which spends thousands of crores of rupees every day for this war, which is out to slaughter the people of that land with its arms, tanks, napalm bombs and modern weaponry — even this America with all of these perpetrations now stands faced with defeat. It is thinking now, how it can flee Vietnam<sup>20</sup>. Why could not America win the war in Vietnam after all these ? It is because peasants in every village there, everyone from aged mothers even to the children in every family have ranged up in the battlefield there. All stand by a single vow — America has to be driven out. If you have nothing else on hand, take up your kitchen knife to fight the enemy. If that too is unavailable, just bite the enemy down with your teeth — so firm is the resolve, so prepared are all to court death. A scramble goes on there among them to lay down life. You will be astonished to learn, the peasants and workers fighting in Vietnam have a squad, which they call ‘suicide squad’. They enlist themselves in that squad to lay down their lives. Such suicide squads of ten

or twenty people, equipped with bombs and other firearms, enter the enemy camp all on a sudden. There they kill the enemy as many as they can and themselves die. There goes on a scramble to get enlisted in the suicide squad. Their sense of pride or picquance is over who will go ahead of others. One who fails to have the chance of going first has his sentiments churned up : ‘You did not send me first, am I any the less ? Am I not capable of sacrificing my life for the country ? Am I incapable of fighting for revolution ? Am I not a son worthy of a peasant family ? Am I a simpleton, a good for nothing who thinks only of his self and evades his task ? I too am the son of a peasant family who considers it the highest honour to lay down his life for liberation movement.’ Such is the attitude every peasant and worker of that country betrays. Could this be ever achieved by mercenaries ? Just realize, this is the character of a true volunteer. In this way, you too will have to raise all the people with revolutionary spirit and realization. So, you realize, those who will become volunteers, they don’t do so in return for money. Whatever little they will need while they carry out their task, they will collect the same in bits, collect them from thousands — one paise from everyone, a handful of rice from every man — this will do for you. But carry out your task you must. For that you do require volunteers — such volunteers who are imbued with right spirit and realization.

### **Tasks of volunteers**

What will these volunteers do ? They will keep track of the movement of the enemy. Who are the enemy agents entering into the village, which families they are visiting, whom they are trying to confound — the volunteers will gather information about all these. These men of the opponent parties will be trying to undermine the mass movement and the organization — not of course by convincing the masses on politics, but by raking up their base instincts, or by means of muscle power, or by alluring them. The volunteer will keep constant vigil so that these men cannot undermine people’s organizations and movements, the volunteers will by all means guard the masses against this evil influence. They will organizedly guard the party meetings. They will seat people at a meeting in a disciplined way. While they will listen to the deliberation of the meeting, they will keep vigil like an eagle on everything around at the same time so that the opponent party or the people of the enemy camp cannot break up the meeting. They will protect the distressed in the villages. They will provide protection to women from those who may try to outrage the women. If wayward youths humiliate the aged or old people, they will sternly take them to task. Again immediately after, they will affectionately, like a friend explain to them where they were wrong. They will explain that this is not proper. Because, these people are aged, they are like fathers. Maybe they did something wrong, or said something unjust. But they are like our fathers. It is our duty to protect their honour, the respect that is due to them. It is a human duty. If we fail in this, we cannot claim ourselves to be humans. Educate them this way. Don’t turn them into your enemy. Thus it is a major duty of the volunteers that they will respect women, they will be paying respects to the aged and will protect their honour whenever someone will violate it. First stop them who show disrespect, then try to educate them with an attitude of sympathy. Even after this if they don’t pay heed, despise them and take appropriate steps against them.

And it shall be the task of the volunteers that when the masses will take to the battle against the enemy, like army generals they will lead them forward. The volunteers shall learn how to fight the battle, how to advance the combat, when to retreat, and when to encircle the enemy from all sides and overrun them. For this purpose the volunteers are to be trained up. To train them up thus and guide them in a disciplined way, the volunteer corps is to be divided into small

groups with a commander heading each group. The commanders are to perform a twin task at once. Firstly they will have to impart practical training to the volunteers, while at the same time in order to imbue them with revolutionary political consciousness and temper them with revolutionary character they will have to impart political education. In this context, the volunteers, too, should bear in mind a very important teaching. The teaching is, for all the party is the highest commander. It is correct, the volunteers will obey what the commander of the group will ask them to do. But, remember, so long as it is the party's assignment, so long as the party holds him as its assigned commander and he obeys the party leadership, he is your leader. But if he turns against the party, if he violates the party discipline or seeks to disobey the party leadership or treats the party leadership with disrespect, then the commander in question should be apprehended immediately and handed over to the leadership. He has to be removed. Your allegiance to the party and to the party's highest leadership should be unquestioning. Remember, without a firm base of discipline no volunteer corps can carry on its task. In the background of the threat that looms before the mass movement today, raising such type of powerful, highly disciplined volunteer corps dedicated to ideology is an essential requisite in the interest of your movements.

### **Identify the genuine party of the poor**

Discussing one more issue I will conclude my discussion today. What should be your guiding outlook to decide which is the genuine party of the poor among the many parties active in our country today — you have to grasp something of it in your own simple way. For, there are many parties who claim themselves as communists, who fly the red banner and talk of Marxism-Leninism. Today in fact there is no scope for going into details of the histories of these pseudo red flag-waving parties, their day-to-day political manoeuvres and practices, their base political lines. About these I have discussed elsewhere in plenty, other leaders of the party have done it too, and our formulated views on these have already come out in print in many organs and booklets. In this discussion today I am going to say a few words concerning only one aspect of the conduct of the leaders and cadres of these parties. I know, not everything will be clear, in fact it cannot be fully clear from what I am going to say in this regard in my discussion here. Still then, a brief discussion on these is necessary.

Firstly, if you look at this Birbhum district and judge for yourselves you can realize who actually did awaken the poor people here — people who were not regarded as humans, even the other day, rather were despised as subhuman creatures, the babus dealing with them with a whip hand.

These so-called Marxist parties in our country existed since long before our party started work and they had been trying as they could to expand their organizational base under the banner of Krishak Sabha and Krishak Samity, and so forth. But none of them had so long tried to awaken the agricultural labourers and poor peasants in the villages by organizing them, nor did they at all try to build a separate class organization of their own. They are not trying it even now. Observe closely and you will find that just like the bourgeois parties, just like the Congress, these sham Marxist parties and socialists rely mainly on the rich farmers and the well-off middle class babus in matters of organization in the rural areas. And with the help of these babus they seek to enlist the rural poor in their respective mass organization and party. It is not difficult at all to realize the real character of these parties — notwithstanding their hollow tall talk about class struggle, Marxism-Leninism and socialism — parties which make no attempt to build the agricultural labourers' and poor peasants' own, separate class organization, parties which instead

talk of drawing together, irrespective of class character, the rich and well-to-do peasants and the agricultural labourers, poor and lower-middle peasants in the same organization — and this in a country where, even at a conservative estimate, fiftythree to fiftyfive per cent of the rural people are landless peasants and agricultural labourers, and, with the poor peasants added, the figure comes to around sixtyeight to seventy per cent.

Although, now, some of these parties sometimes talk of building an organization of the agricultural labourers' own — this long after our party, the SUCI built up the Krishak O Khetmajur Federation as a separate class organization of the agricultural labourers' and poor peasants' own — yet in practice these parties continue to organize the rich and well-to-do peasants along with the agricultural labourers and poor peasants in the same organization in the main, that is, in Krishak Sabha, Krishak Samity and so forth. This goes to deny the ever-present class struggle in the rural society between the rich peasants, jotedars and well-off middle peasants, on the one hand, and the agricultural labourers and poor peasants, on the other hand. And, actually, it is recourse to class collaboration in the place of leading the class struggle in the countryside, and this means nothing but sacrificing the interests of the agricultural labourers, poor and lower-middle peasants at the feet of the rich and well-off middle peasants. There are of course reasons for this manoeuvre by these parties. Just study the base political line of these parties and you will realize that this manoeuvre, no matter the rhetorics, is in perfect agreement with their base political line. Because, what they advocate — national democratic revolution or people's democratic revolution — in either case the rich peasants are considered an ally. So, it is easy to understand that the party which considers the rich peasants an ally of revolution in the present situation of our country can never organize genuine class struggles against the rich peasants. On the other hand, ignoring the vast masses of the agricultural labourers, poor and lower-middle peasants in the villages, that is, ignoring the rural proletariat and semi-proletariat, it is not possible for any party to build rural organizations. So, it is the compulsion of reality which forces these parties to talk of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants.

The poor who so long had been trodden down with whip hand, all these parties did not come forward these years to help these poor people rise on their feet with honour, or build their own, separate class organization on the principle of class struggle. At present too they are not making any such attempts. It is the SUCI which for the first time awoke these poor people in the rural areas, helped them stand on their feet with honour, and built their own class organization in this district and in different other districts of West Bengal. All of you present here, know this. In this country it is the SUCI alone which has built the own, separate organization of the landless peasants, agricultural labourers and poor and lower middle peasants on the principle of class struggle against the rich peasants whom we call, in the Marxist-Leninist vocabulary, the rural bourgeois. This is because, the Indian state is a capitalist state. The national bourgeoisie here are saddled in state power. Therefore, without overthrowing the bourgeoisie from the state power, it is not possible to establish here the workers' and peasants' state, emancipation of the exploited masses is not possible either. In my discussion I have also shown why those who are owners of big lands cannot be called today feudal landlords. They are transformed now into the rural bourgeoisie and they represent the ruling bourgeois in the countryside. Without waging ceaseless class struggles against them, revolution cannot be materialized in any way whatsoever. As you know from your own experience, it is primarily against the rich peasants or jotedars that you have to conduct your day-to-day struggles in the village — whether for land, for wage-rise, for the due share of crops, against eviction or against injustice and oppression of so many kinds. And whenever conflict ensues between you and the rich farmers or the well-to-do middle peasants

and you have no other way than to organize your resistance movement against their exploitation and the injustice perpetrated by them, the government and the police force are seen to stand by these rich farmers and the well-to-do middle peasants against you. To crush your legitimate movement repression is brought to bear upon you. This in itself goes to demonstrate that the rich farmers and the well-to-do middle peasants are the strong base of the bourgeois class rule and exploitation in the countryside. For this, the police force of the bourgeois government are ever ready to protect their interests. It is thus the rich farmers or jotedars and the well-to-do middle peasants — who go against the struggle of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants and whom you regard as the babu community — they are the class enemy of yours, that is, of the rural proletariat and semi-proletariat in the countryside.

If you find a party, although it claims to be Marxist-Leninist or socialist, building up a peasants' organization in which rich farmers, well-off middle peasants together with the agricultural labourers, poor and lower-middle peasants are its members — then whose organization it becomes in reality? Whose interests are protected by this organization? Yours? Or, the rich peasants'? In reality, no class struggle is waged by it against the rich farmers and well-off middle peasants who are the main pillars of the organization, lest they turn hostile — only crocodile tears are shed for agricultural labourers, landless peasants and poor peasants and some empty fire-spitting revolutionary slogans are mouthed. Observe carefully, you will find that the peasant organization of each of the parties like the CPI, CPI(M), Socialist Party, has this character. Now that the poor masses are awakening because of the impact of the SUCI, these parties are coming to realize that unless they can hold back the poor people in their fold by any means whatsoever they cannot hope to reap large dividends in their election-oriented politics. Thus, it is out of concern for their politics of electoral dividends that they have donned the cloak of the poor man's friend and are out now to create division among the poor. To hold both the agricultural labourers and poor peasants back in their organizations they are howling against the government only, sparing the rich farmers and well-off middle peasants. In too vague terms they are talking big of revolution. Keep these words in mind, don't ever miss them.

### **Free the masses from influence of sham red flag-waving parties**

All these parties, who are known in India as communist parties or red flag-waving parties, are much older than our party. But decadence has set in in these parties. They are transformed into privileged parties. Just like everything else of the aristocratic families of our society are melting away, except for vain attempts to maintain outward grandeur, and just like they have turned parasites, so also in the sphere of political movements there are some privileged parties. Under various signboards of the red flag-waving party, namely, Communist Party, Communist Party (Marxist), Socialist Party, they carry on activities among the people. The roles these parties play in the communist movement, in the movements of the workers and peasants in our country, are much the same as of the aristocratic families I mentioned. All the utterings and slogans are there alright but for the living soul of revolution and revolutionary ideology. They are revolutionaries in rhetorics and slogans — and for that the trickery of keeping their cadres constantly incited in false militant posture is the only means on which they rely today. Each of them talks of revolution. But we hardly need to spare many words for them. Watch them closely and you will discover that the intellect of these sham revolutionaries is found to be very sharp in the matter of the security and increase of their personal properties. Of course, as is everywhere, there are a few good workers among them too. But as for their leaders and the high-ups among most of their cadres, they are deeply conscious of their personal properties and family interests. They ensure

their interests first and then they come out to do good to the people. This is how they deceive the masses. Actually, in the name of revolution, these parties create division among the people and in practice they are seen to be more enthusiastic about opposing the genuine revolutionary party than the class enemy. Unless you can free the poor masses from the influence of these sham revolutionaries, it will not be possible to make gigantic preparations for leading revolution through to success. So it is your onus to expose the real character of these parties before the common people and free them from all confusion.

Remember, this struggle is a great battle. It is no battle of a mercenary army. It is a revolution, staking everything to save the country from deep distress, to free industry, agriculture, the rural life, the decadent urban life, the cultural life of the nation, even science and technical education from the shackles of capitalist oppression, from its vicious cycle of looting profits. Today that great onus of revolution devolves upon the workers and the peasants. Remember, the babus will not achieve this revolution for you. A handful of them may come to you, imbued with the revolutionary ideology, abjuring their class interest and at the most try to arouse you to take on the leadership of the revolution. But this revolution will materialize successfully only that day when revolutionary cadres and leaders in large numbers, who are adequately equipped for the party task, will rise from the families of workers and peasants, and workers and peasants in the towns and villages will get organized into a steel-strong army under their leadership. Till then you will stride on with dream in your eyes for the revolution, you will engage in inconceivable toil to make preparation for the revolution. Till then revolution will not come forth, it will remain a distant cry. When you will all arise and in every village you will develop party workers worthy to be leaders equal to the party task and build powerful party committees, under whose guidance the poor masses in the villages will march like one soldier, one soul and one body, inspired by the political revolutionary ideology and together bound in discipline like an army, and treading the correct revolutionary base political line, no power on earth can resist revolution in India that day with arms, army and armoured tanks. Have trust at least in these words of mine.

I conclude my address here today. To all of you, those who are here as delegates from different districts, who took part in the deliberations, who all listened to me for this long, I extend my greetings. My red salute to you.

**Long Live Krishak O Khetmajur Federation !**  
**Long Live S U C I !**  
**Long Live Revolution. !**

*Speech on March 29, 1970.*  
*First published as a booklet*  
*in Bengali on the occasion of*  
*anniversary of November Revolution*  
*in 1970.*

## NOTES

1. KKMf, Organization later changed its name to All India Krishak O Khetmazur Sangathan (AIKKMS).
2. A district in West Bengal.
3. Land in excess of ceiling limits and appropriated by big land holders under fictitious titles to help them circumvent legal provisions.
4. Rich peasants owning huge land, the rural bourgeoisie.
5. Native landlords required to pay land tax to the former British government.
6. Bigha is a measure of land that equals to one third of an acre, approximately.
7. Refers to the year 1350 of Bengali calendar (1943 AD), when a great famine broke out in Bengal.
8. A crore is ten millions.
9. A popular sweet of Bengal.
10. Sugarcane juice, dried.
11. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister.
12. Student organization of the Congress.
13. Youth organization of the Congress.
14. This has reference to the CPI(M)'s *Task on the Peasant Front*.
15. An Indian land measure, equalling one-twentieth of a bigha.
16. Act which allowed ownership of land to rayats, i.e., peasants who cultivated lands of the zamindars on fixed rents and terms.
17. Block Development Officer, a government official in charge of an administrative block.
18. A native percussion instrument accompanying village festivities and also played before public announcements.
19. A sannyasi is a Hindu monk.
20. This address was given in March, 1970. In January of 1973 US imperialism was compelled to concede the demand for withdrawal of US forces from Vietnam and sign a treaty to the effect.



