

Fascism and Moral Ethical Crisis in Left, Democratic Movement

Opportunism and bankruptcy, the hallmark of pseudo-Marxist, social democrat parties, brought down two successive United Front governments in West Bengal between 1967 and 1969. The Congress led by Indira Gandhi returned to power, dashing people's hopes for relief, nurturing seedlings of fascism, and bearing down on people's democratic movements. In this backdrop Comrade Shibdas Ghosh addressed a vast assembly of people on the occasion of observance of the twentyfifth anniversary of the party, in particular exhorting people on what they should do in this complex and critical situation.

Today's meeting has been convened on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation day of our party, SUCI. I have been requested to say something about the present situation in this meeting. Besides, many people and some workers of different political parties have already placed many questions in writing before me for discussion in this meeting. I should like to say in the beginning that it is not possible to discuss elaborately on all the questions of various types and on different topics that I have been asked to do in one meeting as this. I shall not be able to do it. But, as far as possible, I will try to discuss, in my speech some of the questions which relate to our national life, to the problems of the present left movement or the issues connected with the Indian communist movement.

Congress incapable of solving basic problem of the country

To start with, I want to tell you that whatever picture of the present situation of the country and its character is projected before you by the ruling Congress through propaganda, in reality the true picture of India is totally different and indeed very complex. We, the people of India, are truly passing through a grave situation. The problems that have appeared in our country centring round the abnormal price-rise of essential commodities, acute food crisis, drought and flood, and the complex problems that have been right now created in the industrial sphere and the citizens' life as a result of the electricity crisis, cannot be played down or kept

suppressed any longer despite the many promises, commitments and plethora of confusing propaganda by the Congress. Whatever illusion about the Congress had grown in a section of the intellectuals, among the middle class and the common people in our country from the slogan of democratic socialism by the new Congress outfit under the leadership of Indira Gandhi, (claiming to be different from the old Congress) and on seeing the rise of youth force anew within the Indira Congress, whatever illusory hope had grown among them that ‘the Congress will again show a new path’ — questions about it are arising in the minds of the people while they are being tossed about in the vortex of these real problems, although they are not able to make complex, meticulous analysis of politics. The people might not have grasped it from theoretical discussion, but they understand anyway that not only have the promises made by the Congress not been implemented, but even proper efforts are not being made to do so. They are trying to confuse the people with the trickery of high sounding words and by employing the propaganda machinery, as far as possible, but in reality there is no attempt to address the problems as these stand.

Our view, however, is different. We consider that even if the Congress had attempted to do so, it would not really have yielded any result. Naturally you may ask: if the people within the Congress had been honest and if they had really wanted to do something, wouldn't they have been able to achieve anything? We consider that even if they had wanted to do something good in favour of democracy and public welfare, and even if their organization is so oriented to do so, even then whatever little they could have done was to somewhat curb corruption and to make the administration somewhat neutral, in a relative sense, to make it pro-people, that is, sympathetic to people and to provide some relief to the people. But even if they had the will to do it, they would not have been able to solve the basic problems that have appeared in our national life, centring round gradual development of industries in the country, that is, to open the door to unhindered industrial development, modernization and scientific development of agriculture and finding a solution to the ever-increasing unemployment problem.

Main problems confronting development of the country

I hold that to build modern India as a prosperous, developing and powerful country, to free the people from poverty and to translate the slogan of “garibi hatao” (remove poverty) into

reality, deep consideration will have to be given to three main problems. In the first place, it is to be seen how agriculture can be modernized; secondly, it is to be seen how the door to unhindered industrial development can be opened in order to provide employment to the people in the villages who would thus be rendered surplus, that is, how to advance on the path of uninterrupted industrialization, and, thirdly, how to solve the unemployment problem of the country through these two endeavours.

You know that promises to provide jobs to the unemployed are being made on behalf of the government and for that it has reportedly been declared that “some employment opportunity is being created in the public sector”, though they alone know what has actually been done in this respect. But even if such a move is made by the government, even then, to what extent can it solve the ever-increasing unemployment problem of the country? By this, the maximum that can be achieved is to provide employment to some pliant youth cadres of the party to somehow hold the party together and as a face saving device. Where five persons are enough for doing a job, by creating some posts ten persons can be employed and paid salary, simply keeping them idle, and thereby creating a top-heavy administrative system, public money may be recklessly squandered. And another way is that the government may provide employment to some in those posts which are becoming vacant in normal course as a result of the retirement of some employees every year. It is but what the government can normally do. So, what is the necessity of falsehood by publicizing that “the government has planned to provide so many jobs”? And besides, even the fringe of the growing unemployment problem of the country cannot be touched by these. So, those who are organizing anti-unemployment conventions and building up movements on the demand of providing employment to the unemployed, or those who are dishing out tall promises to provide jobs to the unemployed from the seat of government — what they seriously ought to apply their mind to, if they want to solve this problem, is how agriculture can be modernized in the county, how the door can be opened up to unhindered industrial development. And the resolution of this question is inseparably linked up with the character of the state, the social and economic system of India.

Main obstacle to uninterrupted industrial development

The main point that I want to draw your attention to by this discussion is that modernization and mechanization of agriculture is an urgent necessity to overcome the underdeveloped state of India. Again, it is impossible even to initiate the process of modernization and mechanization of agriculture unless the door can be opened up to uninterrupted industrial development of the country. So let us see what is the main hindrance on the path to uninterrupted industrial development. Some pundits would say that the main hindrance to this industrialization of our country is the lack of capital or the paucity of capital, hence this knocking at one door after another abroad with begging bowl. But if I question them at once as to why whatever formation of capital is daily taking place on the soil of the country, whatever capital is being gradually accumulated as per the law of economics, why is even that capital remaining idle? Why is it turning bureaucratic? Why can it not be invested for industrial development? If I ask: why is it that the productive capacity which the various industries have on the basis of present strength of capital in the country cannot be fully utilized, cannot be fully employed in production? Whenever there is a strike in a factory the government and the capitalists raise a hue and cry that so many man-days are being lost. But when there is no strike, even when a peaceful condition prevails in industry, is the installed productive capacity in the steel plants in Durgapur, Rourkela or other engineering industries together being fully used? Are they able to fully utilize that? Can the industries always undertake full production even then? If they cannot do so, in that case it is not strike that is responsible for it; it is not paucity of capital that is responsible for it. What then is the cause responsible for this state of affairs – that is to be searched out. If one has the courage to provide leadership, not simply a desire for pomp and power, but the audacity to provide leadership like a true man, then one will have to confront this question like a true man. What is that hindrance due to which whatever productive capacity exists in the country, even that cannot always be fully utilized? In reality the root cause of that hindrance is the capitalist production relations prevailing in India. It should be borne in mind that a particular society develops on the basis of particular production relations. Again, in course of time the particular production relations of the society become obsolete. Then the particular production relations act as hindrance to development of production, that is, the relations obstruct the path of progress. It is then that the necessity arises for bringing about a revolutionary transformation in the economic, social and political spheres in order to change the production relations, rebuilding the economy

on the basis of new production relations to fulfill the newer needs, the newer urge of the society. So, when we speak for revolution in India, and speak against their 'democratic socialism', it is not political chicanery.

At present those among the youth who act on impulse, who possess youthful vitality and really love the country, they may be confused. I would like to request them to ponder: what is the real meaning and import of what they call to be socialism? Why is the concept of socialism growing within the capitalist social system itself? And what do they try to convey by the term socialism? What becomes apparent from their utterances and activities is that by socialism they mean that the capitalist economic relations, what we call capitalist production relations, will remain intact even after socialism is established. That is, they think that the production system running on the basis of owner-worker relations and with the motive of earning maximum profit in the capitalist system – all these would remain as it is in the society, and yet they would bring about socialism. If, despite being educated, they say such things, then there could be only two possible reasons. Either they are knowingly resorting to falsehood, deceiving the common people, or they do not know at all what socialism is, nor do they know what capitalism is. They raise slogans against capitalism, deliver speeches calling for the destruction of monopoly capital, but they have no idea as to what capitalism is. They think that to corner a few capitalists means to put an end to capitalism. No, capitalism cannot be destroyed just by getting rid of some capitalists. If the capitalist system remains in the society, some more capitalists will replace them. The struggle for destroying capitalism is the struggle to free the production system from capitalist motive of production and from the capitalist relations of production, and it is impossible to accomplish this task without overthrowing the capitalist state. I know that those who are speaking for democratic socialism are indulging in tall talks against monopoly capitalism. But my point is not that. My question is: do the capitalist production relations stand as hindrance to the development of the Indian economy, or do they still have a progressive role? Have they pondered over it? Have they pondered: what is the main problem for development of the Indian economy? Is mobilization of capital the main problem, or is freeing the production system from capitalist relations and capitalist motive of production the principal and basic problem in this context?

Problem of modernization of agriculture

Now let us consider the problem of modernization of agriculture in our country. Everybody knows, whether a country is economically advanced or backward is determined on the comparative assessment of what percentage of the population is engaged in agricultural economy and what percentage is engaged in industries. And so long as the majority of a country's population is confined within agricultural economy it is impossible for that country to overcome its backward state. So, everybody will agree that in order to free our country from backwardness, it is imperative to modernize agriculture. But so far there has been no effort by the ruling class of our country for comprehensive modernization of agriculture. Why is this so? Have the youth pondered what stands in the way of the ruling class opting for modernization of agriculture? Without entering into a detailed theoretical discussion, for their understanding, I am simply telling them one point only. In the capitalist economic system of our country, there being no continuous development of mills and factories in the urban areas and because of drastic decline of the tempo of setting up new factories, one after another, the number of unemployed in the urban areas is increasing as it is. On the other hand, as rural people are becoming landless in an unabated process and the agricultural labourers do not get employment for more than three months a year, they are deserting the village day after day, driven by hunger. Leaving the village under these circumstances, the rural unemployed are coming to the town in search of work and further swell the number of the unemployed in the urban areas. In such a situation, if the rural economy is modernized and scientific methods are introduced in agriculture, millions of people who are still tied up with agricultural activities in villages would become jobless at one stroke. Where would they be provided with jobs in the urban areas? So, unless provisions for employment opportunities are made by ensuring uninterrupted industrial development, modernization of agriculture cannot be accomplished either. And because they are unable to do so, attempts are being made on behalf of the ruling class to confine the majority of the people within the rural economy itself by fixing land ceiling in the village and adopting plans to distribute some small plots of land. And along with it, all sorts of makeshift measures, palliatives and quackery are being resorted to in the rural economy. That is, millions of rupees are being squandered in drawing up plans, setting up commission after commission and experimenting how the magic of so many different crops can be achieved through cultivation with fertilizers within those small plots of land, although we know that they are not able to make even these

makeshift palliatives in the rural economy really effective due to organizational weakness of the Congress and corruption in the administrative machinery. But the problem is not being solved through all these. Because, as I have already mentioned, for a real solution of the problem, modernization in agriculture is to be accomplished and for that the door to industrial progress is to be opened. But what is the obstacle on the path to industrial progress in our country? Firstly, as production in our country is done on the basis of capitalist relations, which means, with the motive of earning maximum profit, the workers employed in the industries are deprived of fair wages. Secondly, along with this factor, there is the growing number of unemployed and semi-employed in the urban areas who have practically no income. Hence, as it is, the purchasing power of the urban population is steadily declining. On the other hand, because the task of land reform in the villages is unaccomplished and there being no provisions for improved living conditions, seventyfive per cent of the rural population lead a subhuman life in semi-starved condition. In such a situation, where seventyfive per cent of the people of the entire country live in villages and again seventyfive percent of that huge rural population have practically no purchasing power; where the urban areas too are full of unemployed and semi-employed and even the workers engaged in industries have to spend their entire income just to secure barely two meals a day and maintain a family somehow – in such a country where is the market, that is, where are the buyers who can purchase the goods produced in the industries? And in the absence of market no production is done in the capitalist system, because the very motive of the capitalist production is to secure maximum profit. So, in such a country just by providing subsidy or by issuing licence-permits, the industries cannot grow rapidly and even those factories which are still running cannot always fully utilize whatever production capacity they have. Thus, while some factories are coming up through such efforts, on the one hand, existing factories, on the other, go on closing down. The capitalists do not want to subscribe to these views, nor will they ever do so. They do not believe in such a theory. They can understand that there was a contradiction within feudalism, but they refuse to realize the contradiction of capitalism. But those who speak of socialism would have to understand all these. Then, the leaders of the ruling Congress who cry hoarse about ushering in socialism and claim to be gradually bringing it about — what steps have they taken for the scientific modernization of rural economy and for freeing the entire production system from capitalist production relations? No, they are not treading that path. Because, it is not possible to free the production system from capitalist production relations

nor is it possible to modernize rural economy unless a socialist state is established under the leadership of the working class by overthrowing the present capitalist state through revolution. But they are afraid of such a revolution. So, it is seen in reality that they are serving this very capitalist state system in the name of democratic socialism, and so regarding the agriculture-related problems they have taken to the path of makeshift palliatives instead of striking at the root of the problem. Hence, the production relations in their 'socialism' remain capitalist, that is, the owner-worker relationship continues while, on the other hand, just by nationalizing some enterprises and factories, through which no change at all in the owner-worker relations is being effected, they are passing it off as socialism to mislead the people.

Nationalization is not the same as social ownership

There is no scope for a detailed discussion on this here. So, I shall not deal with it elaborately. But I urge the intelligentsia, the students and the youth just to ponder over one point. Social ownership and nationalization or state ownership is not always the same thing. Nationalization is no doubt a part of socialism. But the task that has to be accomplished prior to that is the establishment of proletarian democracy, that is, a socialist state under the leadership of the working class, by overthrowing the capitalist state through revolution. And when it becomes possible, by establishing a socialist state in this way, to reconstruct the entire economy on the basis of socialist production relations instead of the capitalist production relations; only then can social ownership in the true sense be brought about through nationalization. Hence, the foundation of socialism is laid just through nationalization of industries, just through state ownership — no student of history and economics would air such an opinion. All those who have before them the history of Hitler, the history of fascist Germany, of Mussolini and fascism in Italy, all know that the ground of heinous Nazism, of fascism and not of socialism was laid in those countries through nationalization and state ownership of industries. Jawaharlal Nehru himself, the role model of the Youth Congress workers, once said that fascism-Nazism is the worst enemy of mankind. Fascism, the worst enemy of mankind, the ideology most despised by mankind and the greatest enemy of progress, raised its head in Germany and Italy for the first time.

So, you see, socialism is not established just through nationalization. Another pertinent question is inseparably linked with this, and that is the class character of the state. If the character of the state is capitalist and if the production relations are capitalist, that is, owner-worker relations, then the act of nationalization denotes the attempt to maintain the aggregate interest of the capitalist class, which has nothing to do with socialism. Rather, the economic base of fascism is gradually established by that. Yet, it is really surprising how a section of the students, the youth and the intelligentsia of our country, in spite of these glaring experiences of history being before us, with no regard to the question of class character of the state consider nationalized industries to be socialism, and thereby getting confused. In this context I want to remind them about an incident. Once, even a man like Rabindranath, the great poet, on seeing the nationalized industries and along with it some social democratic welfare measures during a visit to Italy, developed deep admiration and started eulogizing this in Europe. I like to remind the intelligentsia about that history. Romain Rolland was then his friend. Soon after coming to know about it, he met Rabindranath at once and decisively pointed out to him that what he was regarding as progress was nothing but the most evil design to cause immense harm to human civilization, which had nothing to do with socialism. Having realized this, Rabindranath understood at once and turned around. He saw reason as he was a great man. This noble quality is quite absent among this section of the intelligentsia of our country. Even if the pertinent truth is pointed out decisively, these people for the sake of their petty personal interest would endlessly argue with twisted logic and in an obnoxious way: why should it not be so! I say, if it were so, that would have been good; but to achieve it one must follow the correct, law-governed process.

Correct understanding about socialism

You should note that nobody can bring socialism out of his pocket, nor can it be created by a formula generated in anybody's brain. This is why the concept of socialism has not emerged just from the imagination or the very thought of human well-being by any individual, however great he might be. Had it been so, the concept of socialism would have appeared in the thoughts of Hazrat Muhammad, Jesus Christ, Chaitanya, Sankaracharya, Buddha or Confucius. All of them fought for human welfare having sacrificed everything; they had fought against all sorts of social injustice and oppression of their times. But by that they could not give birth to the concept of

socialism. Whereas in subsequent times after the advent of capitalism, after capitalist exploitation and oppression began, despite not being like those great men, many common people even caught the idea of socialism in the present society; and socialism blossomed in different countries. I do not like to go now into philosophical intricacies. I just want to say, whenever a man reflects any thought, that thought is social thinking. It collects its ingredients from the internal contradictions, conflicts within the society and branches out to take up a structure. Later on that thought assumes the form of individual thinking as per perception of the individuals. So, none is above space, time and environment. That is why we find that the concept of socialism, be it utopian or scientific, emerged from the irreconcilable contradiction of the capitalist system. That is, in course of ever present contradiction between the owner-worker production relations and the productive forces in the capitalist system, when that contradiction becomes irreconcilable, no more conciliation is possible, and when it can no longer help the progress – it is then that the concept of proletarian revolution, of socialism appeared in the human brain. There was many a struggle, conflict over the question as to what should be the path to socialism and what would be its structure. And fighting many a battle the scientific concept of socialism was at last established.

A close look at history reveals that in the capitalist countries not just one or two parties attempted to appear in the garb of socialism. But those who did not destroy the capitalist system, who did not want to free production from the capitalist production relations through revolution, whatever experiments they carried out with whatever brand of idea, whatever formula of socialism, they ultimately consolidated capitalism, and through this consolidation they also contributed to the emergence of fascism even while chanting the slogans of socialism. Many groups and different political parties did this in England. At different times, starting from the Labour Party many groups came up with various formulas of socialism, and the Fabian socialists too did it. But it is imperialism which all of them served. They strengthened finance capital and helped capitalism to consolidate. They could not establish socialism. Wherever socialism was established freeing the country from capitalism, it had to be achieved by freeing production from capitalist relations through overthrowing the capitalist state by revolutionary upsurge, that is, by freeing production from the capitalist motive of earning maximum profit. Besides, whatever one may say about those socialist countries today, whatever mistakes some socialist countries may have committed due to serious deviations of the leadership later on, this truth can never be erased

from the pages of history that those who established socialism by overthrowing capitalism through revolutionary upsurge emancipated the workers and peasants and established the rule of the people – did so on the very basis of scientific socialism. They laid the foundation of socialist economy on the basis of new production relations freeing these from capitalism. They did not confuse the people resorting to worst type of falsehood making use of democratic socialism as a ploy.

Hollow slogan of the Congress against monopoly capital

Those who are talking of democratic socialism and raising slogans against monopoly capital — their slogans against monopoly capital and talk of fighting it constitute nothing but a deceptive tactical move to confuse the people under cover of the slogan of so-called progress. That they do not seriously mean it, I like to illustrate by a commonplace incident. The old codes and practices of the colonial police system are still in force in our country. Nobody is showing any concern about this. I will admit here openly before you when the leftists came to governmental power in West Bengal, I tried to convey through our party to many a leader¹ that they would not be able to do much within the present economic, social and state structure. But they should at least try to change those old colonial attitudes and practices that still persist in the conduct and habits of the police in an independent country like ours. It is possible to do this within the framework of a bourgeois state. The USA is an imperialist country and we call it a butcher. Britain is also a capitalist country. But the way in which the police of our country behave with cadres of the democratic movement, with citizens, that cannot be found anywhere else. The way in which the police being the custodians of law, themselves used to trample the law in connivance with the Naibs² and zemindars in the British period, that legacy still continues unchanged, rather it has assumed an extreme dimension. In this connection with pain I note that people of the country are not paying that regard to the great contributions of Justice Mollah as they are today crazy about Indira Gandhi. In one of his judgements Justice Mollah made a landmark observation to the effect: I know the police, I have worked with them for long, I have seen how they themselves, being the custodians of law, trample law conspicuously and flagrantly. They harass people with trumped up charges and cases. That means, those who should be custodians of law – it is under their very boots that the laws are being trampled. They constantly implicate people in false charges. All the journalists as well as the political leaders

know how police stations function and what they indulge in. First, someone is arrested and then it is decided what charges under different sections are to be framed against him to ensure that the person so implicated does not get bail even. That means, whether the man has at all committed a crime or not, there is no necessity for the police to go into it. He is not arrested on that basis; nor are charges being framed on that basis. In the police station itself charges are so fabricated and sections are so slapped against him that he will not get bail and will not be able to come out of jail. And they are the protectors of law! For the past twentyfive or twentysix years Congress leaders starting from Jawaharlal Nehru have been delivering grand speeches on democracy. But a simple point is that if the administration of a country, particularly one of its major organs, the police, does not have any decency, lacks a serious concern for maintaining law and, in the relative sense, has no impartial attitude, and if it is not guided by a sympathetic and democratic attitude towards the people, where will democracy be in the country? Only in the speeches of the leaders or in some populist rhetoric at the time of elections? Can democracy of a country survive by this? Let alone the question of socialism, has even the minimum of what constitute the most basic tasks of bourgeois democracy been done during the past twentysix years? The Congress has failed to provide food for the people, has failed to solve the economic crisis. It is a party of the capitalist class, that is, the bourgeois class. It is not possible for it to accomplish these. Obviously it does not understand socialism and never will be able to achieve it. But the Congress leaders do claim to be honest and democratic. Even if bourgeois, they are professed democrats. In that case if they are honest and have the slightest attachment to democratic practice and norms they ought to take care about how the police of the country, whom they have made the custodians of law and order, trample the laws every day and misuse power. But that is not happening. Rather, to batter and beat up the people after arresting them has become a common practice of the police, and if these police excesses reach such a stage that protests rise from the people, even then to extend unqualified support to the police has become the administrative 'scruple' of the Congress leaders! It does not appear to be the administrative 'scruple' of the Congress leaders to take strict disciplinary measures against a responsible police officer if he violates the law even in a single instance: whereas this alone can ensure administrative neutrality in a country. But little do the Congress leaders care. Their attitude is to anyhow support the police however much they violate the law. And if at any time extreme difficulty arises to side with the police then at best they, apparently gentleman-like, apologize a bit under cover of some

such reasoning – “a little bit of excess is not unusual in such a massive affair”. You see this has become their culture, their way of doing things.

So, let those who left no space uncovered while writing slogans on the walls against monopoly capitalists answer a question of mine. Under their rule the police arrest and beat up the common people, the workers of democratic movements, harass them by implicating them in false cases, keep them confined in police lockups and batter them with truncheons even if the charges against them prove to be untenable; and, not caring a whit for law, implicate them anew in false cases and keep on harassing them. But under this rule of theirs how many monopoly capitalists have they harassed in a similar way, even if they could not be arrested under the law? Those monopoly capitalists, black-marketeers, hoarders who are wreaking havoc in social life, because of whom the entire country is plunging into a dangerous situation, about whom even the Congress leaders pretend alarm by saying that they are “conspiring against the Congress rule” – how many of them have they harassed in a similar way? In that case I would have taken them to be men with due courage. As a matter of fact, they are cowards, only delivering big, hollow speeches. But their sense of principle and ideology does not deter them in any way from perpetrating ‘bravery’ on the common people who are weak, on the cadres of democratic movements who lack resources and support, by employing the police and armed forces. But all their magnanimity, all their democratic tolerance are reserved for the monopoly capitalists, profiteers and hoarders. And they lay claim to be, what is called, true man! And these people would protect democracy and establish socialism in the country! The new Congress of Indiraji,³ too, is in reality a servitor of this very capitalist state, of the economic and social system in a new style. So, they have no power to touch the monopoly capitalists. Otherwise, no well-meaning person can support such unprincipled conduct of the police in a democratic system. And for that one need not be a communist. But if they would dare to arrest the monopoly capitalists and hoarders, and arrest them again and again each time after they obtain bail and beat them up in the same way as they harass the cadres of democratic movement and the common people – then, even if the procedure is illegal, it would have gone in favour of a greater interest. In that case I would have understood at least this much, that whether they can put an end to capitalism and establish socialism or not, at least there is some honesty in the clamour they raise against the monopoly capitalists. And the youth of our country – how strangely thoughtless they are! Have they ever thought where these people are leading them! Cultivation of thinking, of logical

reasoning – all these are disappearing from the country. As a consequence, this very mindset marked with complete absence of logic and reasoning coupled with the growing trend of blind obedience is paving the ground for eventual emergence of disastrous fascism. I appeal to the youth who are supporting the Congress, to deeply ponder over this.

Real face of fascism

Now, we have to understand thoroughly what fascism is. Since 1949 we have been repeatedly pointing out an important aspect of our party's analysis on fascism. There are some people who regard the severe repressive nature of administration, any dictatorship as fascism. It should be remembered that dictatorship may be military dictatorship; it may be foisted through a coup as well. Besides, there is torture and repression in every anti-people administrative system, and the imperialists perpetrate torture and repression in the colonial countries. But fascism is more devastating than that. Mere repression cannot do so much harm to a country. But fascism is an all-out counter-revolutionary upsurge. On the one hand, it destroys the process of rational thinking in people, makes them self-centred, makes knowledge, learning and education technology-oriented, that is, it engenders a group of technocrats in the country who have completely abandoned all sorts of human values, who have no sense of responsibility towards people and society, to whom employment and wage slavery are simply everything, and who are ready to do anything and everything in exchange of money – and in this direction they channelize the cultivation of science and learning. On the other hand, fascism fosters all sorts of spiritualism, age-old superstitions, irrational mindset and blindness. Fascism is a peculiar fusion of spiritualism, obscurantism and irrational bent of mind with the technological aspects of science. When this happens in a country the reasoning faculty itself dies out in the country. So, speaking about the state of leftist movement I sounded a note of caution that the leftists who close the door of polemical discussions and resort to the practice of using physical force to increase their strength, get dividend for the time being because of their strength and numerical superiority; they do not allow anybody to express his opinion, do not pay heed to any reasoning, their cadres themselves lose all inclination for reasoning and destroy the reasoning faculty in others too. Do they know the deadly outcome of this? Though it may sound incredible but the reality is that those who are speaking against fascism, who are talking of communism, of leftism, of struggle and revolution and who are fighting against oppression – they themselves are found

to be helping the growth of such an irrational mental make-up through their conduct and activities which, as a consequence, eventually will dig the grave of leftism and lead to the ascent of fascism. Because, when the reasoning faculty dies in the country, then that paves the way for infiltration of reactionary ideas in society. To make man fanatic with the poison of national chauvinism, on the one hand, and, on the other, to foster out-dated traditionalism while raising vague slogans of socialism, revolution and progress — if all these three can be combined, then the ground for ascent of fascism is ready in a country. It should be borne in mind that the ruling bourgeois class after having misled the intelligentsia succeeds in masterfully combining these three things then only, when the mindset for carrying on mutual discussions on the basis of reason and logic really ceases to exist in society. This provides the golden opportunity for fascism to rise. That is why, cautioning the leftist forces I said: the Congress and such other parties of the ruling class would surely do their best to foster such an irrational mindset in the country. That such a mindset develops – that is what they desire. But then why would the leftists act in a similar manner, just for the sake of their petty party interests? If they do so, it may yield some results for the time being, but that will surely turn out to be the road to their own burial in future. It is for this, therefore, that a struggle against irrational mindset is necessary, that an environment for cultivation of knowledge, science and history, of dialogue, discussion and polemics, of criticism of each others' views, is essential. Alone if such an environment prevails, will it become truly difficult for parties wedded to the exploiting class to make inroads amongst the masses.

Which way solution to unemployment problem

However, the question that I have raised is: is it possible to open up the road to unhindered industrial development in our country without freeing the production system from capitalist production relations, that is, capitalist-worker relations and capitalist motive of production, the motive of earning maximum profit? Secondly, is it possible to solve the mounting unemployment problem unless the door of employment opportunity through industrial development can be opened up and jobs provided to those rendered unemployed as a result of modernization of agriculture? And when the ruling class cannot embark upon such a course it is observed that they, from time to time, raise the bogey of “nation in danger” and try to provide a section of the youth with employment by increasing the police and military budget, thus squandering public

money. But how many can be provided with employment in the police, in government service and in the military? Besides, what a colossal wastage this entails for the national economy! After all, there is no war all the time. Yet society has to maintain such a parasite machinery spending crores of rupees. What a huge national wastage! That such a huge wastage has to be incurred even in an underdeveloped and backward capitalist country like ours is because the unemployment problem can no longer be solved in any way within the capitalist system. But in the era of industrial revolution, of Renaissance, when capitalism emerged by overthrowing feudalism, when capitalism was revolutionary, at that time capitalism was able to generate newer and newer employment opportunity for the people. For, at that time newer and newer industries were coming up on the basis of free competition. The demand for labour to work in the industries went on increasing. As a result, capitalism modernized agriculture, introduced big farming, brought about the exodus of the rural people to urban areas and employed them at one stroke. People got employment then. So long, I used to know that with the industrial development in a country the slogan for more manpower comes up. Consequently, the necessity of modernization of agriculture arises. Yet just the reverse is happening in our country. Here speeches are delivered on industrialization. But side by side, it is being explored how to keep the majority of the people tied down to cultivation in small plots of land in the rural economy. This being the situation; how is the backwardness of the country to be overcome? So it is clear that the solution to the basic problems like modernization of agriculture, opening the path to unhindered industrialization, removal of economic dependence and solution to the unemployment problem is inextricably linked up with overthrowing the national bourgeoisie from the state power and freeing the entire production system from the capitalist motive of production and production relations. By examining and analysing all these things we have come to this firm conclusion that the solution of the basic problems of our country is possible only through accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution. All other options are wrong and are helping to perpetuate the Indian capitalist system directly or indirectly.

Fascistic mindset

Would those students and youth of our country who have rallied behind the ruling Congress in reaction against the aberrations of the leftists be able to solve the basic problems of our country just by chanting “hail Indira” and lambasting the leftists? So, they would have to ponder

over this question now. They are saying that the CPI has committed mistakes, the CPI(M) has resorted to assaults and murders, that we have caused great harm. Assume, what we did was a grave mistake; that we have caused great harm. We could not find the correct path – and that has caused great harm. But my question is: does this prove that Indira will bring about socialism? And, does it provide any rationale for extending support to her for this? Even if it is assumed that we, the leftists, have committed mistakes, in that case the question of rectification of mistakes arises. Yet, instead of doing that they are extending support for that known path along which the new Congress seeks to consolidate fascism and push the country towards the course of utter ruination. Thus, you see what a queer type of reasoning they too are taking recourse to. They argue that as the CPI(M) resorted to hooliganism, they too have resorted to the same practice. As the CPI(M) forcibly captured polling booths, they too have done the same, and going a step further they have tampered with ballot boxes. I have heard that people from the press too argue like this: You see, all indulge in such practice if they get a chance. The CPI(M) too did this. I say: what a queer kind of reasoning is this! It is a robber's rationale, pure and simple, to argue: "As one person has stolen, so in reciprocation I have taken to dacoity". Has then the entire country turned out to be a land of thieves and dacoits? Because someone has resorted to stealing, does that confer the right on someone else to commit dacoity? Then, what right have they got to condemn a thief? In that case, the matter turns out to be that we are all engaged in a tussle as to who can become how big a thief or dacoit. Otherwise, if anyone steals or commits robbery then the only issue is to stop such acts. Their very reason for criticizing CPI(M) and other leftists is that these parties have resorted to violence, killings and crime. It is to save the land from such acts that they sought power and solicited votes from people against the leftists! It is for this reason that they opposed them, as they did not want to do such things nor allow others to do so. Then with what rationale are they now indulging in the same nefarious acts? And yet, this type of unreasonable stance is found to make a striking appearance today. And it is following this disastrous course that a conspiracy, hidden from the people, is on to foist all-out fascism on the country.

Crisis of morality

So, I need to draw your attention to the serious question of the crisis in ethics and morality. It is true that the food crisis in the country is intensifying, the price of essential commodities is

increasing, industrialization is not taking place, unemployment is on the rise and there is shortage of electricity. All of us are getting extremely angry over all these problems. But what is of greater concern and more damaging than this is the severe crisis that has appeared in our social life as a result of the fast decline in ethics and morality and the accentuating irrational bent of mind. It should be borne in mind that however much might be the torment of want and oppression — a nation cannot be crushed by that. The British kept us subjugated for nearly two hundred years but they could not destroy the entire nation. The USA has turned Vietnam into a veritable desert by extensive and indiscriminate bombing, day after day, and forced the people there to live in underground shelters but could not crush the backbone of the whole nation. But are the rulers of our country creating economic misery only? The arguments with which they justify their unjust acts and ask the people to support them; the way the police openly tramples the laws every day, and the way the political leaders and administrators give indulgence to such conduct of the police; and what is more, if irrational mentality has reached such a level that even the youth of the country do not want to see reason, behave indecently in public and elderly people too remain silent on seeing it; moreover, if there is so much lack of tolerance for the opinion of others among the people of all strata of society – then what does all this prove? Does it prove that we are merely starving and suffering from want? Rather, does it not prove also that our moral backbone is getting shattered? Remember, a nation can stand erect even if it goes hungry, can conduct struggle even without food, if it possess higher human attributes. But if fascism takes root very few will remain in the country worthy to be called man. Because, fascism creates hindrance in the man-making process.

When the United Front government came to power in West Bengal, at that time also I repeatedly tried to stress this point. But no one paid heed to us. On the contrary, we were criticized and it was alleged that we were disruptors, we were destroying unity. Whenever in the interest of unity and united movement we tried to say anything regarding some harmful aspect of a party, regarding its outlook, they attempted to silence us by booing and shouting us down as anti-unity. But what came of that unity that was developed? Everybody knows that unity was developed. Hundreds of thousands of people got united, got mobilized. They had full support for the United Front. How did then the Front collapse like a house of cards? I still remember that I said at that time, too, drawing attention to the moral standard of that vast supporting mass, that those who were being swayed simply on seeing the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of

such supporters had failed to notice the course of world history. They need to realize that this support is not the real thing. The real issue to be clinched is: what is the standard of the political consciousness, culture and morality of this vast mass support. Have we at all been concerned about the lowering cultural standard of those people whose support we were getting? Rather, we supported any act of theirs simply because they supported us and also because we might have to encounter difficulty if we criticized them.

Similarly, about the government employees' movement I raised one important question. I told them that the United Front government had been formed with people's vote, including theirs. It is their government. As they desired it, so it came about. This government was formed at a time when our country was beset with a thousand and one problems. In the villages the poor peasants needed help and the villages needed irrigation facilities. If possible, it was necessary to provide some allowance to the unemployed. Although we are in governmental power, we cannot solve the basic problems, but we can at least do this. Yet, for want of money we could not even do that much. But the government employees were at least getting salary every month, although I know it was not adequate considering the prices of commodities. True, they suffered from want and needed more, but it was also true that the unemployed, the semi-employed as well as the peasants lacking work round the year in absence of proper irrigation and whose living condition was one of utter misery – their problem was far more serious than this problem of getting a meagre and inadequate salary. So, if the government was their own government, if they had the political consciousness and realization of democratic norms and possessed a moral and cultural standard of being sympathetic to people, then they themselves should tell the government that whatever money it had, should at first be utilized to provide those who were more needy than them, and only after that would they seek whatever was available. And if there was no money it was expected that they would say: let us attempt to secure funds from the Centre by pressurizing it through struggle by building up movements and consolidating this vast mass support. But that did not happen. Despite being the supporters of the leftist movement the government employees thought exactly the opposite. They considered that since their government was in power, their demand should be fulfilled first. I said right then – what sort of a political and democratically conscious movement was that? At that time such a thing had been possible because of the opportunist leadership of the government employees' movement. How many crores of rupee were spent to meet the demand of the government employees! Yet how many of the promises

that we the left parties had made to the people could we fulfill? When I said this in such a meeting on 24th April at that time, immediately a campaign was launched against us that we did not support the government employees' demand. It was alleged that we considered their demands to be unjust. By saying these things the common government employees were made to turn hostile to us. But what I wanted to say was totally different. I wanted to emphasize that they were the workers of left democratic movement. When they raised a just demand everyone should support it. But while raising such a demand they too should be conscious about their duty and obligation towards society and people. They would not be conscious about their responsibility, would not discharge their duty to society properly – is it the true understanding of the spirit of democratic movement? This is what I urged them to ponder. But you see whenever we tried to broach these pertinent issues, the CPI(M) leaders' instant refrain was that we were saying so being panicky about their increasing strength.

At that time I also raised another question. I said that the kernel of any noble ideology lies in its ethical and cultural standard. If the ethical and cultural standard is not high, then the ideological content of a noble political ideology in reality turns out to be like a lifeless body. A body devoid of life, even if beautiful to look at, is useless, and if left to rot it becomes harmful for society, similarly if one speaks for a great ideology but does not reflect a high ethical and cultural standard then that too becomes degenerate and harmful for society. So, whether a party talks loftily of ideology is not the main issue at all. Whether its leaders, workers and supporters reflect higher ethical and cultural standard in their personal life, in day to day behaviour and political conduct – that is the real proof of whether their ideology is truly noble. So, had the CPI(M) been a real revolutionary party then with the spread of its influence this ought to have had a restraining effect on the falling standard and moral degradation within the society that started with the decadence of capitalism. But there was no such effect. Rather, just the opposite was seen to happen. Not only was there no such restraining effect, during the UF rule when the influence of the CPI(M) among the youth tremendously increased — at that very time what was witnessed was that the problem of mass copying began to engulf the student community for the first time. When the youth who were coming in the fold of their party raised slogans, they were found to be indulging in worst type of gesticulation. The ethical and cultural standard reflected by most of their workers through their behaviour towards whoever had tried to criticize them in any way, had been of a very low standard. They were in no mood to enter into any rational

argument, in no mood to show regard to others as human beings. Whenever anyone had opposed them, they had either beaten him up or humiliated him in various ways. Then what is the difference between the conduct of these so-called revolutionaries and that of the fascists, the blind fanatics who want to develop an irrational and blind mindset in the society? So, giving a warning I said that there could be no revolution simply by fomenting grievances of the masses. Revolution could be accomplished only by a people who, tempered by their involvement in political movement have been able, to an extent, to acquire a mindset and culture conducive to revolution. By inciting the masses anyhow revolution is not accomplished; rather, it prepares the groundwork for reaction in the name of revolution. This is just what happened again and again on Indian soil. Thus, the mentality of shunning reason and logic that is prevailing in society due to such dangerously wrong politics and activities of theirs has created the opportunity for Congressite reaction to make deep inroads. You will have to regroup and get organized in movement against this reaction by rectifying whatever mistakes and lapses there had been in the past. You will have to get united and consolidate your strength again through day to day mass movements on economic and democratic demands. Important as this is, side by side, I wish to highlight before you another important point. That is, if you wish to lead this united movement to its successful culmination, that is, if you wish to take it towards anti-capitalist revolution for people's emancipation, then the vital question of establishing revolutionary leadership over this united movement cannot be avoided.

Question of establishing revolutionary leadership over united movement

I can tell you confidently that people are thinking afresh. The starving people have again gradually started to assemble in the arena of struggle. Despite all the drumbeating by the Congress, inwardly the people are getting disillusioned about it. So, just as there was united struggle in the past and much bloodshed, I can foresee that in the near future, in two to four years' time, powerful united movement will develop. But the point that I seek to repeatedly pinpoint is that united movement, powerful united movement have been there in the past and will be there in future too. It will no doubt be a united movement. But if the leadership of this united movement remains in the hands of a wrong party, a non-Marxist party, a non-revolutionary party, that is, in the hands of such parties who cash in on the name of revolution, play with revolution, that is, either cause destruction of the revolutionary force by untimely and fanatic

adventurism, or else seek to ultimately confine the mass movements within the bounds of parliamentary politics – then it can never be possible to conduct that united movement correctly. Apart from this, only a revolutionary party has the ability to conduct united struggle in such a manner that the necessity of maintaining the unity is fulfilled, on the one hand, while, on the other, centring round the contradictions within this unity arising from the composite of opposing political forces, the ideological struggle is conducted in such a way that the unity of the movement is not destroyed while through this very ideological struggle the people get a clear political view and are being helped to find out for themselves the correct revolutionary party. A non-revolutionary party does not possess this ability. In conducting the united movement two tendencies are bound to appear among the non-revolutionary parties. Either they would appease everyone in their over-zeal to maintain unity or else behave in a high-handed, aggressive way, that is, whenever anybody criticizes them they would hit out against him and disrupt unity. This is exactly what happened during the tenure of the last United Front too. So when you are going to again start a united movement today, in order that the genuine revolutionary party can rapidly acquire the capacity to provide leadership in the united movement, while building up that movement you will have to carry on discussions and polemics on the politics of the different parties to judge the parties and doing so, you will have to help to make that revolutionary party strong through the united movements.

How to judge the correct revolutionary party

Now you can naturally ask: what is the proof that our party SUCI is the true revolutionary party? Can anybody become a true Marxist just by claiming himself to be a Marxist-Leninist? In that case, there are many parties in our country who claim to be Marxists, for example, first of all the CPI, then the CPI(M) and then the CPI(M-L). Besides, there are other small parties, too, known to be Marxists-Leninists.

Then how to determine which one of these parties is the genuine revolutionary party? In order to judge whether a party is a revolutionary party or not, it is to be examined first, along with many other points, whether or not the stage of revolution and the strategy of revolution is correct which that party has determined by studying and analysing the class character of the state and the economic system of the country to whose people it would provide leadership. Because, if

the path is wrong, if the strategy is wrong, then where it would lead the people by inciting them in the name of revolution would be on to a wrong path. And what happens if the path is wrong and if there is a mistake in identifying the main enemy? Suppose that the people are being prepared for struggle by saying things like: ‘you have to accomplish revolution, fight, lay down your lives, and you the militant people, get ready in the villages and fields’. Then after getting prepared, where and against whom would the people fight? ‘Well, let us pass by the Monument (Saheed Minar) and go on to the Victoria Memorial where the ghost of imperialism and representatives of feudalism are waiting under the mango and banyan trees – let us go and annihilate them there.’ If the theory and path of revolution is wrong, it becomes reduced to such an absurdity. So, if the path is wrong, then all the struggles, the loss of hearth and homes, all the sacrifices and loss of lives would all be a national wastage. It is through a process of tremendous sustained efforts that a revolutionary worker, a whole-time worker, is reared. If the path is wrong, if the strategy itself is wrong, then everything that these workers who were reared through a process of such sustained effort – everything they do in the course of life-long dedication and sacrifice in the name of revolution – the whole of it becomes infructuous. So, if a party after committing a mistake simply says: “ We made a mistake” – the matter does not end there. What mistake it committed should be a matter of serious reflection. Because, when a common man commits a mistake, his family and relatives suffer its ill-effects. But if a powerful political party conducting struggle with thousands of people commits a mistake, it is the people of the country who suffer from its consequences. So, correctly judging a party should be a very important issue in the context of all movements. And in order to judge whether a party is correct or not, it should be examined first, whether its concept of the stage of revolution is correct or not.

Wrong theory of people’s democratic revolution

Now if we consider the case of the CPI, the CPI(M) and the CPI(M-L), it will be seen that all these three parties have determined the stage of Indian revolution to be people’s democratic revolution. In their eagerness though to somehow justify their separate existence, to put up a show of difference between themselves, each of these three parties provide three different types of analysis about the same stage of people’s democratic revolution. This can be detected if their analyses are thoroughly examined. For example, the main consideration for the strategy of revolution is the determination of the class character of the state, that is, to determine which class

in the main wields the state power. Which class is to capture the state power by overthrowing which class – this is the main question of revolution. That is why the determination of the state character is a principal issue of consideration for revolution. Secondly, it should be analysed to find out what is the economic and social system, particularly the main economic structure of the society, although it should be borne in mind that the economic system is not always the main determinant in assessing the stage of revolution. Surely, I don't need to say much about this to those who are well-acquainted with Leninism, with the history of October Revolution, the socialist revolution of Russia. Yet, the CPI and the CPI (M) too say that a socialist revolution takes place only when capitalism reaches the saturation point in the economic base. The CPI(M) again is opining even that the state system in a backward, independent capitalist country can never be termed a bourgeois state if there is dependence on imperialism in the economic sphere and if there are some remnants of the feudal system present. In that case, my question to them is: in what sense was the November Revolution a socialist one? How did two revolutions become interwoven together in the November Revolution? I know that even after the success of the socialist November Revolution in Russia and declaration of the dictatorship of the proletariat by banning the Constituent Assembly the Bolshevik Party had to carry on for quite some time with the slogan "Alliance with the whole of peasantry", which is a slogan of bourgeois democratic revolution. This happened there. Lenin had to adopt 'the New Economic Policy' against Trotsky's slogan of 'War Communism'. Why did Lenin have to adopt these policies? If capitalism reaches the saturation point and the feudal oppression is ended, the slogan of 'Alliance with the whole of peasantry' need not be raised and the 'New Economic Policy' too need not be adopted after the socialist revolution. Everybody knows this. So, those who say that there can be no socialist revolution unless all vestiges of feudal exploitation are totally wiped out and unless capitalism reaches the saturation point, have completely failed to grasp the significance of November Revolution and Lenin's *April Theses*, and muddled up the main problem before the revolution and the objective process of revolution. Today, I do not like to go into a detailed discussion on this, though. However, I cannot but be astonished when they speak of people's democratic revolution in case of India. Because, had the situation in India been as complex as that in Russia, had there been some similarities to a certain extent even with the economic condition of the social and state structure of pre-revolution China, I could have

thought that such confusion is possible for some muddle-headed theoreticians. But such confusion is happening among those whom it is difficult to call muddle-headed.

The question that I like to raise here in this context is what is the dominant characteristic of production relations in the Indian economy. Promod Babu⁴, while writing in an article, in a supplementary copy of the *Ganashakti*⁵ on the resolution adopted by the CPI(M) in the document at Muzaffarpur Conference sometimes back about the tasks of the activists in the peasant front, has stated that capitalism has made decisive inroads into peasant society, that means, capitalism has made decisive inroads into rural economy and the old zamindars are rapidly getting transformed into the rural capitalist class. If according to this latest stand of theirs, there have been decisive inroads of capitalism into the agricultural economy – in that case in the sphere of rural class struggle feudalism no longer remains the main enemy, which is to be overthrown through the blow of revolution. And Promod Babu, B. T. Ranadive⁶ and people like them would surely not say that the production is carried on in Indian industries on the basis of feudal production relations. Then how does feudalism exist as the main hindrance to the economic development of the country? Let us now examine what they say about the class character of the state. Here, too, it will be observed that ever since they started to fight the Naxalites theoretically, and not before that, one thing is again and again coming out in the writings of B.T. Ranadive and others in *People's Democracy* – I won't quote from the bourgeois newspapers, and I would ask their workers to verify it from *People's Democracy*. In these writings they are saying that it is the bourgeoisie who represents the industrial bourgeoisie and 'national reformism' during the independence movement in the 1930's in India, that is, the national bourgeois class, and it is they who captured the state power of India through compromise and who became even more powerful through war. And wherever and in whichever way they may use the terms like 'big bourgeois' to suit their convenience, they are not in a position to deny altogether the fact that monopoly capitalism has developed in India. So, it is observed that according to the CPI(M) India is not a semi-colonial, semi-feudal state as the Naxalites claim. As per what the CPI(M) leaders themselves say by admitting that India has won political independence; it is granted that the Indian state is a national state, backward or whatever, where the national bourgeois class that had fought in the freedom movement is in power. And now along with this they are saying that capital has made decisive inroads into the rural economy, also. Yet when speaking about the stage of revolution, they again say, "However, the object of

our revolution remains anti-imperialist, anti-feudal”. Finding themselves plunged into such a confusion and self-contradiction neither can they directly admit that it is a bourgeois state nor are they able to characterize our state as a semi-feudal, semi-colonial one. So, faced with such a situation the fantastic formulation they are constrained to provide of the class character of the state, is ‘bourgeois landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie’. And they have to do all this because they have superimposed their fanciful theory of people’s democratic revolution copied from abroad on the concrete condition of Indian revolution. Though, in this context, I like to remind their workers – you see, the credit for innovating such a superb formulation does not go to the CPI(M) leadership. The revisionist leadership of the CPI analysed the state character in a similar fashion from the Palghat Congress up to the Amritsar Congress. Further, they present one more argument in favour of this people’s democratic revolution. That is, revolution is to be accomplished in stages, socialist revolution cannot be accomplished by one leap. Who are those seeking to accomplish socialist revolution by one leap – they alone know. From such reasoning their line of thinking appears to be like this: since under their leadership a people’s democratic revolution has not been accomplished, how can the country enter into the stage of socialist revolution?

India is in the stage of socialist revolution

Be that as it may, I would like to ask how, in line with Marxist terminology, to term a revolution to dislodge the bourgeois class from power and to overthrow a national bourgeois state for the establishment of a working class state? After the overthrow of tsardom and establishment of the Kerensky government in Russia some such Marxists in that country, too, said that the bourgeois revolution was not yet completed. How could there be a socialist revolution where imperialist exploitation and feudalism still remained in the economy, where capitalism had not reached the saturation point and many a democratic reform were yet to be accomplished? Giving them a dressing down Lenin showed in his *April Theses* that these two revolutions did not exist in separate water-tight compartments. He said, whatever the condition, be it advanced or backward in the economic and social spheres, and however much the programme of bourgeois democratic revolution remains unfulfilled, the moment the Kerensky government has been installed, that is, the bourgeoisie has captured power from that very moment, politically in the struggle to capture power, our revolution has to that extent become a

socialist revolution. This is what he asserted in his *April Theses*. We shall be glad if my Marxist friends provide answer as to whether this is Marxism and Marxist analysis.

In India today where the market is continuously being squeezed by capitalist exploitation and the market crisis is intensifying, because of which further industrialization cannot be brought about; even full production cannot always be achieved in keeping with whatever production capacity there is in the country leading to increasing unemployment day by day, and where even according to the CPI(M) resolution adopted at Muzaffarpur capital has made decisive inroads in agriculture also – then where is there feudalism? Where does feudalism exist? Consequently, not to speak of the sphere of industrial economy, even in rural economy feudalism is not at all a serious impediment today. And in so far as state power is concerned even a common man, though not understanding all other points, should have no difficulty to understand that imperialism does not constitute the direct obstacle here; today it is the bourgeois class that stands as the direct obstacle. Thus, when the national bourgeois class, whether headed by the big bourgeoisie or whatever, is to be overthrown from the state power and the entire production system is to be freed from capitalist motive of production and production relations, then how can that revolution be anti-imperialist and anti-feudal instead of being an anti-capitalist socialist one? So, as a result of adopting the theory of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal people's democratic revolution, an imaginary enemy is constantly projected bypassing the real enemy. In such a situation, even if struggle is started with the aim of revolution, that ultimately turns out to be playing a game under the nomenclature 'revolution', and in this way channelizing people's yearning for revolution along the wrong course, it is brought to an untimely end. So, capitalism which today directly stands in the way of India's political, economic and social development, cannot be dealt a decisive blow with people's democratic revolution.

Consequences of wrong theory of people's democratic revolution

Until the CPI(M) came to occupy the governmental power, the Birlas and other capitalists were a bit apprehensive: with the CPI(M) raising fiery slogans and speaking for communism, who knows what is in store if they come to governmental power. But when they came to power in Kerala, from that experience, their attitude started to change. I remember some of the queer developments of that period. When the CPI(M) came to power in West Bengal then the British

commercial interests, British businessmen who were here, at first they too became panicky and were thinking whether to wind up their business or not. But the British newspaper *The Guardian* advised them: there is nothing to fear. For, they are not that breed of communists, they are very nice people. If you can intelligently deal with them, manly deal with them, you will get good results alright. Even the Birlas thought like that. Their attitude became like this: let the CPI(M) incite the people in the name of people's democratic revolution as much as they like; rather, if necessary we can contribute some money – if not openly then secretly: there is no harm in doing so. For, the 'big bourgeoisie' began to understand, even though belatedly, that this anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution is nothing but a utopia. So, they found that the 'struggle' that is going in the name of revolution poses no problem for them. It is not a real blow of revolution against monopoly capitalism. The slogan of this revolution is in reality a hollow slogan. In reality this won't harm the Birlas, the Tatas and the monopoly capitalists even an iota. This revolution is but a pure and simple game. Because, its strategy is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal. Therefore, the capitalists in the country have actually nothing to be afraid of.

The CPI(M) leaders are now saying everywhere that they have always been tremendously anti-Indira and in their speeches too, they always oppose the Congress. And yet what we find in their political resolution is that they, too, like the CPI find a progressive section within the Indira Congress. At least they did so, until the other day. Some time back, in 1970 even they said in their political resolution that the Indira Congress had raised certain slogans and adopted some measures which reflected the anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people. When such was their stand, at that time also they were day after day delivering big speeches against the ruling party in their rallies and meetings! And whenever we tried to point out that the image of the Indira Congress, for all practical purposes, was helped to be built up by such utterances from them, they always raised a hue and cry and confused their workers by saying that we simply slandered them. Still today, referring to Indira's stated views they seek to impress upon their comrades that whereas Indira Gandhi herself is saying that the CPI(M) is such an enemy of hers that it seeks to join hands with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra against her, SUCI is charging that CPI(M) has found progressiveness in the Indira Congress – can there be a greater lie? According to them, we are liars. I ask the CPI(M) leaders – do they not claim themselves to be Marxists? Then what is the Marxist method to judge a party? How is it to be judged? If a party speaks of revolution, raises fiery slogans against the ruling party, against the capitalist class, how is the real

political significance of those slogans to be understood? This is to be understood on the basis of what it says about the ruling party and the capitalists in its main political resolution. Everybody knows that the leaders of the CPI(M) engage in fiery rhetoric against Indira. But what kind of logic is it to argue that since Indira Gandhi has called the CPI(M) her arch foe – therefore it is clear they did not say there is a progressive element in Congress(I)? Whereas the fact is that they have hailed as progressive even certain measures taken by the Indira Congress, which are nothing but measures to prepare the ground for emergence of fascism in the economic sphere. Like the nationalization of banks and some other measures which are in reality social democratic welfare measures of the type adopted by Mussolini in Italy and by Hitler in Germany. They had two motives underlying the adoption of such measures: to confuse the people with radical slogans and keep them pacified by providing certain benefits, on the one hand, and, on the other, to corner the Opposition as far as possible and rapidly annihilate the communists by resorting to repression. The measures adopted by the Indira Congress, which the CPI(M) hailed as a ‘step forward’, ‘a big event’, ‘a progressive step’ and ‘consistent with the anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people’, are nothing but stepping stones towards fascism by further consolidating crisis-ridden capitalism. Their utterances regarding the Indira Congress which I have told you about have been published in their *People’s Democracy*. If they so desire, we can show all these to them.

Not only this. Getting a thrashing today from the Indira Congress, they are calling it semi-fascist. Yet we said at that time that the Swatantra and Jana Sangh may be extreme right reactionary forces but the possibility and danger of foisting fascism in India does not arise from them. Because the conservative section of the bourgeoisie has never brought about fascism in any country. In those countries where fascism came, it was brought about by that section of the bourgeoisie which are able to confuse the common people, the intelligentsia, by raising radical slogans, can draw them to its side and is capable of orchestrating a counter-revolutionary upsurge by forging national unity against revolution. So, it is this so-called progressive section of the bourgeoisie which have been able to raise the slogan of socialism and speak about progress that brought all-out fascism in different countries. However much hated they may be, the conservative bourgeoisie could not bring about fascism. So in India the seeds of fascism lie embedded in the social democratism of the Indira Congress. It is from the womb of social democratism that fascism once appeared in Europe. The same thing is about to happen today in

India. I wish to remind the CPI(M) leaders of the history of that time when they used to say: no, no, it is the Syndicate Congress which is the extreme right reactionary force and which has appeared as a greater menace than the Indira Congress before the country. So, starting from the time of V.V. Giri's election, and onwards, in their political resolutions, adopted one after another and published in *People's Democracy*, they went to the extent of saying that they could not underestimate the threat of the right reactionary forces like the Syndicate Congress. So, it is for conducting struggle against it that they are duty bound to move along with the Indira Congress everywhere. It is for this reason that they openly advocated the forging of a united front with a section of the Indira Congress then. Along with this, add the fact that they also discovered a healthy anti-monopoly, anti-big landlord trend, and termed certain measures of Indira as consistent with the anti-monopoly democratic aspirations of the people. After this what if I ask the CPI(M) leaders: to what does the fundamental difference between their above-mentioned stand and conduct as regards Indira Congress and that of the CPI ultimately boil down to? If one goes by the tricky arguments put forward by the CPI(M), at the very most what it may amount to is that according to the CPI(M) there is such a progressive section within the Indira Congress, but Indiraji is not leading that progressive section; whereas the CPI may think that Indiraji herself is leading that progressive section. But if the manner in which the CPI(M), too, hailed the victory of V.V. Giri in the presidential election as victory of popular and democratic forces over the vested interests and extreme reactionaries is analysed, then what it ultimately leads up to is that they, too, like the CPI, consider the Indira Congress progressive. So will it be that much wrong a conclusion if we think that their entire verbal fireworks against the Indira Congress is just for election politics?

Today in our country an intense crisis has arisen centring round the unemployment problem, to combat which an anti-unemployment movement is again gradually developing, and in which almost all the left democratic parties are participating. In this context, I like to ask the CPI(M) leaders: they too admit that the operators of the state system, the rulers, are taking the country along the path of all-out capitalist development. In such a situation is not the solution of this ever increasing unemployment problem interwoven with the question of overthrowing the capitalist state system and freeing production from capitalist production relation? If that be so, how can the solution of this unemployment problem be achieved through the programme of people's democratic revolution proposed by them, since that revolution is not an anti-capitalist one?

Therefore, by avoiding the preparation of anti-capitalist revolution the CPI(M) can at best temporarily mobilize those unemployed youth who are not getting employment, mobilize them for some days centring round their grievances against the ruling Congress through anti-unemployment conferences, just as the Congress once did with the pretence of giving the youth jobs – but the unemployment cannot be solved by that. So, this too is nothing but a deceptive political move. The question is how can they solve the problem of unemployment by accomplishing people's democratic revolution? People's democratic revolution is not anti-capitalist revolution. And in our country the question of unemployment problem is inseparably linked with capitalism itself. Hence, the unemployment problem cannot be solved unless capitalism is overthrown. So, when they are speaking about the people's democratic revolution, on the one hand, and also, on the other, about solving the unemployment problem at the same time – this is simply self-contradictory. Therefore, on analysis of the motive behind their anti-unemployment movement, it ultimately boils down to this that they just want to keep the unemployed under their influence and use them to serve their petty party interest by inciting them centring round this problem.

We consider, the question of whether development of capitalism in India has reached the saturation point or not is ticklish, muddle-headed intellectual bungling. The main question is whether or not the capitalist production relations are acting as the obstacle on the way to development of production, on the way to industrial development, modernization in agriculture and expansion of market – this is to be analysed. If it is seen through analysis from different angles that it is the capitalist motive of production and capitalist production relations that are in the main acting as the obstacle in all the fields, and the Indian bourgeoisie is in control of state power, then the Indian revolution has entered the stage of anti-capitalist socialist revolution — whether capitalism has reached saturation point or not, is not an issue. Under these circumstances those who advocate people's democratic revolution are bound to suffer from two types of deviation. One is, due to prolonged practice of parliamentary politics the party reaches a point from where it cannot proceed any more along that line, and just at that time it slips into adventurist politics and in the name of revolution starts struggle here and there for an imaginary revolution against those who are not the main enemy, and by resorting to this type of struggle at an inopportune time dragging the movement onto an entirely erroneous path, it thereby brings about the ruin of the revolutionary forces, as was found in the last phase of the United Front

government. At that time they started to abuse all other parties as agents of the jotedars. Yet at their Calcutta Congress they have said that the rich peasants are the ally of the working class in their people's democratic revolution. Right from the press people to the village and urban people — all know that these days rich peasants are called jotedars in the rural areas. So they had started a revolution against the rich peasants or jotedars who, according to the document of their own Calcutta Congress were allies of their people's democratic revolution. What a queer thing to happen! Actually, barring one or two jotedars here and there, in reality they did not direct that "revolution" against the jotedars, but against all other left and democratic parties by branding them agents of the jotedars. As a result, in that revolutionary feat of theirs, capitalism, the Birla House, the Indian state, all remained unharmed — not a single scratch did they suffer. The main enemy was discovered all around and the "revolution" was started against them in the name of revolutionary upsurge. So in the Indian context, if this line of people's democratic revolution is pursued again and again, some such things are bound to happen. Again, another type of deviation will come to the fore as a counter-reaction to this. That is, the politics of ultimately confining democratic and mass movements to the blind alley of parliamentary politics even while mouthing revolutionary verbiages putting forward various types of fanciful opportunist arguments and rationalizing, as is happening now. In reaction to the thrashing that they and all of us are being subjected to — and they in many cases more than others — as a result of their extremist and aggressive politics which led to the disruption of the United Front and united mass movements, what is being found at present is that in order to skip little by little into parliamentary politics, and not in any other sense, they have again started to talk of a united front of left and democratic forces and united movement.

Wrong theory of class based front

But strangely, during the period of last United Front government, it is Promod Babu and his likes who cooked up a theory that such a united front had lost its utility, that is, this type of left democratic front had outlived its utility and 'objective conditions' conducive to formation of a 'class-based front' that is, 'people's democratic front' had now appeared. They claimed at that time that the character of non-revolutionary parties had become exposed in the face of intense class struggle, the people had rejected the other parties and were swinging towards the leadership of their party. I raised the question then that if the situation had actually turned out to be such

that the people were swinging towards the leadership of CPIM), all the intermediary parties had become isolated from the people because their class character had been exposed, the phase of democratic movement had been passed over and their class-based front, that is, the People's Democratic Front in reality exists with the workers, peasants and the middle class having all rallied round the banner of revolution under the leadership of their party – then clearly, the opportune hour for revolution has come! The time to start the struggle for seizure of power has arrived! Then how can the slogan of election be raised again? Yet it is seen that immediately after presenting this kind of formulation the leaders of CPI(M) voice the demand: 'we want immediate election'! Then to what does it lead up? What kind of struggle is envisaged ultimately after the emergence of such a 'class-based' front? Clearly, that 'class-based' front — the theory of which they expounded with such fanfare to effect the break up of the then United Front — that class-based front after its 'emergence' would ultimately conduct the 'struggle' for the next election! What an astounding analysis of their Politbureau members and Central Committee leaders. But what is more, from cadres to leaders, none in the party at that time came out to question this queer analysis. It is a peculiar party, peculiar is its leadership, peculiar are its workers and supporters! Not only was there no serious discussion within the party on this issue, which was very urgent at that time, but what is more, when we raised questions about this, then, not to speak of listening to us, on the contrary, we were booed and shouted down, being branded as agents of jotedars, agents of the Congress, class enemy, etc. Thus, it is clear that if the mental make-up for reasoning, discussion and debates, exchange of opinion with other parties and the attitude of listening to others with tolerance can be destroyed, then anything of any brand can easily be made to pass.

Here, I would like to remind you about the Leninist methodology of judging a real revolutionary party. One very vital exhortation of Lenin is that a party may commit a mistake. But only that party is a true Marxist-Leninist party which has the moral courage to admit its mistakes, whose character is such that after realizing its mistake at once it conducts open and wide-ranging discussions about its mistakes before the people and rectifies them. It is very much a fact that the CPI(M) leadership is now raising the slogan for forging a left democratic front comprising the left democratic parties, even including the SUCI whom till the other day it regarded as untouchable. If that be so, should they not have to state whether their previous theory of a class-based front was correct or not? And if that had been a mistake then they should have

to explain what sort of a mistake it was and how it came about. Secondly, the other day only, the CPI(M) leaders developed unity with the Indira Congress in every way within Parliament and outside on the plea of resisting the danger of the extreme right reactionary forces and protecting the country against its menace and had expressed pride in helping Indira to remain in power. And they advocated formation of a countrywide broad-based front with a section of the Indira Congress in order to resist that greater menace. If they desire, I can show them the issues of *People's Democracy* of relevant dates and numbers. You see, how strange it is! Those same CPI(M) leaders are saying today that they cannot enter into a front with the Syndicate Congress because they are reactionaries but discussions may be held with them to combat the menace of Indira Congress. It may be considered whether an issue-based understanding can be reached with them. Then what such utterances of theirs mean is that the Syndicate Congress is no longer considered by them to be so untouchable or dangerous and dialogues can be carried on with them. Therefore, they should at least have to say something on whether their earlier analysis about the Indira Congress and the Syndicate Congress was right or wrong. But they are totally silent on this, with an air as if they never said such things!

So what we should like to emphatically state today is that when they are talking again of forming a left democratic front, that is, raising the slogan for forming a united front like the old one – should there then not have been any self-criticism in a political document of theirs systematically showing what were their non-Marxist deviations when they spoke about a ‘class-based front’ and ‘emergence of new forces’ some time back? It can never be like this: the earlier one was right, the new one is also correct. And if they had made a mistake then where have they conducted criticism and self-criticism following Leninist principles, involving the rank-and-file, the class and the masses about the terrible mistake which brought on such far reaching consequences? And if they have not done so, then what sort of a Marxist-Leninist party is theirs? Rather, it is seen that their ploy is of a different sort – if possible to destroy hastily all their documents on that class-based front so that nobody can find them. After some time they would pose as if they never said such things and what we are telling are lies and slander against them. My point is, when the united movement is again about to develop, in order that the previous mistakes do not recur in any variation even by making certain changes in the outward form, these criticisms are necessary. And I consider: it is right now that these are most necessary. And if they can show us our fault through systematic analysis of our policies and stand — point by

point, as we have shown their mistakes through analysis in a systematic way, I would accept that unhesitatingly. I would not be annoyed nor consider that to be abuse. But the strange phenomenon I observe is that they consider any sort of criticism to be abuse. They ought to realize that there is a difference between abuse and criticism.

I have made many discussions earlier about the self-contradiction in what they say about their people's democratic revolution. I have shown how, while opposing the Naxalites, they later on admitted that the national bourgeoisie had captured the state power. In his article on planning B.T. Randive has even spoken, although in vague terms, of overthrowing the capitalist class from power, although I know that he has said it casually. And lastly, they have adopted a resolution in their Muzaffarpur document that in agriculture capitalism has made decisive inroads. Yet, even after adopting such a resolution they have characterized the Indian revolution to be anti-imperialist, anti-feudal people's democratic revolution. Why does such contradictory behaviour haunt them? Because, the concrete experience of struggle has compelled them to admit certain realities. But because they do not possess the true Marxist-Leninist character and outlook, they cannot reach the logical conclusion by analysing these truths in a correct Marxist-Leninist way. Hence, the people's democratic revolution whose theory they copied from abroad and superimposed on this country by ignoring the concrete conditions, will never be achieved. It can never be achieved. Nobody will have to achieve it. The revolution that they think of, and about which they deliver fiery speeches in meetings held here and there, can objectively have only one meaning, and that is to project some opponent as the symbol of anti-revolutionary forces and thereby end the revolution there. Or else, to toss about within the confines of parliamentary politics under cover of fiery revolutionary verbiage. Real revolution cannot come about in the country through all this. Hence, revolution in the country cannot be accomplished nor can the united movements attain their desired goal under the leadership of such a party which has been unable to analyse the class character of the Indian state and the economic system of the country.

We hold that though India is a backward capitalist country, yet the development of monopoly capitalism and the birth of financial oligarchy through the merger of industrial capital and banking capital have taken place here. There is no denying this very fact. Not only this. The signs of imperialist features in the character of Indian capitalism are already distinct as shown by the birth of financial oligarchy through development of monopoly capital and the export of

capital which is of completely different nature than the export of commodities. Maybe it is still very weak compared to western imperialism, but although in comparison it is an underdeveloped and backward capitalist country, imperialist characteristics have already developed. Those who understand the character of monopoly capitalism, the character of finance capital, the transactions of finance capital and the character of banking operations in different countries in modern times and are acquainted with the Leninist formulations of the five distinctive characteristics of imperialism, can in no way deny this. Those who regard even the industrial capital of India as comprador capital, like the Naxalites, or those who, as suits their purpose, at times designate the big bourgeoisie as the collaborators of imperialism, and again at once on each and every question of the same big bourgeoisie's contradiction with imperialism assure them of their full support — they ought to remember that the character of comprador capital, however powerful it may be, is not the same as that of monopoly capital. It is for this reason that what the CPI(M) says about the role of the “big bourgeoisie” in explaining the character of the state is clearly deceptive. While characterizing the Indian state, they say that it is a bourgeois landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie even after admitting the fact of capitalism's decisive inroads in rural economy as also the transformation of rural landlords into rural capitalists. When they explain the character of the state even after recognizing all these, it can ultimately mean one thing only. That is, if it can be searched out that the great-great grandfather of any modern bourgeois, say of the Tatas, had been a landlord, then it is a bourgeois landlord state, because landlordism is mixed in the blood of the Tatas; therefore it is not a bourgeois state, or a modern type of capitalist state. So I have been telling that because of their inability to reconcile the contradiction thus created, they are trying to flee from truth under cover of their verbiage — ‘headed by big bourgeoisie.’ Otherwise, whom do they mean by ‘big bourgeoisie’ they speak about? These ‘big bourgeoisie’ can only mean the big industrial bourgeoisie in our country, that is, the monopoly capitalists. Now these monopoly capitalists do not descend from the sky. Wherefrom does this monopoly capitalism originate? What is the Marxist analysis of the development of monopoly capitalism? It is the national bourgeois class that gradually gives birth to monopoly capitalism and goes against the national interest, becomes imperialist, cosmopolitan. This is the Marxism I have learnt from Lenin. I am at a loss to make a meaning from what these big Marxists are saying. Therefore, by using the word ‘big bourgeois’ in the Indian context, they are actually meaning the monopolist class. The way they are speaking about

monopoly capitalism one moment and the very next call the same people 'big bourgeois' is utterly devoid of sense and reason, it has no meaning at all. If the big bourgeoisie are the monopoly capitalists then it has to be concluded that not only has national capital been born, but it is the national capitalists who have in the course of development already attained imperialist character and become cosmopolitan. So, how can such a party which is unable to correctly explain the Indian condition accomplish revolution? That is why, although the mass movements gradually gained strength and started to develop forcefully during the period of the last United Front government, these united movements could not reach their natural culmination despite so much martyrdom, so much suffering and the rallying of hundreds of thousands of people because the leadership was in the hands of such a non-revolutionary party.

A non-revolutionary party cannot provide correct leadership to united movement

So, when the people are again getting disillusioned about the Congress, I consider these discussions very urgent right now. I would like to emphasize that still today no party has the capacity to single-handedly organize struggles against the main class enemy, the bourgeois class and its party the Congress. Hence, for conducting struggle all will again have to forge unity, be it issue-based or based on some common minimum programme. But the question of leadership over this united struggle that would again develop is very important. Whether the people want it or not, the party that is powerful provides leadership over this united movement in practice. And it is the influence of that party which spreads. The common people, on seeing that it is strong, further strengthen it. Because, they think that as this party is powerful, it can achieve something. But if that party is non-revolutionary, if its path is wrong and if its theory of revolution is wrong, then all the martyrdom of the people, self-sacrifice of the rank-and-file goes in vain in this game of playing with revolution. As a result, the people become confused and taking advantage of it, reaction again gains in strength. Thus, if still today you extend support to such a party just because it is a big party; a pseudo-revolutionary, a non-revolutionary party which has been degenerating and become decadent as even a scrutiny of its history embracing all aspects – principles, ideology, culture, ethics, political analysis – would reveal, then that big party will definitely misdirect the movement and the ensuing disaster will be even worse. Whether a party is big or small is, no doubt, an important issue. But an even greater issue is whether its politics is correct or not, and whether it is a real revolutionary party.

Strengthen SUCI, the genuine revolutionary party

If there is no genuine revolutionary party in the country, then the slogan is to be raised through this united movement to build up such a party afresh, and however painstaking it might be, such a party has to be built up from scratch. And if such a correct party is there in the country and if it is found through analysis and examination from the political and all other aspects that SUCI is that party, then it is the SUCI that has to be rapidly strengthened through the united movement even if now it is a much smaller party than the CPI(M). Because, strength is an important factor. If a great ideology, a good planning remains confined in the head, remains within the realm of theoretical understanding, then that does not become effective. For translating that ideology and planning into reality – strength is a must. Although the ideology and the character of the SUCI is revolutionary, it has not yet been able to attain organizational strength adequate for providing leadership to the united movements. Hence, in the very interest of united mass movements, it has now become an imperative necessity to strengthen SUCI. Because, it is only those who have the correct understanding about the process of unity-struggle-unity within united movement that can accomplish the difficult task of maintaining the unity of the different parties participating in the united movement by conducting ideological struggle correctly with an attitude of tolerance while the united movement is in progress. I wish to remind you how we knocked at the doors of the different parties with letters and proposals to maintain the unity of the United Front government and of its different constituent parties at the time of the break up of the United Front government, and how we placed our proposals in writing also before the people. Those who remember all these will understand that although we tried sincerely to maintain the unity, we failed at that time simply because we lacked strength. As we were not strong nobody felt the necessity of attaching importance to what we said at that time. So, along with building up united movements that are about to develop again, please extend all possible help to strengthen our party in order to protect that united movement and to ensure that it reaches its logical culmination. Strengthen our hands! With this appeal, I conclude.

Long Live Revolution!

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Notes

1. Leaders of other parties in the United Front.
2. Administrator and rent collector of a landlord state.
3. Which split off from the old Congress.
4. Promod Dasgupta, the then Politbureau member of the CPI(M) and West Bengal State Secretary.
5. Bengali Organ of CPI(M).
6. Fore-ranking leader and theoretician of CPI(M).