

# **On Theory of Knowledge, Dialectical Materialism, and the Revolutionary Life**

*At a school of politics Comrade Shibdas Ghosh delivers an exposition of the basic tenets of dialectical materialism, or Marxism for that, and shows, in the light of the newer developments in all the many disciplines of science, how these advances on all fronts of knowledge are enriching this science of all sciences, reinforcing its foundation in every dimension. In this, he reveals its living soul as guide to action, affirming that in separation and isolation from life struggle or being divorced from revolutionary struggle Marxism cannot be assimilated.*

Comrades,

The subject-matter of discussion in our school of politics here is dialectical materialism. Before going in, we should be clear in one respect in the first place. That point is: why is it necessary that we should know? What it means is: what should be our object of acquiring knowledge? What is to be our understanding of real knowledge? Suppose, we didn't at all go for acquiring knowledge. What way does it matter if we hardly knew anything, hardly understood anything? What, if we never had any knowledge? No, without knowledge we cannot simply get on. Without knowledge we cannot take a single step forward, we cannot build up civilization, we cannot get over the constraints which the surroundings impose, we cannot control nature; we just cannot harness the forces of nature to make life beautiful. It is my consideration, if knowledge is not integrally linked with the very questions of life, if knowledge need have no moulding impact on life, if it is that we do not apply in life the acquired knowledge — what harm if we really hadn't acquired and cultivated such knowledge? Furthermore, true knowledge can never exist in divorce from struggle. Wherefrom came this realization? Realization of this truth has dawned on us after having correctly realized the struggle that man undertook since his first appearance.

## **Knowledge is not possible in separation from struggle**

We know, in order to survive man engaged in struggle with nature. Ever since man set out on this struggle, thinking started initiating — even if in a whit; and idea began taking shape.

Howsoever in incipience his thinking in the very early stage, man carried on struggle against the adverse forces of nature, against the hostile surroundings, drawing upon this little acquisition. Evidently, therefore, knowledge arises from contradiction, contradiction between man and nature and the surroundings. His struggle since early in that primitive stage has precisely been in response to his urge for survival. This urge till then was biological in the main. Even as the human brain had evolved beyond the stage of sensation to motor action by the time and had acquired the power of thinking, even as thought in an embryonic form, maybe an element of idea even, had taken shape man was still largely governed by the instinctive consciousness. To survive he must struggle amidst nature. In the very early stage, the laws of the animal world — the survival of the fittest — ruled man's life also in the main. Imagine, there is no struggle, no battle, but this notwithstanding idea exists, thought is there, knowledge too — such is never possible, such could never be in reality. So it follows, idea comes of struggle, struggle is what begets idea, what begets knowledge. How come then, knowledge could be divorced from struggle? Divorce dooms it to death.

This realization led Marxism to affirm for the first time that knowledge that is indifferent, which does not spur to action, does not inspire to take to struggle, does not inspire to transform the self, does not play its role in bringing changes in nature and the world around, such knowledge is sterile; it is trash in the garb of knowledge. Better leave it off. It would simply tax the brain, sap all energy to act, leave man powerless to act. You see, Marxism is no mere philosophy of atheism. It struck at the roots of faith in God, yet wherefrom did it source the strength to secure its place in the hearts of people in a world steeped in belief in God? And even superstitions of millennia failing to arrest the people? What strength did empower man to break asunder the fetters of superstitions and prejudices and free himself in the face of all odds and adversities? It is the necessity of life: man must fight on for survival. All who want to advance, who want to live on, need strength. Such knowledge should be acquired as allows man to build a struggling character and transform his self. And if he can change himself, he can change the world as well. Hence, in reality, true knowledge is never divorced from struggle. No question therefore of true knowledge arising or existing in divorce from action. Therefore we are to acquire such knowledge as enables us to study each and every problem in minutest detail to thereby reveal all their aspects. Knowledge, therefore, is to be based on the science of logic. The knowledge we have to acquire ought to be knowledge founded on verified truth.

The second point which ought to be clear to us is: why should we, people of India, at all engage in discussing Marxism or dialectical materialism, in particular when so many other philosophies are around? In answer to this question it may be said in a general way that we are discussing dialectical materialism because we consider ourselves Marxists, and to be Marxists we ought to have a clear grasp, a true realization of the philosophical foundation of Marxism, which is dialectical materialism, and we ought to apply it correctly in life, in all spheres of activity. To put it in this way may create the notion that discussing dialectical materialism bears relevance only for those who are Marxists. Should someone not be inclined to learn or accept Marxism, not prefer to be guided by the Marxist outlook, he need not at all learn or understand dialectical materialism. In the reckoning of some others, dialectical materialism just counts as another among a host of philosophies. Their interest may go as far as getting to know about dialectical materialism with the same attitude with which they care to know about other philosophies. I could never accept these views as correct. In my consideration, the impelling necessity of learning dialectical materialism is elsewhere. For, dialectical materialism is the only instrument in man's possession in the present era with which he can shed light correctly on all the different problems and grasp the problems correctly. Therefore, it is because we want to know truth, we want to get at the correct realization of truth concerning life, concerning the different happenings, that we are engaged in pursuit of dialectical materialism. And because we pursue and practise dialectical materialism in quest of truth, we are guided by this outlook, so we are Marxists.

### **How to get to know truth**

Admittedly, there are differences over how to get to know truth. The discipline which addresses the question of how to know truth, or which deals with questions like how thinking or idea arises, between idea and matter which one is prior, and how thinking reflects reality, what is their mutual relation and what is the role which thinking or idea actually plays in influencing social life, determining correctly and in all cases what is true and what is false — this discipline of getting to know truth is called the Theory of Knowledge. Which is to say, all such important questions bearing on the methodological approach to examining a particular concrete event or phenomenon, the method to determine its true nature, the way to know truth or the method of knowing truth, are issues under the purview of the Theory of Knowledge. Dialectical materialism

itself raised a very pertinent question in this regard. It is that while obviously we are to correctly examine and judge every happening, every idea, but the crux of the question is how to ascertain whether our analysis is right or wrong, true or false. What methodology should be followed to know truth? In the Marxian analysis, the methodology of knowing truth is the dialectical methodology. Some may question it, arguing whether one is obliged to accept something just because Marx said so. Is Shankaracharya of our land, say, any the less wise, less knowledgeable? But then Shankaracharya did advocate and believe in *Mayavad* or Illusionism, he had not talked of dialectical methodology.

On this, dialectical materialism presents an elegant and decisive answer. Dialectical materialism explains: whatever might be the contention of anyone whatsoever, before venturing to decide whether it is right or wrong, we had better probe a bit deeper into the roots of the concerned issues. The issue is, who is seeking to know, and what is he knowing? We know, man is seeking to know. He is knowing the external world, and all of this world. He is knowing about the material world, he is knowing about his surroundings. He is also knowing about his place in the universe, how he exists, in what surroundings or environment his life goes on, and how this universe works, how the laws of the working of the universe act on his life and his surroundings. The religious authorities, the believers in the old spiritualist philosophy, the idealists, and the dialectical materialists themselves also affirm that we are knowing ourselves too. Whether it is his own self that man is knowing, or he is getting to know the external world — the question is how he is getting to know. For long it had been believed that it is our mind what we know with, it is our sense-perception — knowledge comes of the five sense organs. To say that the way the human mind perceives the external world through the sense organs is how man cognizes it is correct in a sense. Reflecting deeper, however, reveals the limitations of this notion. In psychology there is a term named illusion. Say, for instance, mistaking a rope for a snake. Even if the vision of a rope makes someone mistake it as the image of a snake, the rope remains a rope all the same — it does not become a snake for that. Which is to say, notwithstanding a rope creating the fake impression of a snake, a rope is but a rope. Tangles of this sort are apt to present themselves in matters of ascertaining truth because in this approach the mind is taken to be the criterion of knowing truth. However, truth exists independently of mind or human consciousness. Thus, the methodological approach to deciding truth or falsity as that what

the mind perceives something to be, as has been in practice so long in the field of idealist philosophy, cannot itself be the sole basis of determining truth.

### **Matter is prior to idea, idea comes after**

For the sake of clarity it is necessary to look deeper into the issue. First of all, we should be clear about what philosophy means and what the difference between idealist philosophy and materialist philosophy is. The outlook with which we see and consider the world, nature, its change, human life and its problems, is what we call philosophy. Everyone knows, philosophical thinking is usually divided into two basic types or categories — idealist philosophy and materialist philosophy. Besides, an important and prime issue of philosophy concerns mind and matter. Many a philosopher recognize that the two, mind and matter, are interrelated. One acts upon the other, and through contradiction and conflict between them one influences the other. However, this measure of understanding alone that mind and matter are in constant contradiction and conflict, that they react inter-dialectically on one another, falls short of a comprehensive knowledge regarding the precise nature of the interrelation of mind and matter. Because, after all this, a question goes a begging: which is prior between the two? Which comes first? This question of priority is singularly important. Unless one has a clear grasp of this concept of priority, confusion is sure to muddle the issue in entirety. The brain is made of matter, and mind or idea is a particular function of the human brain. Which goes to show, between matter and mind, it is matter that is prior. Lack of understanding of primacy of matter, that is, of the understanding that idea is but a product of matter, leaves one's grasp of dialectical materialism incomplete and incomprehensive. Again it will be a mistake to claim that none else but the dialectical materialists realize that mind and matter are entwined in mutual contradiction and conflict, one influencing the other. Bertrand Russell, for instance, shares this understanding, so also does Jean Paul Sartre and many others as well. But see, where they ended up as a result of this failure to understand this very question of primacy of matter. Feuerbach, although he broke free from the spell of Hegel's dialectical idealism, could not become a dialectical materialist ultimately for lack of clarity in understanding this question of primacy of matter. He became a humanist, holding humanism an eternal ideal. Russell, despite being an atheist has remained an idealist. Sartre, an atheist though, failed to come out from the labyrinth of idealism. In later years he advanced to the extent of holding that dialectical materialism is the only comprehensive

philosophy. But even so, he turned an existentialist. It shows, even men like Russell and Sartre could not become Marxists, communists, or revolutionaries. They were abreast with the discoveries of science. But they have reservations on questions like whether these alone reflect reality. Besides, these men differed among themselves on the very issue of what constitutes reality. On critical examination, their standpoint comes to this : they acknowledge the findings of science, they also acknowledge modern biology; they do not dismiss or disparage the theory of evolution of species. But despite all this, not every one could agree to accept the conclusion which follows — that thinking and idea arise as functions of matter, an altogether new creation, a new phenomenon coming into being for the first time in history with man's appearance. In the case of some, their way of thinking was somewhat like this that idea has been embedded in matter since eternity. Not that idea has been in matter all along in a form same as of present day human thinking, that is, in a manifestation same as we find it in man of today. It had been present in matter previously in the form of an element of intellect. With man's appearance this element of intellect, ever embedded in matter according to them, brought itself up in the human brain to full flourish. This is what transpires from their way of thinking and reasoning. What it means is, in their view, the element of intellect embedded in matter since eternity has had the privilege now in the human brain for full flourish. Thoughts and consciousness which we observe in today's man are its manifestation. Which is to say, the element of intellect has had its full revelation in the human brain, to be particular. It is not the point of importance whether any of the exponents of this idea gave forth their view in these words actually. The point is, this is what the core of their thinking turns out to be when analysed. The crux of confusion in their thinking is that their imagined element of intellect exists independently of everything. It is in this way that it appeared in this world. This power of thinking, as they contemplated it, is not only not a product of matter, it is not even governed by the laws of matter either. That is why these thinkers begot the concept of absolute freedom of thinking. They have understood individual freedom in absolute terms. What comes out of their conjectured line of thinking is that the concept of freedom is not conditioned by social circumstances even — it is absolute. This happened because they made muddle of the question of priority between matter and idea. Neither do they hold idea to be wholly external to matter, on the one hand, nor, on the other, do they view idea as arising as a product of matter. Say, if we consider the issue within the precinct of the bourgeois social system itself in the age of Renaissance, we will note that it was precisely then that democracy

was at its highest stage of unhindered and free development. But in any case, the concept of freedom even at that time did not entail the idea of absolute freedom; rather it was inseparably linked with the idea of reasonable restriction. This was so because the idea of absolute character of the state had not arisen at the time. But today, when capitalism has given birth to monopoly capital, finance capital and imperialism, acquiring thereby its present rabidly reactionary character, when the state has alongside assumed an all powerful and absolute character — it is after reaching this social stage actually that we now hear of absolute freedom devoid of reasonable restriction. In this age of decadent capitalism, Sartre's thinking carries just the imprint of this moribund capitalism's idea of absolute.

### **Difference between methodological approaches of idealism and materialism**

Then with respect to the very methodology to be pursued for knowing truth, where lies the fundamental difference between the idealist philosophy and the materialist philosophy? The fundamental difference is that between these two types or categories of philosophy, which I mentioned earlier, one considers the mind to be the determinant of truth. That is, truth exists in the mind. In other words, in this approach there is no question or room of experimentally verifying, proving or ascertaining whether what the mind perceives or thinks is real or not. The mind is held to be a self-conscious entity or supra-natural entity. Basing upon this way of thinking, the philosophical school of thought that developed is called idealism. Just for this I said, personal realization exclusively dependent upon mental perception is the basis of idealism. The other philosophical approach has developed based on experimental verification, scientific analysis of the real world and knowledge derived from history, though the role of the mind is not denied here. This philosophical approach we call materialism, in particular, dialectical materialism. However, it is not true to say at all that all variants of idealist philosophy have rejected observation and experimentation. To impute this would be a denial of history. There are idealist philosophies also which do acknowledge all these. There are idealist philosophies which go to the extent of recognizing even that the surroundings or the environment acts upon the mind and influences mind, thoughts and ideas. Such variations notwithstanding, there is an underlying unity and similitude among all the idealist philosophies in that in the ultimate analysis each comes to consider the mind to be the determinant of truth.

On the other hand, just as there are many variants of idealist philosophy, no fewer variants do exist in the sphere of materialist philosophy either. Even though none of them deny the existence of mind anyway, variants of certain materialist philosophy consider the mind just a physiological action. They have conceived things in a mechanical way. Their idea is that physiological action comes foremost. Thus, even acknowledging the mind's existence as they do, they attach lesser importance to its role. But as regards the basic premises, there is unity among all materialist philosophies. And this point of unity is that the universe, the material world, whatever we observe exist independently of human consciousness. This is what constitutes the very basis of their thinking, though there are many differences between them as regards approach or respective method of analysis.

### **Differences between formal and dialectical logic**

It is important to remember, when one attempts to analyse or evaluate a thing, no matter whether one is an idealist or a materialist, one has to follow a line of reasoning. This very way of proceeding through reasoning is what is called *tarkashastra* in Bengali ; in English it is called logic or science of logic. Logic is divided into two types, a fact familiar to school-level or college-level students also. One is inductive logic, the other deductive logic. In logic that very process of reasoning which starts from particular phenomena or premises, then generalizes upon them in stages to arrive at a general truth, is called inductive logic. On the other hand, the method of examining particular phenomena in the light of generalized understanding of truth or of the conception that has developed in us is called deductive logic. One more point should be clear here. Philosophies of all schools have of necessity to follow a particular course of reasoning, right or wrong. But if someone, simply making an appeal to logic, pleads that something is true as because that is based upon logic, then it needs to be emphasized that to say an argument reflects truth because it sounds well-reasoned or logical is a statement which itself is subject to critical examination. To accept a conclusion as one reflecting truth because it appears all so logical, but doing it without taking into consideration matters like whether the course of reasoning followed has its basis in fanciful premises, or maybe in formal logic, is flawed and upsets the whole object of getting at the correct conclusion or truth. It means, even if a conclusion is arrived at adhering to logic but basing upon an erroneous hypothesis, though held to be correct, it can never be regarded as a correct one.



Consider the issue from another angle. There is a branch of logic which is called formal logic. It consists of both inductive and deductive methods. For long ages, science and other fields of knowledge have developed on this logic. Later dialectical logic was developed on the foundation of a comprehensive understanding of science. The entire process involving induction and deduction is equally in operation in dialectical logic also. Where lies then the difference between the two methods of analysis, formal and dialectical? Formal logic considers each phenomenon in isolation. Phenomena are not considered in their interrelation and interaction with the surroundings, in contradiction and conflict with the surroundings — in fact phenomena are considered static. That these also are in a state of constant flux, in a state of constant motion is not taken into account. Which means different material entities, or happenings, are not considered in their mutual contradiction and conflict, and in their motion; they are considered in isolation. On the other hand, dialectical logic studies every material entity or happening in the totality of its surroundings, in its relation with its environment, in its motion, in its contradiction and unity with other things. What this means is that the method of analysis of dialectical materialism has developed through coordination and generalization of the laws which have been revealed in the course of scientific observation and experimentation of material objects or phenomena and their material surroundings. Just because of this we are able to arrive at the correct objective conclusion on any issue whatsoever only by applying the method of analysis of dialectical materialism. We may achieve a partial understanding of a phenomenon or an issue by way of formal logic but never a comprehensive understanding. This is why Marxism emphasizes that a conclusion which *prima facie* seems logical does not *ipso facto* prove to be a truth. For that very reason, it is clear that Marxism or dialectical materialism is no mere philosophy of reasoning. However, this should not be construed to mean that reasoning has been given the good bye in dialectical materialist philosophy. For acquiring a comprehensive and truthful knowledge of everything by applying dialectical logic, Marxism is the one and only scientific instrument.

On this, a point has come to my mind and I am placing it before you. All acknowledge that inductive and deductive logic are mutually complementary, one conduces to the other, the two being at once supplementary-complementary to each other. But that is not the whole of the matter. With the advent of man, as his power of thinking developed so also did grow alongside his power of reasoning, and the two logical processes — inductive and deductive. While they

grew in a supplementary-complementary relation between them, it is also evidently true that in induction there is deduction, and in deduction there is induction. This understanding is all correct, and logicians all admit it. But mine is a question to the logicians on this score: Is there a point of priority in these inductive-deductive processes of reasoning? That is to say, through which of these two processes of reasoning did man's thinking operate in the first place? Which one came first — induction or deduction? This is how the point is to be understood. I am yet to come across an instance where this question of priority had earlier been raised in discourses in Marxist philosophical, theoretical discussions. But I want to raise it. Firstly, we know that different elements of thinking have developed through contradiction and conflict of the very many phenomena or happenings, and thought developed in this process of contradiction and conflict between these different elements of thinking. With the advent of man, in the beginning of this process of development of thinking, man did virtually have no knowledge in possession. Naturally, in this primary stage of incipience of thinking, no general conception of truth could have developed, and was therefore not available to man, in the light of which particular questions could be examined. In that very early stage of civilization, man's thinking had been guided by the method of logic which, in my consideration, was inductive in character in the main. Hence I say that between these two, induction is prior, and in the course of its development deduction arose. That is, deduction has been subsequent to induction in the main. Failure to grasp this would be compelling us to admit that ever since his advent man carried in his brain some such ideas with which he could think out in the deductive process. Its obvious implication is that idea or thinking has been embedded in man's brain in some form or another since the beginning. Allowing oneself the pursuit of this line of thinking would inevitably trap one in idealism, which in no way bears link with science, or dialectical materialism.

**In the light of dialectical materialism every other materialist philosophy is idealism in a way**

The point however, is that except dialectical materialism no other materialist philosophy has been totally free from the influence of idealism. In other words, in terms of dialectical materialism or Marxism other materialist philosophies turn out to be some kind of idealism<sup>1</sup>. Obviously, the question of evaluating other materialist philosophies in this perspective could arise only after the development of dialectical materialism, not before that. The main drawback

of idealism is that it cannot truly cognize or comprehend the objective reality. Flawed, inappropriate or incorrect cognition of reality hinders or obstructs the onward struggle for development and progress of humankind. It hampers social development and man's struggle with nature. Stagnation besets scientific pursuit, it goes off the track, and confusion clouds the question of ethics of science. These are the reasons why idealism causes harm, otherwise we have no personal animus against God. Imagine, with one such blissful Being around, we would have been spared all trouble! If there were anything like God existing, it would have been of enormous benefit to us. Our burden would have been so much lighter. We could just lay all our troubles at His feet and be relieved! By refuting God and doing away with idealism our struggle has increased manifold; hence we are involved in a struggle that is at the same time truly noble, gigantic and complex. Because, with wrong or false ideas we cannot get ahead. At every step they create hurdles for us. In every way they do harm to humanity. Thus Marxism's emergence brought to light beyond doubt the limitations of every other materialist philosophy, to reveal clearly that except for dialectical materialism the other varieties of materialism are not capable of reflecting truth correctly, even though they all fall in the category of materialist philosophy. That is why it is said that in the last analysis, these other materialist philosophies too are idealist in nature though, no doubt, dialectical materialism emerged in the course of development of these materialist philosophies.

### **Only human brain has power of thinking**

Before taking up the question of methodological approach to determine truth I need to make clear one more point. Say, we are reflecting over something, or analysing a point. Who does the thinking or analysing? Actually we think with our brain, our brain does the analysis. For this it is said that the mind is a particular function of the human brain. All who are conversant with the evolutionary development of the animal world know that biped mammals descended in a particular lineage of quadruped or four-legged animals in the course of gradual evolution of the animal world. Man does not walk on four legs. He walks on two legs in erect gait. This change that came up had immense potential. Because, in the first place, the two forelimbs or hands so freed in the process endowed the human with the capacity for intensive interaction with nature. Not only could he gather fruits with his hands, he was able even to engage in production. The role of labour came forth in society. Labour played a signal role in the development of

man's power of thinking. But the thinking faculty itself could not have developed, had not the upper layer of the brain or the cerebral cortex become enlarged and developed in man. Take the instance of the chimpanzee which too at times walks on two hind limbs. The chimpanzee also uses its hands to do some kind of work; even so it cannot think which man can. That the chimpanzee cannot think is because it lacks the requisite particular organization of the brain, that is, the material condition of the brain for which the brain's interaction with nature could generate the power of thinking. There is an excellent reference to this all-important role of human brain in the Introduction to the invaluable treatise of Engels entitled *Dialectics of Nature*.

Anyway, you know, the human brain has a specific power with which man can think which is called the power of translation of the human brain. Man is endowed with this quality in virtue of the highly developed nature of the human brain, especially its developed and enlarged cerebral cortex. It is evident that the brain with which man thinks is made of matter. The external material world is interacting with the human brain through the sense organs and the mind is a product of this entire process. All this, therefore, is the outcome of material interaction. So, it leaves no room for considering the mind a supra-matter entity, something external to matter. Which means the self-same mind that contemplates God is the outcome of material activity or material interaction. I intend to take up later the remaining detailed discussion on man's ideas and thoughts. For the present this much just.

### **How thought arose**

The question therefore is, how the mind, idea or thinking arose in human society. Marx said: "The ideal is nothing else than this material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thoughts." The 'reflection' here does not denote that the brain is like a negative film on which the material world simply leaves its imprint. The matter is not like that. The brain should not be thought of as one without any role whatsoever, that is, something which is passive. It should not be construed like that. Marx, Engels, Lenin, while they used the term reflection, did not mean by it that the brain had only a passive role to play.<sup>2</sup> We should not forget the fact that the human brain itself is an organ of the body which acts in an altogether different way. Although in Marxist literature the concept has been termed 'reflection', I am not inclined to use 'reflection' for it. I would prefer 'interaction' in the place of 'reflection'. That is, idea or thought

arises in the course of contradiction and conflict, or action-reaction, that is, interaction of the human brain and the external world.

If we go on using 'reflection', instead of 'interaction', and if its meaning is not properly understood then this may beget the misconception that any thoughts arising in the brains of individuals are reflection of reality. Looking at the matter this way would lead us to the conclusion that no thoughts can be wrong or false because every thought is a reflection of reality. In that case the idealists may very well claim that their ideas are also reflection of reality and, therefore, they are correct. This fallacy may well arise if we do not use 'interaction'. The fact is that the human brain, because of its highly developed state of organization, is endowed with the power of translation, that is, the power of thinking. So, which event will give rise to which thought or idea in which individual depends on the nature of this contradiction and conflict, or interaction, into which the human brain constantly enters with the material world or the external world, whatever the descriptions. It is through this process that perception has emerged. Perception, through a process of onward development has given rise to higher form of cognition, that is, conception. Thus, realization, thought, idea, ideology, sense of justice-injustice, logic, science, methodology, thought process, and so forth — all the conceptions arose in this way.

Pavlov made signal contribution in this field of knowledge. He explained these matters in a very lucid and elegant manner. It is not the point whether he could become a dialectical materialist himself or not. But Pavlov's experimental studies handed down to us a very powerful weapon. Certain issues which so long we were obliged to discuss in philosophical terms, now we can explain in scientific terms. For instance, the question of consciousness. Formerly, it was our practice to divide it into two types — organic or life consciousness and mental consciousness. For the manifestation of signs of living behaviour we observe in animals, apart from in man, we used 'instinct'. By consciousness of life or organic consciousness, we used to mean instinct; we used to mean the organism's nerve action at that. On the other hand, by consciousness of mind we used to mean the power of translation of the human brain, that is, the power of thinking. This is the consciousness arising out of deeper realization — a phenomenon with which the question of the power of thinking of human beings is involved. Man is capable of thinking some such

things with which he can sometimes, say, stimulate his nerves, and sometimes depress his nerves. Or, he can recall old memories afresh which had been stored in the repository of mind.

### **Unconditioned reflex and conditioned reflex**

I may proceed now to illustrate a few relevant aspects of Pavlov's works on the organization of the human brain and its activities and the truth he revealed therefrom, explaining these with analogies for easy comprehension. We know that compared to other animals the cerebral cortex of the human brain is not only enlarged but more developed. How does interaction with the external world take place in the case of other animals? As is well-known, constant contact is made with the external world through sense organs. That is to say, constant contact of the external world takes place with the brain or the central nervous system through sight, hearing, smell, palate, and touch. It is in this process that interaction takes place. As a result, sensation occurs. The first signal system goes into operation, motor action generally taking place at once. Thus it goes from sensation to motor action. From sensation to motor action, the process is controlled by the first signaling activity or the first signal system. Like in the case of the railway signal system which directs by signaling which train shall take which track, or, say, where the engine shall stop, here also the first signaling system determines which stimulus will produce which reaction, that is, which stimulus or sensation will produce what type of reaction or motor action. The brain process by which such actions are determined, say, when will a dog salivate, or when will it spring upon — that is, which nerve response will occur when — this is what we call the first signal system. The signaling actually determines which gland or nerve will do what, or which organ will function in which manner. This is because sensations and functions are not all of the same nature. The sight of food causes a sensation in the dog which makes it salivate — it is an action on certain glands. Again, if the dog is hit with a stick, this makes it yelp perhaps. It means, different sensations act in different ways for which responses become different too. Pavlov explained all this in terms of reflex action. When a stimulus from the external world, transmitted through any or more of the sense organs, acts upon the brain or the spinal cord, then by virtue of activity or power of action of the nerve cells of the central nervous system of man and many other animals a sensation or a reaction or an action sets in. This is what is called reflex action. It is true that only the human brain is capable of thinking, but reflex action occurs in all animals. Else, how could an animal really function? Pavlov demonstrated : reflex is of two types.

One is unconditioned reflex, the other is conditioned reflex. Both the reflexes operate in the animal world.

What is unconditioned reflex? A few examples will serve to explain. It has been mentioned before that maybe a dog yelps when hit with a stick or it barks, or that it salivates when some food is put into its mouth — these are all examples of the unconditioned reflex.

Again, consider the case of a man sleeping. When asleep, the conscious activities of his mind are muted. The man cannot get into action. Still it happens that if one tickles the sole of his foot even as he is asleep he draws back the foot in the sleeping state itself. He is unaware himself that he did move his foot away. What function does it result from? Simply the function of the nervous system; just a normal function. How does it happen? There are some reflex centres in man's body, almost instantaneous response happens because of these reflex centres. All this is the unconditioned reflex. There is no role here of the mind or idea, it is entirely a physiological process. A stimulus acts, an immediate physiological response occurs.

On the other hand, what is the conditioned reflex? When an animal gets accustomed or tuned to a specific situation or condition, it is then that the conditioned reflex sets in. Otherwise it cannot occur. I am going to give you a widely familiar example of an experiment Pavlov himself carried out. Pavlov began to experiment with domestic dogs. He used to ring a bell while he served the animal food. The dog became accustomed or tuned to the simultaneous ringing of bell and the serving of food. With conditioning in this process, it was observed that afterwards while only the bell had been rung but no food served the dog started salivating even in the absence of food. Such had been the conditioning of the animal to the ringing of the bell and the serving of food simultaneously in the stage preceding that now only the bell ringing induced the dog to salivate. This type of reflex is called the conditioned reflex. But if this went on for consecutive days over a period, only a bell rung but no food served, it was observed that the animal was no longer salivating after the ringing of the bell. Thus, conditioned reflex is induced in dogs or other animals when they just get accustomed to or conditioned in a specific situation.

### **Function of first and second signal system**

Consider again the instance of domestic dogs. The animal seems to recognize its master, seeing him even after a lapse of several years. It may be seen, it is wagging its tail and lying at the master's feet or snuggling up to his person even when seeing him after a long duration, behaving exactly in the same way it used to behave in earlier times — wagging its tail and lying at the master's feet. This behaviour leads many people to believe that the dog has recognized its master. So, they think, the dog must have intelligence. Even these days there are many who believe that the dog or the chimpanzee has some measure of intelligence or intellectual faculty although they cannot think exactly like man does. No, it is not the fact any way. The dog's seeming ability to recognize people, its ability to smell out something acting on the scent, its 'faithfulness' to its master — these all are highly advanced functions of the conditioned reflex. These are instances of nothing other than conditioned reflex of varying degrees. There is no role of intelligence here. All these instances or phenomena fall very much in the category of the conditioned reflex. Owing to long association with the master, not just the smell organ but the entire nervous system of the dog has been conditioned or patterned in a specific way. This stereotype of the pattern of conditioning remains operational for long – or, say, stored-in or accumulated for a long period — and the action of the same stimulus manifests itself in the form of a conditioned reflex. So, even if the dog meets the master after a long time the same sensation is created and that is why the dog wags his tail and lies down at the master's feet. It is just this which leads many to misconstrue that the dog is recognizing its master. No, it is not that the dog has its master stored in thought, mind, or memory. The dog's behaviour is not an act of thinking or idea. It is merely an operation of the conditioned reflex of its nervous system.

Take, for instance, the case of snakes. Many snake-charmers are known to sell some kind of roots as antidotes for snakebite. Actually, there are no such kinds of antidotes. In the first place, unless a snake is the poisonous type its bite may not be fatal for a man. Moreover, even if the biting snake is the poisonous type, its bite may be fatal only when its sac is full of venom and the victim has not had access to immediate and appropriate treatment. The snake-charmers' practice is that when they catch a poisonous snake they hold before the catch a piece of hot iron that looks like a root. Once a snake has burnt its mouth by biting the searing iron, thereafter such a snake drops its head on seeing a root. Why does it happen? It happens because of the conditioned



reflex. But a snake which has not for once bitten a searing iron will no doubt strike out and bite you, even if you hold a root in front of it. In any case, all these are examples of the conditioned reflex.

A little earlier I discussed the first signal system. There is yet another signal, the second signal system, which operates in man only. In all animals the first signal system operates in the track of sensation to motor action. That is, the signaling determines which effect a particular sensation would produce and under which stimulus. In the case of man, under the action of this second signal system, which exists in addition to the first signal system, the signal goes from sensation to perception, and then beyond into a different process, which is called translation. The second signal system does this operation of translation in the brain itself, whereupon the brain thinks, analyses, conceives. These operations are all controlled by the second signal system. Precisely because man has this power of translation, that is, he has the capacity to think, sensation from an external stimulus does not end up in the track of sensation to motor action. The track it takes is essentially from sensation to perception to conception in which motor action may happen at any stage. I told you already that perception, in the course of development, has given rise to higher idea or conception. The brain's organization has the capacity for perception or conception, that is, the brain can hold it in memory; and, in a reverse way, through reciprocal action, perception and idea can act upon sensation and motor action. All these are no simple processes, together these add up to an exceedingly complex process. Be that as it may, as soon as perception occurs, idea is born, the phenomenon of cognition occurs — the question comes how do we express it? We express it through language. Language is the vehicle of thought. The speaking that man does, his expression of mind or idea in language — this is called speech or speaking power in English. This also he does with the help of the second signal system. This is absent in the animal world except in man. This second signal system determines what shape idea and thinking takes in the human brain in its contradiction and conflict with the surroundings. That is to say, the thinking process or ideation began with man by virtue of the specific organization of the human brain — say, how and what way this thinking faculty will act — is determined by the characteristics of the second signal system. Consider the fact that the phenomenon of interaction, or the process of conflict and contradiction works in all of us. But for that, do you, me, or someone else think the same way in response to the same incident? No, we don't. It can be seen, the same particular incident has induced someone to enjoy it deeply, while

another person has made quite an opposite reading of it or has landed in an interpretation altogether different. Which means because some preconceived notion or complex worked in his mind, so the process of translation took a different track in him. It is this variation in workings and activities of the human brain giving rise to different thoughts or ideas in different individuals that we call different powers of translation or different acts of analysis. It is controlled by the second signal system. In any case, this is how man has come to acquire his power of thinking, come to possess the power to study matter, even study his own self — a power no other animal could come to possess.

### **Role of surroundings in change and development**

So from science and history we gather, consciousness has arisen precisely in the course of change in the material world, through a course of conflict and contradiction within nature itself. The question of interaction between matter and consciousness could arise only after man's appearance on the earth. From then on began man's conflict and contradiction with nature, his surroundings. Often an oversimplification has been made of what we call 'surroundings'. This, I believe, has prompted a question in this school : how is it that two offspring of the same parents, born and reared in the same environment, grow up into two different types? Say, one has turned an anti-social whereas the other is seen not only to be very honest, sober or modest, he has grown into a trusted cadre of the revolutionary struggle. Are the Marxists then correct when they emphasize the role of environment and affirm that all this primarily depends upon the environment? One such question has been asked. The reason for which the question has been put up is no doubt because the concept of environment implied has been understood in an oversimplified way. When Marxists emphasize that man's thoughts and ideas, his mental faculty develop according to the conditions of his environment, the concrete situation, the concept of environment implied therein is construed in a wider sense, it does not entail this sort of oversimplification. The Marxist concept of environment subsumes all the minutest details of it. Consider, for instance, parents believe they love all their children equally. Strictly, this 'equal' does not make sense. From the scientific standpoint, it is impossible theoretically as also humanly. It is simply not possible for parents to behave every time in exactly the same manner with the same child, nor can the father's affection or compassion for his child and the child's for its father take the same shape exactly on any two different occasions. If we admit this fact and

take the trouble to critically analyse details of the environment in which two children of the same parents are being reared — which is to say we take into consideration the circle of friends of each, or who mixes with whom and whom, who keeps company with whom — then shall we realize that there exists a significant gulf between the environments of the two. Not only that. The thought process of each of them, the conflicts in respective mind, the life-struggle of each, reactions to life's vicissitudes manifesting in conduct, behaviour and outlook of each — all these together are creating the wide difference between the two. Therefore, the correct conception of environment is indeed not as narrow in implication as is the understanding generally with which common people or comrades go about. That is to say, the Marxist conception of environment should not be taken in this oversimplified or superficial, flat sense. There are a thousand and one elements of contradiction between man and his environment. Even there is contradiction within contradiction. In Marxism, all these have been considered in their minutest detail. Even those elements which are not apparent normally have also been taken into account. All these elements constantly engage in mutual conflict all the while. When analysed thus, it will be realized how it could be that two children of the same parents could come to have two wholly opposite characters.

Again, the differences between individuals as are commonly seen — are these inborn in nature? We should not view it like that. Almost all individuals have a normally developed brain, or a certain standard level of attainment. It is a different matter if some deformity in the brain occurs due to certain reasons in an individual. That is simply an exception. The fact that two mutually opposite ideation occur in the brain of two different individuals but in response to the same incident happens because of differences from brain to brain in respect of power of thinking, or, to put it more precisely, as a result of differences arising in the most natural course due to differences among individuals over development of understanding as a sequel to differences in their respective course of conflicts and interactions with respective environment. Ever since birth, the differences in respective environment, differences in educational and cultural attainments, differences in experience and inner struggle of each one, and such like, gradually give rise to differences among individuals in respect of mental functioning in its entirety, reasoning, sense of values, outlook and approach and so forth. As a result, two quite opposite reactions to the same incident may come to happen in two individuals. That is to say, the same incident may evoke different reactions among different individuals. It is the nature of interaction

or conflict taking place in the brain of one or another that determines the resultant thinking. In fact, the understandings of two different individuals are different because the interactions are of different kinds. But it is not true, in any case, that because the understandings are different the incidents as such are different, too.

We can learn from examples in the party itself how differences occur from individual to individual. We can very well draw upon the experience of the party in this regard. Are all the comrades in the party of the same type or level? Consider, some comrades are working under the same leader. Some may think that since these comrades are working together under the same leader in the same party so they have altogether the same environment. Such is not the case at all. There are differences, and there are bound to be differences. Leaders too have a role here, so also have the cadres. We tell comrades that the external world, surroundings, the work one is doing, all have a role in everyone's life. We know, the filth of the capitalist society we live in is accumulating in us every instant, and the party is constantly exhorting comrades to struggle to free our mind from it. Which is to say, the party constantly puts great emphasis on the struggle within the self of every comrade, or what we call the inner struggle. Yes, all this is correct. But, before anything, do you think everyone among the comrades have been able to cleanse their mind from all this filth in an identical manner? Have all of them been able to broaden their mind? Not merely in rhetoric — is everyone able to love all the comrades in the real sense? Do the leaders uniformly love all the thousands of party workers in the same way, or even all those workers whom they personally know well? More than that, do leaders love comrades in such a way so as not to make them blind fans? And do these comrades also love their leaders in such a way that this love for the leaders is but a personified expression of their love for the party and the party leadership? When leaders have acquired the ability to love party workers in this way, then all the disturbances in the minds of comrades will gradually disappear creating in them so irresistible an attraction towards the party and its ideology that no problems arising from their family, howsoever numerous, can hold them back. How many leaders and organizers are here who have attained the ability to love workers this way? This love belongs to an altogether different mould. Think, when a worker gets attached to the party through some contact and is drawn to it by the attraction of ideology, in most cases he or she has a mind soft like a lump of clay. Just as the clay modelers of Krishnanagar make clay figurines out of soft clay and create so many designs from moulds, similar is the task of us, revolutionaries — like artists, like clay

modelers, to transform that soft mind of each into true man in the mould of love, and temper them firm and strong in the fire of revolutionary struggle.

### **Organic matter formed from inorganic matter**

In connection with change and development, another important issue needs discussion. We know, the material world exists independently of human consciousness. The truth is not that the world exists because man exists. We have learned from science and history that the material world existed prior to the advent of man on the earth. Everything in the material world has a history of development, and the organic world too has a long history of development. This is an acknowledged fact of science and history. Before the coming of man life had appeared and evolutionary changes of numerous species had taken place. And even before that had happened the formation of organic matter from inorganic matter. It is now proven beyond doubt that the inorganic world and the organic world are not two watertight compartments of the material world, that is, they are not separate worlds lacking mutual connection. Students of science also know that organic compounds formed from inorganic compounds, and the organic world as such and organisms are all made of organic compounds in the main. It is not true, which many people believed earlier, that inorganic and organic matter existed side by side since eternity. The belief once held by a group of scientists that it would never be possible to prepare organic compounds in the laboratory has long ago proved to be false. Especially, the preparation of urea in the laboratory left no room for doubt. Today it is a confirmed fact that it is not only possible to prepare organic compounds from inorganic compounds; a host of such organic compounds are being prepared from inorganic compounds. Much progress has no doubt been made towards solving the question of origin of life or the emergence of life, of the constituents of living forms and the first organism to appear on the earth, but much more remains to be uncovered by science. I am aware, for instance, that about virus much remains to be known. But one aspect has been known — that viruses function both as living matter and as non-living matter. When it is in the body of an organism it functions much like a living organism itself. In other environments, for instance, if kept inside a vial, a virus does not behave like a living organism. It is then nothing else than inert matter like any other chemical substance. Scientists hope to elicit much information on the origin of life once they get to know precisely the etiology of viruses.

## **Darwin, the pioneer of modern biology**

In the history of development of the organic world, early thoughts were all fantasies, much like mythological anecdotes. These ideas prevailing in the then society had mostly stemmed from religious way of thinking and scriptures. Darwin was the first to strike at the root of such thoughts. He established that the developments in the organic world were governed by laws. These developments had a history of their own. These changes in the organic world did not come about in any arbitrary fashion. In the course of development of the organic world — beginning from single-cell amoeba and the simplest primary class of protozoa which formed in a process beginning from protoplasm, the chief ingredient of living cells, some of these having been jellylike organisms — cells had started dividing themselves. Thus reproduction came to happen through replication. Till then reproduction by sexual union of male and female forms had not happened. In this process, through a series of conflicts, interaction and changes, all the various species evolved. Darwin's theory of evolution postulated that in the course of evolution from a common stock of monkey-like forefathers the divergent lineages of present-day living monkeys and apes evolved, and later, from a lineage of apes, anthropoid apes to modern man evolved in a particular lineage. Whereas it is true that this Darwinian theory undermined the belief in God and modern biology was born, it is true at the same time that Darwin's thought had certain lacunae due to historical limitations — these lacunae relate to the two aspects of change which are termed, in the language of science, the quantitative and qualitative changes. Darwin had recognized the course of gradual change or evolution. But he failed to realize that in this process of change both continuity and break exist together and that quantitative change inevitably leads to qualitative change. He could not offer a clear explanation of the cause behind organic evolution and why evolution at all takes place. Later scientific discoveries have made it possible for the Darwinian theory to be further enriched and developed. Students of science are conversant with all these.

## **Fanciful notion is no criterion of truth**

Earlier in this discussion on mind and environment we noted that differences exist among individuals over cognition and realization. In that event, how shall we ascertain truth? Everybody has the right to consider his or her thinking correct and also to assert the claim. But assertion

does not lead us to truth. Because, truth does not depend upon one's ideas or notions. To understand truth one has to go in for critical examination, one has to take to practice. In most of the idealist philosophies there is no such thing as practice. Many of them maintain that philosophical cultivation is not for mundane living, it is for contentment of the soul. Consider the matter from a different angle. We know, Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ, Hazrat Muhammad and Sankaracharyya were all noble men, men of great height. They were all religious preachers, but each maintained an idea on religion different from the ideas of others. What one preached as truth, another sought to refute, proclaiming a different idea to be truth. Which among these great men should people opt for? How shall we know who is right and who is wrong? Many of you must be knowing that in our schools teachers refer to Sankaracharyya as God when they teach students lessons on him. So much so, he is said to have crossed River Godavari on foot wearing a pair of wooden sandals. Just see, this giant man in the field of philosophy who is the real, the most powerful exponent of Vedanta in this country by gleaning from the *shruti* and the *smriti*, has had to be proclaimed God. For it won't do without making him God. In ancient times there was a practice among idealist philosophers. Whenever one succeeded in defeating another in argument, the one who won used to claim, "I have been accepted and the other deposed — this established my authority". This was how one 'truth' used to be established in the place of another in those days. Truth was never established on the basis of experiment and analysis. That was not felt necessary. They did not want it either. In view of this, Marxists have raised a basic question in the field of theory of knowledge. It is that everything has to be judged on the basis of experiments, history and experience, not on any individual's notion or idea.

Now one may argue that there may be commission of mistakes in experiments also. True, mistakes may be committed despite arguments and counter-arguments, deliberations and experimental investigation to arrive at a conclusion. The question is: which is fraught with greater chances of mistakes — to base ourselves on personal belief or realization of an individual, howsoever great, or to base ourselves on experiment, experience and critical analysis? Dialectical materialism holds that the latter method is dependable. Because, chances of mistake are far less in this case. Moreover, even if mistakes are made, the way to rectify mistakes can be found through this method only and certainly not basing ourselves on the personal belief of an individual. To depend on the personal realization of an individual entails far greater chances of mistake. However, it should also be borne in mind that the conclusion or realization

gained on the basis of experiments and critical analyses is not eternally valid and is subject to verification. Because, the realization achieved has to be put into practice, it is not for armchair exchanges. Whenever an idea will be put into practice, a conflict with reality is inevitable. In this conflict with reality, it will be tested whether the realization attained is right or wrong. Neither is it a correct understanding that this test itself is final. But in idealist philosophies there is no question to pass any such test of truth. You can see, this has created an interesting paradox in this field. In idealist philosophy there are as many prescriptions as the number of physicians. Even the atheists among the idealists differ in their interpretation. Such things happen in idealist philosophy because all concepts and ideas develop from individual perception, realization. But the same does not happen in science. The theory of electricity is the same in England as it is in Japan; also it cannot be any different in India. There cannot be several different interpretations or several different theories for the same phenomenon at several different places. Since truth of science is truth verified by experimentation, so there can be only one particular conclusion or one truth on a particular question, or in a particular domain of science. An experimentally verified truth of science never becomes incorrect. If however a new domain comes to light in the course of experimentation, a new truth or new law becomes valid in this new domain, the old becoming invalid in this new field although, of course, it continues to remain valid as before in the old domain. Because, truth is always concrete, particular truth. To oppose this basic tenet is to oppose the values or ethics of science. It applies equally to the philosophy which has been founded upon the integration of all sciences — that is to dialectical materialism.

### **Not just to interpret the world, but to change it is the real task**

While highlighting the difference between Marxism and other philosophies, Marx once observed that the other philosophies had so long only interpreted the world, but the task is to change it. Should someone conclude from this that Marxists are in no need to interpret the world and all they need is to change the world, then it must be said that these people have simply failed to get at the fundamental point. In the other extreme, if one thinks that no philosophy earlier to Marxism did play any role to change the world then that too is mistaken. A correct realization of historical materialism leaves no room for such mistaken notions. What did Marx actually want to convey with this observation? He wanted to convey that no other philosophy could perform the task, which dialectical materialism did, of critically and thoroughly analysing on the basis of



science the laws governing changes in every domain of the material world or every sphere of activity — thereby developing a comprehensive system of knowledge as a guide for changing the world.

Moreover, as many idealist philosophies preach that the universe is the creation of a supernatural entity, they therefore view man's role in the struggle with nature limited to the extent that he is subservient to nature's laws, for which he cannot consciously act on these laws to harness nature for his own necessity. These philosophies consider social edicts and injunctions to be, essentially, immutable and inviolable. And they brought this teaching to man that for amelioration of his sufferings he should change himself so that his endurance grows further and he becomes reconciled with all these. This is what they mean by such change; consequently their role has just been in accordance with it. But dialectical materialism has been the first to show that being guided by the scientific and comprehensive outlook and concept of laws of nature and society, man can consciously act on nature and, avoiding its harmful effects as much as possible, he can harness it for his own benefit. And he can deliver himself from all sorts of injustice, exploitation, humiliation and remove all sufferings by radically transforming the prevailing social system. In this sense it has been stressed that now it is the task to change the world. That is, if we give adequate recognition to the laws of nature and necessity of society by correctly understanding historical and scientific concept of social development, only then the call that the task is now to change the world will have carried any meaning. It is this sense which Marxism emphasizes that 'to know' is meaningless as such unless practice is inseparably linked with it. We want to change the world, we want to change ourselves and we want to play our conscious role as human beings in the course of change. Our urge to know the world stems from this. Therein lies the true significance of cultivating Marxism, or dialectical materialism. Had not mankind endeavoured from the beginning to know the world as they could, and to act accordingly, human society could not have taken a single step forward. Also we would not have had the opportunity to engage in discussions on various aspects of knowledge, science and philosophy as we are doing now. The happiness of mind we enjoy from this would not be there, we could not enjoy it.

Everybody knows that what man has created in the course of his struggle and conflict with nature is called production. Production is of two types: one is material production and the other

is spiritual production. Our thoughts, concepts, values, ideals, philosophy – all these belong to the category of spiritual production. The urge for material production has brought in its wake spiritual production. Again one influences the other, influencing each other reciprocally. But material production constitutes the base. We have the urge to live with our basic needs fulfilled, and from this urge we have sought to set up production system. In order to set up that production system we have to engage in struggle against adverse forces of nature. As our production system and lifestyle have developed in this struggle, so has developed alongside the sphere of our spiritual production. We should also bear in mind that before the emergence of any human thought the material ingredients for it, for the growth of that thinking process, is first created within society. Precisely for this, Gautama Buddha, Hazrat Muhammad and Jesus Christ, despite being great personalities, failed to discover the Theory of Relativity in their times. Is it that Einstein was a greater genius than all of them? None would agree. The correct understanding of this question is that each of them was the greatest thinker and genius of his time and a great man. The thoughts, power of analysis and intellect of each of them principally developed on the basis of the then social situation, the concrete conditions of their respective times. The highest thoughts of each respective age, reflected in the greatest thinkers of that age, constituted the limits of the thoughts of the age. I reiterate that it is the social situation, the concrete conditions prevailing at the age which principally define the limits to their thoughts and ideas. This is the correct Marxist understanding or approach. Even many leading scientists and philosophers have muddled over this question.

### **Marxism is a developing philosophy**

The correct grasp of this Marxian approach would also convince that Marx's own understanding a hundred years ago is not the same as the understanding of the Marxists a hundred years later, it cannot be the same. Because it does not remain the same, the realization and its expression is bound to change. Karl Marx who is the expounder of Marxism did realize the very essence of Marxism in the perspective of his own particular time and existing social conditions. That understanding cannot remain static with changing times and in changed, newer situations. That understanding changes and gets enriched. My own understanding of Marxism at the early stage, the way I understood it then, has not remained at that early level. It cannot. Because Marxism is a science, hence of necessity various expressions and understanding of

Marxism have to be explained with greater lucidity, clarity and precision. It has to be made more convincing, more penetrating and decisive. This, of course, does not mean distorting Marxism in the name of enriching it, or revising the basic tenets of Marxism on the plea of developing them — which nefarious role the revisionists are playing all over the world today. I am not meaning that. The question does not arise at all. My point is that according to the teaching of Marxism its understanding of the tenets of Marxism today, a hundred years after Marx, cannot remain at the same level. As many new discoveries are being made in the various disciplines of natural science, and changes are taking place in economic and political fields, resulting in ever newer lessons and experiences accumulating in revolutionary movements and class struggles, development and enrichment of dialectical materialism inevitably happens through coordination and integration of all these newer elements following the dialectical method. Thus, in the interest of all-out development of the science of Marxism, at a particular time and in a particular field its way of expression or style of expression is bound to change in the course of its development. Unless the matter is understood in this light, Marxism cannot go on developing. It happens this way and will so happen in the future as well, because Marxism is a science. Else, Marxism is certain to meet with its demise. In other words, I mean to say, the science of Marxism shall have to advance by constantly elucidating the ideas, making them ever more clear and sharp. Failing this, it will degenerate into a dogma. I am putting this matter in my own language. Long back, Lenin taught that Marx and Engels gave us the fundamental teachings of Marxism, and the task of the Marxists in every country was to enrich and develop this science in all directions.

### **Relative independence of thought**

I have already dwelt, elaborately at that, on the relation between mind and matter. I explained that the material world is prior, and mind, thoughts, ideas, and so forth, are all mere products of matter. In this connection, I want to touch upon one more aspect. All these — mind, ideas or ideals whatever you may talk of — as they emerged in society, that is, as thoughts and ideas arise they start in turn influencing society and the material world. This means that the thought, the idea which arises from material base, once it emerges it has however its relative independence. As it emerges, the thought, the idea influences society and the material world and vice versa in a dialectical way. Just to give you an example, notwithstanding the fact that after independence the entire economy comprising both industry and agriculture has acquired a capitalist character, yet

in the realm of thought pattern, ideas, conduct, habits, and such like, feudal hangovers still persist. This phenomenon that capitalism appeared in the base but feudal ideas continue to linger in the sphere of thoughts and ideas, that is, in the superstructure, could be possible because ideas, ideals, thoughts, and such like have relative independence. It could not have been possible otherwise. In this era it is possible to eliminate the degenerate and obsolete feudal hangovers still persisting in the society only by conducting a counter ideological struggle inspired by the ideal of socialist revolution.

It shows that what we call ideology, which is a systematic view to guide life on any questions, has a signal role. Needless to say, every ideology in a class-divided society is certain to be a class ideology or class thought. Which ideology will play which role in the struggle for progress of society depends upon which ideology is correct and conducive, and which ideology is wrong. Herein lies the reason why it is that singular importance is attached to ideological struggle in the communist movement. Only the party with the correct ideology, that is, the ideologically most superior party can provide the correct leadership for preparing the ground of revolution in the respective country and also for leading revolution through to success. The organizational base, that is the requisite ability to transform the correct ideology into adequate organizational strength, depends on the correctness of the ideology. Needless to repeat, this whole question is decided by proper dialectical synthesis of theory and practice.

The theory of knowledge has many more aspects, but its essence is the criterion of practice. In natural science there are both direct and indirect experiments. The methods of experiments in disciplines like physics, chemistry and life science, say, are of one kind; then again the experimental methods are of a different kind in astronomy. These experiments in science require instruments for study; many types of instruments are used for direct experimentation. That is, however, a different question. But whatever the field of study, everything has to be made subject to experimental verification. Otherwise, truth cannot be ascertained. This aspect of practice or experimentation is indispensable in Marxism as well, but for that you must not think that this experimentation is of the same kind to which laboratory experiments of natural sciences belong. Because of the emphasis on practice in Marxism, that is, the fact that every theory has to be verified through practice, it is necessary that we have a clear understanding of the interacting role of theory and practice.

## **Theory and practice are not divorced from one another**

Stalin said: “Theory without practice is sterile, practice without theory is blind.” It means, a theory devoid of practice cannot create anything and it cannot act as the instrument to conduct the life-struggle of man. It is sterile because it is not creative, and, because it is without application. Such a theory is useless. Similarly, practice which has no relation to theory is blind practice. On this some may argue : ‘Well, I am doing my tasks as a party worker, pasting posters, voicing slogans, visiting peasants, mixing with common people, discussing with them, and keeping constant association with them — which means, I am in the thick of practice and have practical experience’. For comrades who think in this way I should like to sound a note of caution. If this practice of theirs, this struggle of theirs is not based upon theory and if they are not constantly checking whether all these activities are in conformity with theory, and if they fail to view these in terms of unity and struggle, then I ask them to reflect what worth is their claim for experience, because in that case such activities turn out to be just a kind of blind activity as can be witnessed in the natural world. Say, a peasant who has grown old tilling his land all life, if he thinks he understands the basic problems in the peasant life better than Marx, Lenin or Mao simply because he is a peasant himself, such thinking hardly makes sense. It doesn’t make sense because the theory which these giant communist leaders of the world cultivated was enriched with the experience of its application in real life. Their theory was not divorced from reality. The question should be understood in this light. Our peasant comrades also should realize that their experience is valuable no doubt. No question of denying this. But to free peasant movement from blindness and to conduct it with the revolutionary outlook, they must adequately grasp the fundamental teachings of Marxism. They must cultivate the Marxist theory and apply it in life all through.

At the same time it is true that Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao had all to learn from peasants. There are many things to be learnt from common people. These leaders all laid great stress on this aspect. Theory and practice are not divorced from one another, the two have to be integrated, that is, a dialectical synthesis achieved. If the experiences obtained while working among the masses on the basis of the revolutionary theory requires certain modification or changes in certain old concepts, then the latter may have to be changed. The communist movement is replete with many such an instance.

### **Subjective and objective practice — two aspects of same human practice**

The world of science, too, corroborates that many important and fundamental theories which have been formulated on the basis of many a scientific research have in turn to be put constantly into practice. Natural science is studied in two different branches, namely theoretical science and applied science — this as a matter of convenience. Though studied along two separate branches, these two divisions are not exclusive of each other. The same applies equally to Marxism. Here it is not that one group of comrades is required to study only theory, another group to work only in the field. Comrades who work in the localities, who are engaged in fieldwork, should not work blindly but while applying the theory in practice they should ascertain whether or not it is correct and whether or not they are helping to advance theory. And those who are engaged in theoretical work in the main, who may be engaging their brain in theory, should also be mindful to check whether or not their theoretical pursuit is helping to guide practice in life, that is, whether it is acting as guiding principle in reality. If not, the whole exercise is frittering out as sheer wastage of time and energy. Theory and practice must be integrated constantly. What I am trying to emphasize is that theory must find itself realized through a conscious process in what we call practical movement. Again while conducting what we call theoretical movement, all must be duly alert to see that correctness of it is getting realized in practice, that is, in real terms theory is guiding practice. What we commonly call theory, I prefer to call it subjective practice. And what we commonly call practice, I prefer to call it objective practice. That is, subjective practice and objective practice together constitute the category of human practice in totality. Subjective practice, that is, theory and objective practice, or activity — though the way of pursuing them is different — both are human practice. Unless we understand the issue in this way the danger of committing error looms large. People who approach this question of theory and practice rather mechanically are sometimes heard to remark about our party: ‘You are theoretically correct, but evidently in the sphere of practice you are found to be wanting.’ These people mean to say that the SUCI is theoretically correct but not so in the field of practice. If one accepts this specious logic then what follows is that other parties are theoretically wrong but even so they are correct in practice! Only those could indulge in such argumentation whose realization of Marxism is flawed, who, in other words, practise something else in the name of Marxism. Because, a theory

which is not a product of struggle, verification and practice, how can it be regarded as a correct theory? It cannot be. To call anything theoretically correct means that applying it in practice does not produce results wholly contradictory. When scientists apply a theory which they consider correct, they take conclusions made from its application to be approximate conclusions, meaning thereby that the results obtained from application may vary within certain limits but the same do not altogether contradict the expected results, provided of course other factors or conditions do not differ. It is for this that I was saying that a theory is correct but practice is wrong – it can never be like that. This is because a correct theory stands upon successful verification on the touchstone of objective practice.

I have noted that even after all such discussions some questions often linger in the minds of some comrades. They hold: ‘Our theory is correct, no question about it. But unless something is wrong with our practice, why is our organizational progress and advancement not up to the mark? Why can’t we progress to the extent we hoped?’ Actually, they also mean to say that our practice is wrong. They should understand that these talks really do not make any sense. Actually it has to be examined whether there are lapses and shortcomings in our effort to build party workers in every way to make them capable of applying the theory correctly. Stalin said for this that it does not suffice that the political line is correct, you have to check whether this political line is being correctly applied in practice in the face of all odds and adversities. It may often happen that we have not been able to achieve success or progress in the expected measure because we are yet to attain the strength which is required to tackle the counterforce or the adverse situation. Of course, this does not mean that we may as well sit idle, making a plea of adversities of the situation. This is not the revolutionary outlook. We should constantly examine on the other hand whether we are fully utilizing all the possibilities opening up before the party organization in a given situation and tackle whatever adversities be there. We must always look into it and be on our guard that there are no lapses and shortcomings in our effort in this regard. This is the correct revolutionary outlook. There must not be any lacunae here. If we hold adversity of the situation responsible for all our failings, if that is the outlook swamping us, we had better not take to this path. The history of successful revolution in every country furnishes the lesson that revolution in these countries could be led to victory only by overcoming many failures, confronting many a twist and turn and countering so many adversities.

## Marxist philosophy — history of its emergence

In the context of discussing the Marxist philosophy I had better touch upon here, even if briefly, the historical role that the thoughts of Hegel and Feuerbach played to prepare the ground for emergence of the thoughts or the philosophy of Marx. Hegel was first, we may say, to expound the dialectical law or the theory of contradiction. He was the first in the world of philosophy who established by elaborate analysis that everything is guided by three principles of dialectics, not only in nature or the material world but also in life and society. Hegel gave an interpretation of this phenomenon of universal change in his own way as cosmic evolution in which every entity or every phenomenon is in a process of coming into being and going out of being. All this notwithstanding, ultimately it follows from the interpretation he offered that this material world or everything we come across is the dialectical expression of the Absolute Idea. Which means, everything we perceive through the sense organs — the objective reality, or, say, human society, for instance, all this, Hegel asserted was the dialectical expression of the Absolute Idea. Explaining his view Hegel also affirmed: “All that is real is rational.” This interpretation of Hegel’s gave rise to certain questions. For instance, if everything that is real is rational, then an act of theft should also be reckoned a rational act. Also, it had to be conceded that an act of theft too is a dialectical expression of the Absolute Idea. In that event, punishment cannot be meted out to a thief. Hegel retorted, these were misconstructions leveled against him. But his protest notwithstanding, these are conclusions which necessarily follow as logical corollary of his enunciation<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, as the exponent of the Absolute Idea he became a supporter of the Prussian absolute state. Even though a dialectician, Hegel turned into an advocate of the absolute idea. This Hegelian conception of the Absolute Idea is somewhat akin to the conception of Vedanta of our country. It differs from Vedanta because Hegel expounded the dialectical law and it is clear from his discourse that the material world is ever in a state of flux. But *Brahma* in Vedanta who is without form, without attributes and is ever absorbed in profound peace cannot be understood. It is not clear from Vedanta, nor from Sankhya and other such philosophical systems, how change takes place in the material world. This lacuna is not there in the Hegelian dialectics. Change is explained here as taking place through contradiction and conflict between thesis and anti-thesis — these ideas are all contained in Hegel’s discourse.



Any way, among the pupils of Hegel there was a group who could not accept such propositions concerning the Absolute Idea. They were called the left Hegelians. Feuerbach was a pupil of Hegel who, unable to accede to the reasoning of Hegel, argued that the whole trouble had its roots in the Absolute Idea. What is the use of Absolute Idea? It is not established either. So why accept it? There is nothing like the Absolute Idea. And it is nature, the material world which is real. Feuerbach was right on this. But what is idea — which has real existence — and wherefrom it came, how it came — Feuerbach had no explanation for this. The point is : neither Hegel nor Feuerbach had the correct conception of the relation between matter and idea. Feuerbach accepted that the material world is real. But for mankind, ideal, values, sense of justice and injustice, etc. — these are also all real issues. How are these originating and how are they changing? On this question, Feuerbach talked of a kind of absolute human essence. It means, he advocated the idea of immutable humanism. This is the reason why Feuerbach's place in history has later been set apart as a humanist philosopher, not as a dialectical materialist philosopher. Marx and Engels acknowledged with tribute Feuerbach's thoughts as materialist in character. At the same time they pointed out in no unclear terms that on the question of ethics and sense of values, etc., Feuerbach could not keep to this position and for this they justly criticized him. In this context, it should be pointed out that notwithstanding his contribution to dissemination of the humanist ideals, Feuerbach had not been in the same current as Rousseau, Voltaire, Shakespeare, and Goethe.

I want to touch on another issue. Many people consider that mechanical materialism guided the entire period of Renaissance and humanism. We know mechanical materialists are those materialists who do not attach any importance to the role of idea, who do not acknowledge the relative independence of idea. I need to add that not only mechanical materialism but alongside agnosticism also played an important role in the age of Renaissance. The agnosticism sought to base their action on objective laws. So, they drew closer to materialism.

So we see, neither Hegel nor Feuerbach had the correct conception concerning the mutual relation between idea and matter. It is Karl Marx who for the first time correctly showed the mutual relation between idea and matter. He did not merely conclude that the mutual relation between idea and matter is dialectical; he showed that idea is the product arising out of a particular function of matter of special organization. It is Marx who for the first time, and

correctly, showed it is matter that gives birth to mind, and thereby he put Marxism on a strong foundation. So it can be seen that although Hegel developed the theory of dialectics, he upheld the primacy of idea over matter.

He held that Absolute Idea had given birth to matter. But Marx maintained that it is matter which has given birth to idea. Hence, Hegel's theory of dialectics gave rise to dialectical idealism and Marx's theory of dialectics gave rise to dialectical materialism.

### **Certain confusions over relation between idea and matter**

Even after the development of Marxism, confusion continued to confound the Marxist circles, or those known as Marxists, regarding the mutual relation between matter and idea and a few other related issues. On this, I shall refer to a few personalities. For instance, M N Roy of our country began as a Marxist but he could not maintain that position ultimately. He became a radical humanist. But if a single person from this soil were to be named as the one who undertook elaborate theoretical discourses on Marxism at that time it was none but M N Roy. Nobody can deny this. Instead of dwelling at length, I shall make a few points only regarding what I have observed to be the shortcomings and deficiencies in the thoughts of M N Roy in the later period. Firstly, his view was that man appeared with rationality in him; that is, man is originally rational. By pursuing this line of thinking he objectively denied that idea arose from matter and that the mutual relation between matter and idea is one of contradiction. Thereby, with this stand, he actually contradicted science. There are many others among philosophers who also subscribe to such views. I could not agree with them. The question is, how did idea arise in man — what way did it happen? It is known that the material world is constantly coming into contact with the human brain through the sense organs, and idea arises as a consequence of the interactions, conflicts and contradictions that result from it. It is not that man is born with idea. So, to say that man is born with rationality in him clearly connotes that when man is born, he is born with idea. Which means, if it be said that man is originally in possession of rationality, it goes to deny the very process of origin of idea. I know that apart from M N Roy there are some other Marxist philosophers who also believe in this doctrine. The seed of idealism remains inherent in this line of thinking. No way of coming out of it. Secondly, M N Roy meant to say that Marxism is really nothing more than economic determinism. But in reality, this is certainly

not correct. Thinking in this way he has denied the vital fact that Marxism has been proved to be a philosophy appearing through correct grasp and comprehension of all spheres of knowledge. Thirdly, his emphasis on idea amounts to denial of the primacy of matter. Actually, these three aspects which I just mentioned no doubt characterize the structure of thoughts of all humanist philosophers of nineteenth century Europe. Feuerbach, too, could not go beyond its pale ultimately. Rather, in the ideas of M N Roy we find, in the main, a reflection of Feuerbach's thoughts. M N Roy began his political life as a communist, he even played a role for some time in the international communist movement, yet this problem arose with him because he had sidetracked the struggle to acquire communist character. This is doubtless the root cause of the problem with M N Roy. He could not keep to a definite position. Though he started as a communist, at one time he said he had differences, and on that he wrote a book *Our Difference*. Thereafter he said that communism was a dogma. He declared, he was not a Marxist, he was a Marxian. He ended up as a radical humanist.

I have also noticed certain shortcomings in the thinking of Christopher Caudwell who belonged to the Marxist movement and had a good command over science. Caudwell's position was, however, different from M N Roy's. But we are indebted to both of them. Caudwell wrote a book on science under the title *The Crisis in Physics*. Therein we find that although Caudwell maintained a stand in support of Marxism his understanding of the relation between causality and determinism from the standpoint of dialectical materialism has shortcomings. In his several works Caudwell made some fine analyses of science, philosophy, art and literature, though I cannot agree with him on all his analyses. But nonetheless, I must say that the life-struggle of Caudwell has indeed left certain very important lessons to emulate. He laid down his life in the Spanish Civil War against the fascists. Such glorious examples have inspired the communists all over the world.

On Jean Paul Sartre I made a few references early in my discussion. He started as a humanist and was not only an atheist from the beginning, at one stage he even acknowledged dialectical materialism as the only correct philosophy. But at the same time he held that communism is a dogma ; just as Christianity is a dogma, so also communism is another dogma like that.

As I have mentioned earlier, according to Sartre there is no existence of God. Now, as at one time, moral values, sense of justice-injustice, sin and rectitude, all these stemmed from the idea that there is an omnipotent God, therefore, Sartre held that as because there is no God so there exist no *a priori* values, nothing like a universal moral category. From this premise Sartre argued that any talk of moral values for all human beings is an infringement of individual freedom. So he emphasized that man has to choose his own values. Of course, the onus for this choice would also lie with him. And because this choice is absolutely one's individual matter, the individual's freedom is, therefore, absolute. Again, for existence man has of necessity to make some choice, so, considered in this light, his freedom is a kind of condemnation. In an exquisite diction Sartre articulated his idea. He said that man, every individual, is condemned to freedom. Note the beauty of his expression!

Emancipation and development of the individual can come only through emancipation and development of the human society; but Sartre did not view it that way. Freedom of the individual was his sole concern and he fought only for that. Thus he strayed from the correct realization that attainment of individual freedom remains a utopia if one attempts it in separation from society. However, whenever the question of struggle cropped up, Sartre never lagged behind. He was a steadfast fighter against imperialism and joined wholeheartedly with the French resistance movement during the Second World War. At the same time, Sartre's contention was that religious priests, the humanists, and also the communists, had all put curbs on the freedom of the individual. He completely failed to realize that all these ideas of his were an outcome of the conflict between social thoughts and his own self-entity — sort of a byproduct. If this point is not understood, then the struggle for individual freedom whose cause he champions would itself suffer. In fact, failing to grasp the dialectical relation between matter and idea, and failing to decide his own class position in the context of the ongoing contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, Sartre stands in between. He is neither a humanist nor a communist — he is an existentialist.

Earlier I had referred to Bertrand Russell along with Sartre. I feel, I should make a little more elaboration on Russell. In his later years Russell played a leading role in the global anti-imperialist struggle. He took a very bold stand against the war machinations of the imperialists, and in his later years this once-diehard anti-Marxist came close to the socialist in camp and the

liberation struggles of peoples of the world by taking an active role in the struggle against imperialism, in the anti-nuclear war movement, and the like. Yet, in his philosophical thoughts, he could not become a dialectical materialist ; he remained, as he admitted himself, an analytic empiricist.

### **Marxism, a science on its own**

In the beginning of this discussion I pointed out that the question of priority between matter and the mind which for ages remained a subject matter of debate in the realm of philosophy has been settled long back. And I have discussed in more or less elaborate terms that the mind is a product of matter itself and that there is no supra-matter entity in this world, or any entity independent of matter. But there are many other aspects which should be clear to us in order that we have a thorough grasp of Marxism or dialectical materialism. I discussed some of them earlier in other schools of politics. Even so, I feel I should enter into a fresh discussion not only for the benefit of those comrades who have lately joined the party but of the old comrades too. Remember that Marxism is the only philosophy which can claim the status of science. It is not merely a coordination of different disciplines of science; in itself it is science. What kind of science is it? Speaking in general terms what do we mean by science? Chemistry, physics, mathematics, biology – these are disciplines generally regarded as science. The various properties of matter are all interrelated with one another in varying measures. But to study in detail the different domains or aspects and properties of the material world scientists formally recognize several branches within the overall sphere of science. This is a division just for critical observation, investigation and understanding, and for the sake of carrying out practical activity. What is the function or scope of, say, chemistry? The study of the chemical properties of matter or substance in detail and the specific study of the laws which govern chemical reactions between elements or their compounds come under a particular branch which is known as chemistry. Similarly, physics is the branch in which the physical properties of matter in all its different forms, their interactions, and the laws that govern the changes in this domain are studied. Similar is the case with mathematics. Indeed, many people fail to understand what kind of science mathematics is. Let me try to explain it with the help of an illustration. In chemistry we consider 92 natural chemical elements. All substances are made of these chemical elements, and chemical compositions are expressed in terms of these elements. Similarly, in mathematics,

all the numbers are generally written using the ten digits — 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0. In this sense, these ten digits are the elements to constitute all numbers in mathematics — the basic ingredients of mathematics. Putting these digits in different positions in a specific orderly fashion, we can express all numbers. Again, when we put in various numbers in four basic operations — addition, subtraction, multiplication and division — we arrive at different results. In fact, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are means to perform different operations of mathematics. Remember, in everyday life in the process of using different concrete material entities that are produced and out of the necessity to measure concrete matter, the concept of number has arisen through abstraction. Building on this, all the different mathematical operations, procedures and concepts have grown and developed. That is to say, mathematics too has a material basis. You know as well, other than arithmetic, there are algebra, geometry, trigonometry, differential and integral calculus, and many more in mathematics. All these operations or processes of mathematics are either particular types of analysis or are generalizations. These are based on inductive and deductive methods of logic — from particular to general, and from general to particular. Like the way the laws of other different disciplines of science have been derived through generalization of particular findings or observations, so also in mathematics all theorems or formulations have been arrived at through the process of generalization from particulars. In every discipline of science, in each of its domains, properties or attributes of matter in particular forms are investigated, analysed, and the general relations between them determined. From this we arrive at the ideas and the concepts of matter. To arrive at these general conclusions or truths on matter, the methods, theorems and concepts of mathematics are employed. So I say, this application or applicability of the methods, theorems, and concepts of mathematics in different domains of science clearly bring out the objective order in the material world — or, in that sense, the mathematical features or general orderliness of matter. The function of mathematics is to study the features of matter in abstraction, stripped of concrete particularities and study its governing laws. For this, mathematics too is a science, a science which has developed in keeping with the advent and development of different branches of science centring round production. You should also remember alongside, the concepts and conclusions of mathematics — as they develop through generalization in abstraction involving a specific mental function in response to interaction of the material world with the human brain and in pursuit of the methods of formal logic — when applied conversely to concrete phenomena

of the material world, each and every mathematical conclusion may not correspond to the objective reality. While it is true that mathematics has developed on the material base, it shall not be reckoned to mean that the material world follows in the footsteps of mathematics as its corollary. Mathematics has instead its task to reflect the object reality correctly and comprehensively, that is, to reveal the objective order of the material world.

In the same way, biology is also a discipline of science. These apart, these days social science and economics are also reckoned as science. The practice still persists in our country to consider political science, social science and economics as ‘arts’ subjects. In the modern world, in many other countries nowadays they are considered science subjects. In our country, there is now an initiative to give economics the status of science, but it appears, hardly any change in outlook has occurred. What do these subjects study? The object is to study the particular set of laws which govern the specific phenomena of the given particular domain and the causality relations in that domain. Thus the specific phenomena of a specific particular domain are governed by a specific set of laws, and all these laws are woven together to form the concept of the entire universe, the concept of the material world as a system of discipline.

Scientists emphasize that all the branches of science are interrelated. How are they interrelated? Under which basic principle or general law are they mutually related? Also, naturally, the question took shape: ‘Is there a science to address this general law or basic principle?’ Academic establishments in different countries of the capitalist world would answer it in the negative. They have their metaphysics or philosophical theory of knowledge as the instrument at hand with which they seek to keep science under control. They have metaphysics but they do not have in their hands the science with the help of which one can unravel the mutual relation of all the different disciplines of science. At a definite historical stage, when the working class began its struggle for emancipation against the bourgeois class centring round the contradiction between labour and capital, and when the different branches of science had reached a definite stage of development, did this science emerge by coordinating, integrating and generalizing the particular truths of all the branches of science. Dialectical materialism is this science. It is that science which studies the general laws that govern and interrelate the particular laws revealed by the activities of the particular branches of science. So dialectical materialism or Marxism is a full-fledged and comprehensive science. Marxism, therefore, cannot close its eyes

on the new experimental findings and developments in any of the different branches of science. There is no way Marxism can refuse to recognize them, bypass them, or explain them away by invocation of fanciful theories. Hence, Marxism is the only philosophy which has developed on the foundation of science and is developing continuously along with the progress of science. In turn, it is influencing and helping science to advance. In Marxism, for the first time, therefore, humanity found a science which considered and integrated all the different branches of science in their mutual conflict and contradiction.

### **Marxism, the philosophy of emancipation of humanity**

We must understand also clearly that it is the strong urge for emancipation of the working class that worked behind the emergence of Marxism. It is in this sense that Marxism is generally regarded as the philosophy of the working class. But to regard Marxism as the working class philosophy only in this commonplace sense would be too erroneous and would create a dangerous situation. Why so? Because, if Marxism is regarded as the working class philosophy in the commonplace sense, it will inevitably bring on the question whether Marxism or dialectical materialism will not lose all its validity when in the future the classless social system will be established, when class division will be eliminated and the state will wither away. My objection arises from this. Because, as the scientific philosophy Marxism will remain valid then also. Hence I object to the characterization of Marxism as working class philosophy in the commonplace sense. Marxism should be regarded as a methodology governing the process of thinking and analysis. It is characterized as working class philosophy because it reflects the class aspiration of the proletariat in class divided society. But it is also true that today the question of emancipation of the proletariat and of mankind as a whole has historically merged into one and the same. For this reason, Marxism is the philosophy of emancipation of humankind also.

### **Certain philosophical confusions concerning matter**

You can see, time and again a question has been doing the round in discussions on science and philosophy. This question is, what is the origin of matter, matter which makes up the world — the material world we see around us? As I understand it, for various reasons, this question is sure to come up time and again in the future as well, cycling back and forth. You know, a time



was when, in the long quest of splitting matter further and further, that is, to think out what was the ultimate smallest particle of matter, it had been concluded that careful study of chemical reactions leads to the hypothesis that the atom is the smallest particle of matter which takes part in chemical reactions as the ultimate indivisible entity. So it comes out that each and every substance is made up of atoms. Thus, the quest of resolving the question of how matter is made up reached a dead end at that stage; it was found that the atom cannot be split any further. This gave rise to the notion that atom is the smallest and original particle of matter and led many to hammer that the atom is indivisible or unbreakable, since it cannot be split any further. So, they claimed, the atom is the primary constituent, the fundamental bit with which the whole universe has come to be built up. They held, the atom is the original entity. Thus, at the time the atom came to be reckoned as immutable and eternal. Idealist philosophers found in the atom's indivisibility corroboration of their idea of the eternal, the absolute. The march of science had not, however, stopped there. Today, even school level students know that the atom has been split into very many minute particles, namely electron, proton, neutron, and a host of others. Needless to say, this discovery severely shook the idealist philosophy, and modern science has had to give up the idea of the fundamental particle. Instead, any microparticle is considered to be a composite of so many dynamic and minute particles. These minute subatomic particles are in constant tussle internally resulting in motion. All these together give rise to motion of matter as its mode of existence. With the discovery of these extremely minute particles within the atom, which in many cases are mutually transmutable, it is no longer possible to deny that, strictly, no such thing as the fundamental particle exists. However minute and subtle, each particle is an assembly of some other minute particles. If you think of the structure of a particle, you will find that within it exist numerous dynamic minute particles. There is an endless chain and no end to dividing particles further and still further. That is to say, there is no end to the process of transmutation of particles from one into another. We should realize, a concrete particular matter has its beginning, a concrete particular matter has its end. But science today admits of no absolute beginning or a particular end of all together. At the moment I am not entering into a discussion on the very many important aspects of the nature and characteristics of the electron and other subatomic particles in the context of the major achievements of modern science. I will discuss them later.

I wish to discuss now a few other important issues in this connection. We know, matter exists in motion. On the cause of motion of matter or the origin of motion, it was the idea in Newton's time that the cause of motion of matter is external. In the context of development of science at that time, Newton looked at the question in this way. Suppose a stone is thrown. The stone falls at a distance, depending upon the force applied in throwing it. The fact that the stone flew over some distance could not be due to any force acting from within. It happened so because an external force was applied on it to throw it out. So the inference was that the cause of motion of matter is external. Or, consider a man pushes the trigger of a rifle, consequently a bullet flashes out from it. So it was reasoned that these inert bodies were set in motion due to the action of a force applied to them from outside. If never a force were applied, the matter in question would ever be in absolute rest. Based on all these the concept grew in Newtonian mechanics that force in an infinite degree was externally applied to the whole universe, as a result of which the universe has always been in a state of motion and will remain so. Science in those days had no satisfactory answer to the question of who applied this force and how. Newton tried to explain it as due to a first impulse or a prime mover. But later, when it was found that the atom could be split into subatomic particles —which fact I just discussed – and then with the discovery of the particle theory based on this and the appearance of new ideas of space, time and gravity due to the discovery of Einstein's Theory of Relativity, it became amply clear that the basic cause of motion is internal, not external. Earlier to this, it had been known to science that the nature and magnitude of the tussle among the atoms or molecules within a body, high or low at any given instant, depends upon the specific type of the state of the body, upon the state of aggregation of its constituent finer particles. When matter is in the gaseous state, the tussle is quite intense. It is less so when it is in the liquid state; and in the solid state the atoms or molecules are still in motion, but it is far less than in the gaseous and liquid states. In a reverse way, when a solid is transformed into a liquid and then into a gas the tussle goes on increasing many times. This is one aspect.

There is another aspect of deep relevance here. Earlier it was the practice in science to recognize two basic divisions, namely, matter and energy, in order to denote substance and its form and energy. Now it is looked at in a different way, the division now is into mass and energy — correctly at that. Strictly, mass and energy are the different forms of existence of matter. Energy is one form of matter, another form is mass. We just saw that the basic cause of motion

of matter is internal and not external, but that is not enough for fuller comprehension. Science and Marxism explain that motion is the mode of existence of matter. Matter exists, means matter exists in motion. Hence it is said that motion is the mode of existence of matter. In other words, matter without motion does not and cannot exist.

Modern science sets forth very clearly and beyond all doubt the correct understanding on these questions. But we know that long before, stripping Hegel's dialectical theory of its idealist veil, Marx showed that in every material entity there are mutually opposite forces, opposite tendencies in constant contradiction and unity – this is called internal contradiction in matter. Again, every particular material entity is interrelated with every other material entity of the world external to it through a process of contradiction and unity which is its external contradiction. These two contradictions together are the cause of motion. Between the internal and external contradictions, however, the internal contradiction is the basic cause of motion. As I already pointed out, later scientific discoveries confirmed these fundamental conclusions of Marxism.

### **Correct conception of space-time**

Relating to this issue a comrade has asked to know whether the idea as appearing in some recent Soviet publications that motion, time and space are all forms of existence of matter is right or wrong. Just now I explained that motion is the mode of existence of matter. Matter means matter in motion. There is no matter without motion, there cannot be any. So it is not correct to say that motion is a form of existence of matter. On this, I dwelt upon at some length in some previous schools. The moot point is, space and time are inalienably linked with being or matter in existence. Matter exists, means it exists in space and time. Existence of matter, or being, cannot be conceived in separation from space and time. Conversely, conceiving space and time in separation from matter is an exercise in absurdity. There is nothing like an absolute vacuum. In what we call cosmic void, there too matter exists in the form of radiation and extremely rarified gases and dusts. Space and time are conditions of existence of matter. To reiterate the point, matter exists means it exists in duration of time and is undergoing changes. Again, matter exists, means it exists in extension of space and in a state of motion. So neither time nor space can be alienated from matter or being. Hence the understanding should be that matter exists

means it exists in temporal duration and in spatial extension. This is the condition of its existence. Which is to say, space and time are indispensable conditions of existence of matter.<sup>4</sup>

Also important to remember is that, like every other general principle or basic concept of science and philosophy, the understanding of the concepts of space-time are not static or immutable — it is not a concept that is independent of the concrete character of the concrete material domain. The specific concrete character and significance of space-time in the Newtonian domain is different from the specific concrete character and significance of space-time holding in the case of relativistic motion, and also from the characteristics of the domain of micro-particles obeying the quantum mechanical laws.

Further, in modern science space and time are conceived in union, with the concept of space-time continuum arising on its basis, and space-time equations are used in the study of motion of matter. On this stands the manifold of four-dimensional geometry. In Euclidean geometry, a straight line can be obtained by joining any two points. But we cannot do with this Euclidean geometry in space science or cosmology, the science that studies the universe as a whole. Such is the distribution of matter in motion in the universe that the space-time has the structure in which any two points joined together may not produce a straight line; it may turn out to be a curved line as well. The conceptions of straight plane, curvature and such like concepts assume so varied and peculiar forms which cannot be handled within the framework of Euclidean geometry. This concept of curved space has brought forth non-Euclidean geometry beyond the pale of Euclidean geometry.

Engineers construct houses or buildings on concepts of three-dimensional geometry and, besides this, of trigonometry. This whole framework stands on the foundation of Euclidean geometry. Whatever may be the limitations, naturally what is being hoped is that science with the help of cosmology will add greater dimension to our present knowledge as many more things will be revealed. Today man has embarked on a voyage to outer space and prolific has been the technological advancement as a result of which the gathering of many more new information on the interstellar space beyond the solar system has been possible. This is how the triumphant march of science is going ahead.

Briefly speaking, from Galileo to Newton, Newton to Einstein — science took these strides on its onward march from stage to stage. And thus shall it continue its march. There is no end to it. Why no end? Because nature, the object of the quest of science, and whose mystery science seeks to unveil, is itself in an endless chain of change and development. There is no end to it, no stop anywhere. Consequently, the quest of science cannot have any point of end or termination. The quest for truth cannot end, too. No end, no stop for it at any point. What we have come to know as truth today will come into contradiction with what will appear as unknown tomorrow. People who assert that there are many things on earth and in the world which are unknowable and we cannot get to know them harbour a wrong notion. Dialectical materialism emphasizes that we can get to know everything. Everything is knowable, but at every point of time something or other remains unknown. We can put it in this way, therefore, that there are many things which we are yet to know, which are unknown to us today. These we shall come to know about — in the course however many other things again will remain to be known. Through this conflict between the known and the yet-unknown we have been advancing.

It is imperative, therefore, that our concept of truth be very clear. At a given time in a concrete situation there can be only one concrete truth. So it is said that truth is concrete, relative, decisive and deep-acting. Put in a different language, truth is inexorable. It may be that regarding this concrete truth, in spite of its being a concrete truth, different individuals may have different perceptions about it. That means, with respect to perception of truth, its understanding or realization, there may be variation from man to man. But that does not alter the correct understanding of truth. Truth remains what it is. On the other hand, our knowledge of concrete truth also undergoes change and development. What we are trying to know is itself changing and developing. Man, the knower, is also changing and developing. Consider, further, in the sphere of science, the instruments which we use to gain knowledge are being constantly improved and developed. There cannot be, therefore, any eternal or absolute knowledge whatsoever. The universe which is the object of our study is infinite itself. Even the concept of infinity cannot remain fixed or static at any point. It is in the process of constant change. In the context of the ongoing change and development of understanding, the concept of infinity at one point of time becomes finite relative to the developed and enriched concept at a later point of time. As a result, it is seen that a contradiction arises between the old concept of infinity-turned-finite in sequel to newer and newer developments and newly unfolded perception of boundlessness of infinity. For

this, I reiterate, knowledge knows no bounds. When the unknown of today will become known tomorrow, there will manifest newer unknowns in their abounding presence before us. Knowledge, therefore, cannot be eternal, nor can truth be eternal or absolute. That is why, truth is not only concrete, truth is also relative. Truth exists in concrete form under concrete conditions and in concrete state. On any one issue, therefore, truth is one, not plural. Not that there is no truth, but that there is no absolute or eternal truth. Truth is what sheds light on our life, arming us with ever newer weapons to wield on our march to scaling newer heights.

### **Idea of eternal truth is utopia**

There is no cause for dismay at the realization that eternal truth is sheer myth. We should be rather glad over it. The idea of eternal truth can only help us excel in inaction. It cannot propel us to action, because it is a fanciful idea, has no punch for action. You will also see, in many spheres in the world of knowledge there is a recurring bid to inculcate that it is not true to say that nothing absolute or original exists. Some people claim, for instance, there are certain essential characteristics or properties of the gene which are immutable and absolute. In support, they cite examples of a few hereditary traits of man. For instance, in families certain hereditary physical resemblance is often found. Also there are diseases known to be hereditary, namely rheumatism, diabetes, and so forth. Citing instances of the colour of the skin and some anatomical features of particular races and tribes, it has also been argued that there are particular races which are original and of pure blood.

I will take up the case of race a little later. The issue of the so-called absolute character of the gene arises, especially taking into account the hereditary traits I just mentioned. No one can deny that it goes against science to claim there is no interaction in the reproductive process of organisms. It is simply unrealistic to think of immutability and unchangeability of the gene amidst the constant and exceedingly complex and delicate interactions of the genetic factor and the environment. If genes are considered immutable, it would not be possible to correctly explain mutation through genetic change and the origin of new species. Modern biology and genetics do not admit of any such notions. Regarding hereditary likeness it can be asked: Is likeness observed in every case? Even where physical resemblance occurs, it is not true that the likeness extends to cover every trait of character.

So nothing can be considered absolute or original in regard to hereditary trait or gene. Genetics has indeed great potential as a branch of science, but there is also a tendency nowadays to make exaggerated claims in the name of genetics. There are many areas in medical science where a lot remains to be known. Researches are going on, for instance, to learn how the liver functions and how through the proper control of it many ailments can be cured. Metabolic diseases are related to the metabolic functions of the human body. But if attempts are made in the name of scientific studies to smuggle in patently anti-science ideas as scientifically established truths, we cannot accept it.

While acknowledging the general understanding of modern science that heredity and environment are mutually related through a complex mechanism of interaction, a group of scientists is highlighting that creativity, intellect and qualities of character of man are controlled by respective particular genes. Some even aver, the aptitude for mathematics is the result of one type of gene, while proficiency in music comes from another type, and so on. Briefly, these scientists consider and preach that the intellectual faculty, emotions and creativity of man are all controlled by one or another specific type of genes. However, modern brain physiology teaches that creativity, emotions, intellect are all primarily related to the specific organization of the human brain, being impossible with the brain organization of other animals. Are we to reckon that particular flairs for creativity flourished at particular stages of history — for example, religious preachers at one stage, musical geniuses at another and great scientists at still another stage — each of these being the result of proliferation of the respective particular gene in a particular period? Is such thinking rational and scientifically valid? So, the conclusion is inescapable that environment, especially social environment, plays a great role. It is in this light that we should understand the relation between heredity and environment, especially the role of social environment for growth and development of man.

Again, we often come across the deep-rooted belief that among the races and tribes there are special ones which are original and have pure blood. Those who are conversant with history and science know that there is no pure or original race. If somebody has a fancy for pure blood he or she must realize that any such thing as unmixed race does not exist. Since the very distant past cross-breeding among races has gone on in a long process of intermixing in the courses of clashes and conflicts among races. None of the races such as the Mongoloid, Pala Alpine,

Australoid and Egyptian is unmixed and original as a race. On the same count pure Aryan blood or original pure Aryan race is a myth. Yet a peculiar trend of thinking is strong in this land which stems from this kind of unhistorical and misconceived notion. It has also subsumed in itself the doctrine of upper and lower caste hierarchy. No words are strong enough to describe the terrible oppression and discrimination which is being perpetrated in the name of caste. We must bear in mind that under the sun nobody is born a *brahmin* or a *sudra*. Everybody is born as a human being. The records of history testify to the inhuman injustice, humiliation and consequent inferiority complex to which the so-called lower caste people or the *sudras* have been condemned under *brahminical* domination since the days of monarchy. This society of ours still carries the curse of casteism mainly because of the weakness of the leadership of our independence movement, for which accomplishment of the essential task of social-cultural movement for democratization of society was neglected and remained unfulfilled. The bourgeois political parties, even the so-called left parties are pandering to the caste, religious and other divisive sentiments to reap parliamentary dividends in their petty, sectarian interests.

Be that as it may, remember that the reason for which there is no eternal truth, for that very same reason there are no eternal principles. But the fact that there are no eternal principles does not mean there are no principles at all. Such thinking is tantamount to abjuring the very concept of principle itself. Whether you are aware of it or not, whether you are conscious of it or not, some kind or other of principle or ideology is governing all our activities, is governing our life. But that ideology also is not static, it changes. This is how Marxism understands it. And that is why Marxism is not a dogma. In this sense Marxist philosophy differs in its basic character from all other philosophies, be it idealist philosophy or any other materialist philosophy. Herein lies the fundamental difference.

### **Concept of matter in modern science**

Earlier I had started off on the matter concept, and said I would take it up later again. Now I wish to discuss certain aspects of it. I referred to the fact that scientists long back succeeded in splitting the atom to obtain a number of extremely fine subatomic particles. For the sake of convenience, I want to confine the discussion to the example of the electron only. At one stage of investigation, a question arose: what is the nature of the electron? Is it particle, or is it wave?



Initially, scientists thought that the electron has particle character. They reached this conclusion based on certain experiments. Louis de Broglie later showed in his hypothesis that the electron has wave character also associated with it. Validity of this conclusion has been established on inferences from experimental studies.

This created a great stir among the scientists. Not only that, referring to this and a few other problems, scientists even started saying that a crisis had been precipitated in physics. Some of them held that the electron is actually particle and wave at the same time, and it depended upon the conditions of experiment how the electron would show up or behave. There is some truth in it, but in my consideration it has shortcomings that prevent a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the electron. Anyway, de Broglie himself presented a solution to the crisis which contributed to later developments in science and also helped resolve other aspects of the so-called crisis. De Broglie showed that not only the electron and other microparticles but even those which we call macrobodies all exist with the particle and the wave characters simultaneously. There is one difference in that, in the case of macrobodies, the particle character dominates, and the wave character becomes so insignificant to become practically non-existent. Whereas, in the case of microparticles both the particle and wave characters are present in equal dominance. These scientific studies provided clarity in one respect at least that matter, in fact, is dialectical unity of mass character and energy character at the same time; dialectical unity of particle aspect and wave aspect at once, what is called wave-particle duality.

Even after this, some serious problems in the spheres of science and philosophy appeared concerning certain issues. Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle is the one which comes uppermost in this context. In this principle Heisenberg showed that the position and momentum of an electron or any microparticle for that matter cannot be measured simultaneously with arbitrary precision. In simple terms, this is usually what Uncertainty Principle or Principle of Indeterminacy states. This is its essence. The greater the precision of measurement of position, the more uncertain becomes the measurement of momentum. Conversely, the greater the precision of measurement of momentum, the more uncertain becomes the measurement of position. It was a basic conception of classical physics that both the position and the momentum of a body could be measured simultaneously with arbitrary precision, and consequently any future position of the body, and so its future path, could be predicted with certainty. But accord-

ing to the quantum theory whose application holds in the world of microparticles, this prediction is not possible with arbitrary precision. Because of this uncertainty in this domain a furore was created over this 'uncertainty'. Still now much confusion persists among scientists and philosophers on this issue and every bit of opportunity is seized upon to unleash tirade against materialism, that is, dialectical materialism or Marxism. I do not see anything in the principle enunciated by Heisenberg which could give a handle to attack dialectical materialism. In the first place, scientists all know that the field under consideration here is one characterized by high sensitivity where constant action-reaction or interaction goes on. Moreover, the problem is not that we cannot get to know anything, neither the position nor the momentum. That is not the thing. It is possible to know both, but it is not possible to simultaneously measure both with arbitrary precision. In this domain or field it is only natural that it should be so, because an extremely subtle, delicate, and exceedingly complex cause-and-effect relation obtains here. The cause for change at every instant itself undergoes change in the process of change. Heisenberg expressed this characterization of motion of the microparticle in the form of a mathematical relation which is not an equation, but is an inequation. The Uncertainty Principle applies in the particular domain of microparticles. But in the domain of macrobodies this principle loses significance. The principle of classical physics takes over in that domain. It is not the point of the Uncertainty Principle that behaviour of microparticles defies any kind of law and that complete chaos or anarchy reigns. The matter is not at all like that. My point is that Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle has no such implication which goes to invalidate the causality principle in the microdomain. Any suggestion or claim to this effect is erroneous and is undoubtedly against science. On the contrary, the causality principle and determinism are very much in force in this domain also, and these concepts have become enriched and more developed here.

### **Concept of probability has freed determinism from pre-determinism**

Other than the Uncertainty Principle there is one area in which scientists have differences in understanding. It concerns the interpretation of the law of probability governing the motion of electrons. Now, as because the law of probability is also a law of science, on this ground some scientists raised the question : has not discovery of the Uncertainty Principle of quantum theory invalidated the earlier concept of determinism by which different changes in nature were explained in a deterministic manner? Which is to say, one counterposes the other, the two are not

mutually conducive. If determinism gets undermined, causality also collapses. The skepticism which surfaced on this issue at that time, to my mind it remains perhaps yet to be resolved in the scientific community. Differences and confusions linger among the scientists on these questions. My understanding is different however. The understanding of determinism in classical mechanics was, in a way, mechanical. In the macroworld, given the position and velocity of a moving body at an instant, it is possible to predict from calculations when and where the body will move to. In other words, the previous state of a body determines its present state. And again that previous state has been determined by a still earlier state. The problem had been viewed in these terms, and since the time of Galileo and Newton it has been viewed like this. Observation was found to be in agreement with prediction from calculations. From this, formal reasoning leads to the conclusion that an event or phenomenon is determined since before its incidence, that is to say, each and every event is predetermined. It shows, this understanding of determinism is distinctly predisposed to predeterminism.

My understanding is that when the position of an electron is described in terms of the law of probability, that means its probable position, not a definite position in terms of classical physics. That is, the probable position of an electron within definite contours is meant, instead of position at a definite point in space. So it cannot be said that a conclusion from application of the probability law is no conclusion at all. The conclusion is essentially one of approximation in character, the problem being viewed in terms of definite probability. A probability-based conclusion is also a particular conclusion in the sense that it is a logical and rational conclusion based on probability. Similarly, a probability-based truth is also a truth. We cannot say that it is no truth at all. This is one aspect of the problem.

Earlier I have said, the prevalent conception of determinism suffered from a mechanical bias. Strictly, this conception of determinism was overshadowed by predeterminism. It induced many people to reckon determinism as meaning fatalism. I hold, therefore, it is not true that the concept of probability in modern science, as for example in the instance of Uncertainty Principle, or for the other many issues concerning the microparticle, has undermined determinism or done away with causality. The correct understanding is that this law of probability has freed determinism from the preconception of predeterminism to set it up on a stronger foundation. Where change in the material world involves an inter-dialectics of action-reaction-interaction,

being in a multiplicity of conflicts, and there is contradiction within contradiction, the concerned phenomena have each to be analysed in the light of science and dialectical materialism. Where there is multiplicity of forces within a phenomenon or an entity and so change occurs through a complex of action-reaction-interactions, in many cases it may not be possible to predict the future state or condition likely to result from change. But the change at every instant is always law-governed. Denial of causality and determinism, therefore, goes against the basic tenets of science. It should be understood that the new and enriched conception of determinism is not a mechanical one; it has rather been freed from the influence of predeterminism and fatalism.

### **Application of theory of contradiction and probability in revolutionary life**

I would ask you now to consider the matter from another angle. It does not relate to natural science, nor does it come under the issues I discussed so long. But there is some relevance and I am taking it up for its deeper understanding. I am going to speak about it keeping in mind the question of development of the party leaders and cadres. We have the experience that out of a number of workers who join the party and start working together some comrades take on increasingly greater responsibilities and build themselves as good workers, that is, as good communists. Others might have started off on a high key, but later they fell behind, making compromises in life-struggle consciously or unconsciously. To answer how these differences come about we ordinarily say that it is the difference in the method of struggle of the two groups of comrades that caused such widely differing outcomes. There is no basic flaw in this understanding. But if you do analyse a bit more critically, it will be clear that even as a comrade struggles every moment he also makes compromises at the same time. That is to say, the struggle and compromise go on together in the recess of mind in a very delicate complex. Because of the exceedingly complex operation of this process, such very many outcomes happen in the contradictions and conflicts in the varied complexity of life, which no one can foretell. So, can we predict how a comrade will turn out to be in the future even when many others entertain a high opinion about his proficiency as a party worker? We can, and yet we cannot. Then why do we say that a communist has to pass the test till the day of his demise? We say this because no test is the final test in life. He who successfully passes a test today may fail in another test in future. For such common turns of events can we say that there is no law governing these changes or developments? It is certainly not correct to affirm so. On the other hand, can we definitely

predict with certainty what shall be the turn in development of a comrade just because it is law governed? Determinism works no doubt, but there is no predeterminism or fatalism here. Rather while talking of development in the life-struggle of a comrade we can only speak about a probable outcome. That is, we can say only what is probable. But probable does not mean that this or that outcome in his or her case is unexceptionable or inevitable or certain. People who accuse the Marxist conception of determinism of so-called fallacy of reasoning and make this a plea for rejecting not only determinism but also Marxism on flimsy grounds should try to comprehend determinism anew in the light of the new discoveries in science.

### **‘Plurality of causes’ — a mistaken notion**

Other than determinism, plurality of causes is one major question which the idealists often take to for assailing Marxism in an effort to demolish it. Their reasoning is that many a different cause may produce but the same event or phenomenon. They think, it is wrong to hold that a singular cause works behind an event. True, in reference to particular events, we often hear people talk loosely or in a very general sense that many a different cause may have brought about a particular occurrence. That is, a number of causes acted to bring about the particular incident. But it is one thing to speak about it loosely but quite a different thing to realize the philosophical implication of what is being said. When we say loosely that a particular event owed its happening to a number of causes, the term cause employed here should be understood to mean a factor or a condition. It has nothing to do with the notion of the plurality of causes.

But when we are examining a question on the philosophical plane, we cannot take it in its commonplace sense or usage. We have just seen, while discussing determinism, that when multiple possibilities exist at a point in the course of change in any field, we cannot really predict which way development will ultimately mature. Suppose A is an entity and it has, before it in its course of change at a specific stage, several alternative possibilities for change to — say, to B, C, D, E, and so forth — we cannot say beforehand whereto it will go. But we can say definitively that whatever the change — A to B, or A to C, or A to D, etc. — the change takes place deterministically, being law-governed. It is the multiplicity of conflicts which works in the course of any process of change, not multiplicity of causes. Whatever the eventuality, a particular event has a particular cause behind it.

There is a concept in philosophy bearing on this question, which states that cause is the immediate antecedent of effect. That is, the interplay or interaction maturing into a situation and inducing an event to happen. When the situation or condition for a change matures in the course of action-reaction-interaction of multiple factors or conditions, that is, when the appropriate condition matures for a particular change to happen, it becomes the immediate antecedent. The instant the immediate antecedent takes shape or matures, the effect ensues. This is the correct understanding.

Some people smell regimentation in the refutation of the plurality of causes, as if the refutation is designed to curb democratic rights, or to suppress the right of free expression. No, no question whatever of denying the importance and necessity of polemics or exchange of views to arrive at truth. But, conversely, can we claim that all the diverse views, even wholly contradictory views are correct and true at the same time? Science cannot just admit this proposition. Again while being engaged in finding out the correct path for emancipation from the yoke of capitalist exploitation if we, moving under the erroneous concept of plurality of causes, hold that we can achieve emancipation by taking recourse to any of two courses – the course of class collaboration or that of class struggle — then it must be concluded that wittingly or unwittingly, it is nothing but an indulgence in worst trickery to deceive and hoodwink the people. Further, those who seek to reject forthwith as a Marxist dogma the truth that capitalism is the root cause of all the present economic, political, social and cultural problems afflicting our country, and go on reasoning that multiplicity of causes is at work behind the present problems, are all actually denying the burning truth that it is capitalism which is breeding this multiplicity of factors, that capitalism is the immediate antecedent of all these problems today.

So the point is that change occurs in the material world, including in the organic world, only when the condition conducive to change is created. The necessity which science or Marxism speaks about in this connection is the necessity or urge that works behind all motion, all coming-into-being. In the absence of necessity nothing comes into being. Every entity, every development, every motion, every law and every process has its necessity that belongs to it in the natural course, which course indicates its necessity. Governed by law, in the process of operation of law, and through interaction of cause-effect relations, the necessity that arises is called true necessity. Necessity as a term may be talked about and used in this sense, that is, in the sense of

necessity arising from a specific particular cause-effect relation in a specific particular domain or situation. But necessity as a conception is not applicable in a universal sense, that is, in reference to the universe as a whole in its general connection. It means, behind every happening there is a particular causal necessity. But there is no universal singular causal necessity for the world as a whole, for the whole universe. If we understand necessity in the sense of singular universal necessity, we will slip into mysticism, we will stray into idealism.

### **Freedom is recognition of necessity**

The implication of necessity goes deep when Hegel says: “Freedom is the recognition of necessity.” By freedom we understand man’s right to purposeful free development of man. Purposeless action in the name of development is the other name of indulgence in undisciplined, reckless activity. One is truly free, or truly liberated only when one truly realizes what freedom really means and one puts one’s realization consciously into practice. For this, attainment of freedom means establishing control over self and over the external world on the correct understanding of the laws of change of the material world, this control being established through knowledge that is derived from the correct understanding of necessity. Indeed, it is a beautiful expression of Hegel’s — freedom is the recognition of necessity — truly superb. What Hegel wanted to impress is that if there is a gap between the level of man’s realization of the laws of change of the material world and the actual laws of change, then invariably there develops a blind understanding of necessity. Indeed, I have seen how necessity has been used in later times in a petty sense which has nothing to do with the Hegelian conception of necessity. I have often pointed out earlier that these days many people interpret necessity in a very narrow sense, which has bred the idea of pragmatism. You may sometimes come across people who, being unable to prove with arguments the existence of God, resort to saying that we may not go into arguments over existence of God, but even then belief in God is a necessity. For the sake of order in society and conducting society on the basis of principles, belief and trust in God is a necessity. This is not the kind of necessity I am speaking about. These arguments stem from the pragmatic need to sustain belief in God. There are many who would even glorify pragmatism. The fact is, what we call opportunism in politics is called pragmatism in philosophy. In reality, pragmatism is negation of the course of social progress, a vulgar and abominable kind of opportunism in the narrow and immediate interest of individuals or groups. It is truly anti-Marxist in character.

## **Onward and upward development**

This point brings on yet another question for discussion. On the question of change or development certain other issues cropped up later. For instance, the concept of onward and upward development. The very concept of onward and upward development has developed in order to uphold the truth that in the course of change in the material world the same phenomenon is not repeated, does not come in cycles, which means that in the course of change we may reach from one stage to progressively higher stages, but in the process of change the old thing is not repeated. We know, every particular material entity has an origin, its course of development, and its elimination or end in that course. Every particular material entity has a beginning and an end of it. And this concept of beginning and end is also relative. It means, we can conceive of a beginning and an end in reference to a particular material entity or phenomenon. Similarly, we can quite easily get at the idea of the front or the back of a particular person in reference to his particular position and orientation. But it is wholly unscientific to entertain the question of beginning and end, or of front and rear of the material world as a whole. That is, to suggest that the material world as a whole has an origin and an end is to indulge in a sort of thinking which goes against science. It does not reflect the correct understanding of reality.

In the parlance of natural science this is termed change. Either way, this change is endless or infinite. There are many who claim that consciousness has got a role in the process of change ; however, I am not in agreement with this view. Again, some others hold that in the sphere of natural science there is pure and simple change, but in the sphere of social science whose focal point is man, the role of consciousness is invariably involved, there the motion is onward and upward. With this view too I do not agree. The point to understand is that this onward and upward development has universality but that is only with respect to concrete reality of matter. It relates to concrete specified onward and upward development of every entity, every phenomenon, every attribute — each in its concrete specific course. Generalizing upon in abstraction the particular specific developments of all the different particular specific entities, phenomena and attribute, we arrive at a generalized nature, in abstraction, of change or motion taking place constantly in every instance — this we term onward and upward development in the parlance of philosophy. But it will be grossly erroneous to consider the entire gamut of changes or motions of the whole material world together as a specific course of development and call it



onward and upward development. The error consists in the fact that in that event a purpose or a particular motive will be implanted into it. Which is to say, it will be assumed then that a certain consciousness, a certain purpose is at work at the root of the entire cosmic evolution; it is directing onward and upward development in accord with a specific law. In that case, even if we get to understand mutual interaction of matter and idea, we will not get at the understanding of priority. We will fail to realize what comes first and what comes later. We will fail to realize that matter is the origin of idea, idea arises out of matter, matter is primary and idea secondary. It is on this relation of matter and idea that the interactions between the two take place, one influencing the other. Failing this, we will lose our bearing and slip into idealism. In that case the question of origin of matter will crop up time and again. For this, we cannot afford anyway to grasp the issue of onward and upward development in this way.

In this connection I want to touch upon another issue. If we talk of the developing universe, the conception implied is all right. The understanding is that there are many things which did not exist previously but these have appeared new in the course of change. 'Developing universe' — it means precisely this. But the idea inherent in the talks of expanding universe is untenable, because it automatically follows that the universe was smaller earlier than it is now, and if we get back into the past successively it would be smaller and smaller still, and the question of the origin of the universe will inevitably arise. This runs counter to the basic tenets of science and hence of dialectical materialism.

It takes us to yet another issue. It concerns the objective law, as for example, the law of social development, such laws can neither be created, nor destroyed. In this ongoing process of change a particular law may be found to have become inoperative and a new law appears. An objective law cannot be destroyed or abolished. It comes into operation in a given condition and goes out of operation in another condition, being replaced by another law. It goes out of the scene yielding place to a different law. We have to clearly understand and constantly keep in mind that the universe, the whole world, or, say, our society, or the minutest of particles is not fixed or static at a place or time. All this is in constant flux. The ideals of a society, the norms, the values, the principles, the practices — everything is changing constantly. What is the cause of this change? Dialectical materialism affirms that everything has its internal contradiction as also its external contradiction, and the internal and external contradiction together are the cause of change. The

forces in contradiction can be broadly divided into two. One is the thesis, the other is its anti-thesis. One acts in a way to retain the existing structure or entity, the other acts in a way to break up the existing structure and to come out of it.

### **Internal contradiction is the basis of change, external contradiction influencing it**

On the theory of contradiction there is a beautiful exposition by Mao Zedong. He explained that the basic cause of change is the internal contradiction, and the external contradiction influences it. So the metaphysical concept that external force imparts motion to matter is wrong. There is nothing as absolute rest. Everything is in motion. External force tends to change the state of motion. Earlier in the discussion on science, we learned that the basic cause of motion is internal, it is not external. The old concept stemming from the Newtonian mechanics has changed.

I am giving you some examples to explain the roles of the internal and external contradiction. Consider the instance of the carbide gas lamp. The lamp cannot be lighted except with a matchstick or some such device. Maybe from this one will reason that since the lamp cannot be lit without a matchstick or some such thing, then why should we not regard the external contradiction as the basic cause of change here. This reasoning does not hold because if there is no carbide gas or if any combustible material is lacking then no numbers of matchsticks can light up the lamp. So, evidently, the basic cause of change is internal contradiction.

Also, concerning the transformation of society, consider the Marxist teaching that revolution in any country cannot be imported, nor exported. Proper understanding of the truth that the internal contradiction is the basic cause of change will convince everyone how deep-going is the truth of this teaching. If in any country the internal situation conducive to revolution has not developed, has not matured, then no matter the efforts put in by any revolutionary force from outside, revolution will not materialize here. The impact of a revolutionary struggle outside can certainly help and benefit the revolutionary struggle within a country but by no means can it bring about the revolution within the country in question. For this reason, it is affirmed that unless the internal revolutionary condition in any country has matured revolution will not materialize there. For revolution to achieve success the requisite objective and subjective conditions must both mature.

Some raise the question why actually the external conditions should not be regarded as the basic cause of change, because it is indeed our experience that a comrade after joining the party and coming in contact with a leader becomes radically transformed. His entire being becomes transformed. He becomes a good party worker and engages in the struggle to become an even better worker, a communist worth the name. After such experiences would it be wrong to claim that the external contradiction has acted in this case as the basic cause of change? Actually, uncritical and superficial consideration is likely to create such misconceived notions in many people. But it is necessary to probe deeper to get at the correct understanding. The phenomenon that a comrade became radically transformed after coming in contact with a leader could happen in the case of only that party worker in whom the possibility for it had been ripe, or the necessary condition for it had matured. Short of this possibility or the necessary element, the transformation could not have come about. If the conducive element itself is absent, can change be effected at all from outside? No, it cannot be. We should note, it is true that the external force has played a significant role in developing the internal force to the nodal point. But unless the comrade concerned has the possibility developed within him, unless that comrade has conducted his own conducive struggle, no effort by the leader would have succeeded. When the change occurs the comrade becomes transformed because of the change in the internal contradiction itself. It means, the external contradiction has operated through the process of bringing about change in the internal contradiction.

Consider the question from another angle. There are many other comrades who have come in contact with the leader and many of them have received direct help and assistance from him. The impact of the leader has had deep effects on some comrades, but not on others. Why did it happen? It happened because in the case of the former category of comrades their internal struggle made it possible for them to acquire the revolutionary character, whereas the others who belong to the latter category could not conduct the struggle properly to the desired end. Instead of correctly handling the internal contradiction they made compromises with various weaknesses. This is why they could not make adequate progress.

### **Antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions are relative to conditions**

The discussion relating to the theory of contradiction has many more aspects. One of them is that there are two types of contradictions. One type is the antagonistic contradiction, the other type is the non-antagonistic contradiction. What is the nature of antagonistic contradiction? It is uncompromising. Of the two mutually opposing forces, one eliminates the other — one does away with the other. Consider the instance of the struggle with one's enemy. The struggle is such that you cannot live compromising with the enemy. If the enemy survives then you are finished, or else if you survive the enemy is finished. So the nature of this struggle is uncompromising. Consider another instance, the contradiction between labour and capital. Historically, this contradiction is of such nature that workers cannot win emancipation until and unless they can overthrow the capitalist rule and deliver themselves from under the profit-making yoke of the owners, the capitalists. Winning this struggle alone can bring workers their emancipation. So this is the kind of contradiction which is characterized as antagonistic contradiction.

And what is meant by non-antagonistic contradiction? Here also there is conflict, but both of the conflicting forces tend to reach the same goal in the end. For instance, the fundamental class division in today's class-divided society is such that the workers are on one side and the capitalists on the other side. Again within the working class also there are differences and contradictions of different kinds. There are the industrial workers, then workers who have come from peasant families of the villages, and those from the middle class who have turned into workers. Although all are workers, yet conflicts and contradictions appear amongst themselves because of their different ways of thinking and mental make-up, etc. The nature of this contradiction is not, however, such that one tends to overthrow the other. In relation to their struggle against capital and the capitalists they have a basic unity. Whatever the conflict and contradiction between them, in relation to production and distribution or the existing exploitative capitalist system they are all united. So the contradiction between the different sections of the working class is non-antagonistic contradiction. Moreover, it may happen that a contradiction which is antagonistic in nature in a particular relation or situation assumes a non-antagonistic character in a completely different relation or situation. At one stage of the Chinese Revolution when the Chinese Communist Party was conducting a revolutionary struggle against the Kuomintang, led by Chiang Kai-shek, the character of the contradiction was doubtless

antagonistic. When, however, China was attacked by the Japanese imperialist power it became the first and foremost task of the communists to thwart the foreign imperialists. The CPC led by Mao Zedong then rightly took the initiative and built unity with Chiang Kai-shek against the Japanese imperialist power. The leadership of the CPC conducted this struggle in such a manner that while freeing China from the Japanese occupation it exhausted the role of Chiang as a force at the same time. In the annals of revolution in China you will find how the revolutionary struggle grew from strength to strength through correct application of the theory of contradiction.

On the other hand, where contradiction is non-antagonistic in nature, that is, where the main object is to strengthen unity through the handling of the contradiction, even then if the contradiction is analysed as an element of contradiction in isolation from that context it will be seen that viewed in this background the nature of the contradiction turns out to be antagonistic. Any difference of point of view or approach within a working class party over different issues due to many different reasons is contradiction of non-antagonistic nature. That is to say, these differences are resolved through exchange and discussion, and the party emerges stronger through such ideological struggle. But if the difference in views over any particular issue is considered in isolation as an element of contradiction, which is really a contradiction between right-wrong — that is, a contradiction where the issue is to decide which is correct and which is wrong, or maybe either of the two is incorrect and a third view is the correct one — in that case the character of that element of contradiction considered in isolation cannot be anything but antagonistic. Again, this contradiction between the right and the wrong which is non-antagonistic in the overall context may turn antagonistic in a changed situation. Then the task also becomes one to remove the wrong and establish the right.

So it is clear that contradiction is of two kinds — antagonistic and non-antagonistic. Now it is very important to correctly understand the relative nature of non-antagonistic and antagonistic contradiction. With the overthrow of capitalism and all kinds of exploitative state structures in all countries, when society advances beyond socialism to communism, when the classless society will be established, antagonism between man and man over production and distribution will cease to exist. The contradiction centring round production and distribution which is the fundamental and the antagonistic contradiction of the present capitalist system will then

disappear. The particular antagonistic nature of the contradiction — this particular antagonistic contradiction will cease to be there, it will die out. For this, Lenin said: “Antagonism and contradiction are not at all one and the same. Under socialism the first will disappear, the second will remain.” (*Selected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. 11, p. 357, quoted in Mao Zedong’s *On Contradiction*) Mao Zedong also said : “...antagonism is one form, but not the only form of the struggle of the opposites, the formula of antagonism cannot be arbitrarily applied everywhere.” (Mao Zedong, *On Contradiction*)

If we analyse it keeping the instance of the capitalist society in view, then through overthrow of the capitalist system and establishment of the socialist system and advancing beyond it with the establishment of classless society, we get that since this particular contradiction, that is, this antagonism centring round production and distribution disappears — in that sense it is characterized as temporary. There is nothing wrong in this characterization. But to generalize upon the specific observations of Lenin and Mao Zedong and make it a universal proposition will be gravely erroneous. Because, to say that a contradiction exists means it exists with antagonism and non-antagonism together. So it would be wrong to say in a generalized way that antagonism is temporary, contradiction is permanent. Again, at the same time we must keep in mind that within contradiction both antagonism and non-antagonism exist together amidst the universality and particularity of contradiction. That is to say, no material entity is there in this material world which is free from contradiction or the conflict of opposites. While contradiction in its universality exists everywhere with both antagonism and non-antagonism, a particular contradiction of a particular material entity, when considered in isolation, will be found to exist with both antagonism and non-antagonism amid conflicts and tussles with the surroundings.

Our exercise in the theory of contradiction is not for acquainting ourselves with a little of theory. The object of our learning is to apply it consciously. We should, no doubt, have a general knowledge and grasp of the contradiction theory, but the moot point is to understand why and for what objective we want to learn it. Of course, it is possible to know from books what dialectical method of analysis is. But it takes a whole life to correctly apply it in every sphere of life. It is our task to constantly check whether we are capable of consciously acting on particular events in accordance with our realization of the contradiction theory : can we effectively influence the particular events? Can we steer-gear an organization? Can we explain our point to the people?

Can we truly solve a problem of the people? Can we shed light on a question of science and help resolve it? So, if we are not able to particularize in the form of concrete knowledge the general theory of contradiction through its application in practice, then it must be understood we are simply good for nothing, all this learning notwithstanding — our knowledge is simply bookish, and so it is ineffectual. Learning the contradiction theory this way will not at all help us. We must have deep realization of the bearing of the contradiction theory upon our campaign to convince the people, building organizations, conducting movements, guiding scientific research, and all this.

### **The three principles of Marxism or dialectical materialism**

I shall now briefly deal with the three principles of dialectical materialism or Marxism. We notice that in every change in the material world the three principles are at work. It is not our point that one should accept the three principles as the principles governing the changes of matter just because we are averring it to be so. Rather, the fact is that in every kind of change — be it in society or in matter as a whole — these three principles are at work, influencing everything everywhere. What are the three principles?

The first is: From quantitative change to qualitative change and *vice versa*.

The second is: Unity of opposites.

And the third is: Negation of negation, i.e., elimination in the course of development, development through elimination.

### **From quantitative change to qualitative change and *vice versa***

In classical Marxism we find Engels not closing the statement of the first principle at ‘quantitative change to qualitative change’, but he includes ‘*vice versa*’ also. Some others do not mention ‘*vice versa*’. I shall explain later how important is the concept of ‘*vice versa*’. So, no question of leaving out the phrase ‘*vice versa*’. Unless the statement is made in full — that is, from quantitative change to qualitative change and *vice versa* — the concept is not complete in itself.

In any case, what does quantitative change to qualitative change signify? This principle is also stated in other different expressions: for example, from gradual to abrupt change, evolutionary to revolutionary change. In the language of science it is also given as continuous to discontinuous change.

Suppose, heat is being applied to a container with water in it. Before the whole of water starts changing into steam, the water first gets heated, then it starts boiling, and ultimately the whole of the water is vapourized, that is, gets transformed into steam. Before the stage of the whole of the water vapourizing, there is only quantitative change. In which respect is the quantitative change taking place? Mainly in respect of the heat content or the temperature of the water. But even so, the whole of the water does not start vapourizing till the threshold temperature of 100°C is reached at normal pressure. It is a fact known to all. So, you see, when the water starts to get heated the change is slow and gradual. Immediately on reaching the 100°C mark, the water ceases to be in its liquid form, it becomes steam. When this water gets vapourized, why do we say that a qualitative transformation has occurred? We say it because water is no longer in its usual liquid state, it has been transformed into steam. From the liquid state it is now in the gaseous state. The particular qualitative change should be understood precisely in the sense of this specific change and only this much, nothing more than this. Because from the point of view of chemical property of water, there is hardly any difference between chemical properties of water and vapour, as students know very well. Hence, qualitative change in this specific case does not refer to chemical or any other type of qualitative change.

Now consider the instance of this capitalist system in our country. Over a long period a struggle is going on against oppression, exploitation and repression of this exploitative capitalist system. The intense yearning for freedom is churning the working class. The class struggle is intensifying within the society. Marxism emphasizes that the working class which will overthrow capitalism and replace it by socialism, the class which will radically transform the society must change itself in the first place. For, in the existing capitalist society the working class is under the tutelage of capitalist ideas and age-old superstitions. In the process of freeing himself from all this, the worker shall have to transform his character in the process. And the worker who successfully accomplishes this task becomes a communist. This is a qualitative change. Being a worker does not automatically make one a communist. Say, when the working class movement is



building up in a capitalist social system, the genuine working class party, that is, the genuine communist party, is rising alongside to lead it through to its cherished goal, and gradually in this course the working class party is emerging as the main force in the movement, in consequence of all which the working class movement is growing stronger on the basis of consciousness — and in the course of all this it is the class struggle which is intensifying. In other words, the class contradiction is undergoing a quantitative change.

Let us examine the question from a different angle. Suppose, such is the prevailing situation in the country that the working class movement going on is failing to disseminate political consciousness, deep-going realization and clarity of thoughts widespread among the workers. Seeing the situation, on the face of it, if somebody thinks that the contradiction between the worker and the capitalist is not intensifying, he will be committing a mistake. To come to such a conclusion on account of the weakness in the political movement will be a mistake, because the reality is altogether different. The reality is that the polarization between the classes is constantly increasing and for this reason the classes are engaged in a life-and-death struggle against each other. But due to the complexity of the political situation, weakness of ideological struggle and influence of the revisionist or the bourgeois-petty-bourgeois political parties, the required clarity of outlook is failing to grow among the broad masses of the working people. It is quite natural that such a thing happens. But despite the weakness in outlook and thinking due to a host of reasons, it can never be denied that as capitalism is becoming more and more decadent and moribund its onslaught on the exploited masses and especially on the working class is intensifying day by day with the result that the capitalist class and the working class are getting enmeshed more and more in a life-and-death struggle. This mutual conflict between the two classes inevitably finds its reflection in the growing intensity of class contradiction. Yet, despite the struggle continuing over decades amid twists and turns and the class contradiction continuously intensifying, the capitalist system continues intact. One point comes out very clear from this. Although constant change is occurring to capitalism at every instant, this constant change by itself cannot cause the overthrow of the capitalist order. The overthrow will materialize only when not only the objective condition but the subjective condition also, that is, the genuine working class party leadership will have emerged with adequate strength, both ideologically and organizationally, to guide the revolutionary struggle. Only then will it be possible to smash the capitalist state structure with the force of revolution and establish in its

place the socialist state structure — not before that in any case. Therefore, we should all understand clearly, checking our understanding again and again, as to how this principle operates in social transformation, too.

### **Concept of *vice-versa* is very important**

The term '*vice versa*' in the statement of this principle does not at all mean 'conversely' or 'in a reverse way'. What does then '*vice versa*' exactly mean here? In the first place, as I discussed earlier, when we talk of quantitative to qualitative change of a particular material entity we mean by it that so long as a radical transformation does not take place no qualitative change occurs to the entity and change remains quantitative to be precise. But in the whole process of development arising from quantitative change and ultimately culminating in a qualitative change many an inter-dialectical conflict between quality and quantity take place. That is to say, during the quantitative change, some qualitative change, too, in little bits though, occurs within, and whatever little qualitative change occurs, with growing intensity it goes to hasten up the quantitative change. Again take the instance of water. As water is heated gradually, vapourization actually starts before the whole of the water in the container starts boiling at 100°C and turns into steam. The temperature of 100°C is not attained simultaneously throughout the mass of water in the container. At whichever points the temperature reaches 100°C level, water in small droplets vapourizes and correspondingly the amount of liquid water decreases gradually. Little by little the liquid diminishes and little by little some vapour escapes, correspondingly the intensity of its heat content, that is, its temperature rises. As a result, the process or rate of quantitative change goes hastening up. In this course when the whole of the water reaches 100°C temperature, the entire mass vigorously boils to vapourize all at a time. If heating starts from, say, the normal temperature level, throughout the stage from this till 100°C temperature level vapour forms little by little, though not all of the water vapourizes at the same time. With water thus vapourizing little by little, the temperature also goes on increasing and the transformation speeds up correspondingly. That is, in this process of qualitative change little by little, the quantitative change also gets hastened. This is to be understood as the *vice versa* phenomenon. As temperature of water increases in the process of this quantitative change and before the whole of the water reaches 100°C temperature level — qualitative change occurs to a few minute drops of water. As these particular droplets vapourize, the same contributes to raising the temperature

level of the water as a whole and thus to hastening up the quantitative change. Those who do not understand the meaning of *vice versa* in this way also do not understand the particular role of the quality and standard that comrades in the party need to attain in order to accelerate the process of revolution. They underestimate such aspects in practice.

How are we to understand the *vice versa* principle in relation to the party? We know, the organizational strength of the party is growing, which is a quantitative growth of the party. If this fact induces us to believe that in this process of quantitative growth automatically in its own way the qualitative standard of the leaders and cadres of the party will get elevated, that will be a wrong understanding. Because, this understanding does not take into cognizance the *vice versa* aspect of the principle. But those who truly realize the implication of *vice versa* and the inter-dialectical relation of quantity-quality and the fact that some qualitative change — even if little occurs or has to be made to occur in the course of quantitative change which in turn hastens up and influences the quantitative change, also that this change does not come about automatically, in its own way — those who have the understanding of all these aspects together do correctly realize the importance of continuously elevating the qualitative standard of the leaders and cadres of the party. Theoretically, we understand in a way that when in the distant future the world communist social system will be established in the course of successful completion of socialist revolution in countries across the world, men and women in that communist society will engage themselves in the struggle to be communists in the natural course and become communists of higher standard. But the question remains as to how communist characters are emerging from within the capitalist system itself in different countries where capitalism rules supreme. How could it happen that the communist revolutionaries in different countries, including the giant leaders like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong engaged themselves in life-and-death struggles? It did happen and can happen because of the very important role of '*vice versa*' in the whole process of change. As communist revolutionaries will emerge one by one in the course of this struggle, so will be augmented the quantitative change in the succeeding stage of the revolutionary struggle. In continuation of this process of change when some day in the future both the objective and subjective conditions will mature the hour of revolution will arrive.

### **Unity in conflict and conflict amid unity**

The second of the three principles is the unity of opposites, that is, unity of two mutually opposite forces. Take the instance of the contradiction between labour and capital. All Marxists know that the emancipation of the workers of our country will be made possible with the overthrow of the capitalist order and establishment of social ownership over the means of production. The struggle to this end is their struggle to win emancipation. And it is a struggle without any compromise. Till it reaches its culmination, this struggle of the working class against the capitalist class will go on. But the point to be noted is that till this struggle will reach the nodal point the working class, even in the midst of struggle, will inevitably have to enter into compromise with the owners on thousand and one issues. The compromise is necessary for the working class in order to acquire adequate strength for the struggle. Until the workers will reach their ultimate goal, time and again they will have to enter into such compromises. But the compromise is entered into without forsaking in any way the object of the struggle. Consider also, how this capitalist state structure is sustaining itself. On what basis? While the working class struggle is conducted with the object of overthrowing the capitalist order, the same capitalist order continues to survive on the basis of worker-owner cooperation.

Could all this production in society have been possible without the participation of workers? In the feudal system production was mainly for individual consumption, and the remainder would be used to procure other articles of necessity for living through commodity exchange. Under the capitalist system it all changed. Under capitalism the worker is not himself the owner of the products, because the ownership of the means of production is in the hands of the owners of industries. Yet in this system production has assumed a social character. It is social in character in the sense that production is not made with the object of individual consumption but is carried out to meet the social demands. But the ownership is in the main private. The principal contradiction of the capitalist system centres round this.

It has to be understood that in the capitalist system workers cannot at will overthrow the state structure. The ground has to be prepared for that and the necessary strength acquired. The working class movement in our country is still nowhere near to that requisite strength. It is the historical task of the working class to overthrow the system of private ownership. But if with this

little understanding alone unorganized workers, who lack in political consciousness, think in terms of the final or the ultimate battle, and they plan to strike under the impact of emotions while the leadership of the genuine working class party has not emerged with the necessary political and organizational strength, then the movement will soon fall to pieces in the face of repressive onslaught of the state power. Moreover, when in a capitalist society a mass movement grows over a demand, the bourgeoisie want that the movement does not assume an organized shape and does not reach the higher stage of a conscious, organized and long-drawn struggle. They are not afraid of outbursts of spontaneous, sporadic movements. They fear most the conscious, organized, long-drawn struggles which gradually grow from strength to strength ultimately to give birth to people's political power as the alternative to the state power.

The forces who are known as the Naxalites<sup>5</sup>, as they failed to grasp the principle of the unity of opposites, have done much harm to the working class movement in this country. We recall their sacrifices with deep respect. But all the same, the damage has already been done, and even today we are paying dearly for that. Not only has the movement been crushed under the iron hand of the coercive state apparatus, but frustration has overtaken the masses. This frustration is nothing but an added harmful effect. Without a correct understanding of the principle of the unity of opposites it is never possible to safeguard and advance the struggle in the midst of many twists and turns of the revolutionary movement. So the principle of the unity of opposites has to be abided by till the necessary strength is acquired to strike down the capitalist state machine. But when the hour of revolution arrives, if someone reins in the revolutionary movement on the plea of unity of opposites, then that also has to be resisted. The understanding of the principle is not that two mutually opposite forces will coexist for ever, and forever the unity of the two opposites shall remain, which understanding implies that the capitalist system must not be struck down. This type of understanding of the principle of unity of opposites is not in conformity with Marxism.

Another important aspect of the unity of opposites should also be discussed. We should understand that all the three principles of dialectical materialism operate simultaneously. They are interrelated among themselves and that is why none of the three can be understood fully in isolation from the other two. Even so, I do not see much reason for objection if one puts special and additional emphasis on the principle of unity of opposites out of the three on the ground that

the basic cause of all changes, including motion, is the contradiction of opposite forces. However, I maintain that the other two principles also operate simultaneously.

But some people exclusively emphasize the principle of unity of opposites as the basic law of dialectical materialism. In certain cases this has created problems. From a mechanical understanding of unity of opposites a group of theoreticians consider that the struggle between two lines — the bourgeois and the proletariat — go on constantly within the working class party also, as if this struggle between two lines is conducted from two different centres within the same party. These are misconceived notions arising from an erroneous understanding of Marxism. True, leaders and cadres of a communist party always try to achieve uniformity of thinking and pursue the same thought process, and in this manner they conduct all the different activities of the party. Even then contradiction may arise among them over many issues owing to differences in experience and differences in the level of consciousness. This is, of course, natural. True, among these contradictions within the working class party on some issues there would be contradiction between right and wrong, and in that sense unity of opposites operates. Again, it cannot be denied that at one time or other bourgeois class thinking arising from capitalist social environment may even cast its influence on the party. But it must be remembered even then this phenomenon can never be construed as two-line struggle going on always within the party, regardless of any other thing or the concrete situation. This is not the correct Marxist way of thinking. Here what is important to note is that since these differences or contradictions are within the same orbit of Marxism-Leninism, so the correct method to resolve them is to reach unity through exchange of opinion and ideological struggle and in this way strengthen the bond of unity. If not understood in this way, it will not be possible to correctly realize the character of this contradiction.

### **Negation of negation**

Now comes the principle of negation of negation. When development occurs to a phenomenon, an entity or a particular social system, it certainly cannot be that the entity, of which development has taken place, continues to have the same characteristics even after the development, which characteristics it possessed before the development ; or that it will continue to exist in the future also with those same characteristics. No, no question of that. What is the

significance of negation of negation? The development which takes place through negation of previous characteristics is not a case of just simple negation. We are considering the law of development. If we call it simple negation then the whole is negated, which is nothing other than annihilation. But here it is not a matter of just annihilation; here the new arises through the destruction of the old.

Now consider this : change occurs every instant to every person. But for that no child grows overnight into an adolescent. Again, one does not suddenly discover that one has grown into a young man from an adolescent, or for that matter it does not suddenly occur to one that one has crossed that youth and grown aged. These changes do not come about by leaps and all on a sudden. The point to be understood is that every moment physiological and psychological changes in every respect are going on in every person. It is true though that because of the change at every moment within him, a person as such does not undergo fundamental changes every moment. Failure to understand all this actually creates trouble.

How are we to understand the principle of negation of negation in this case? The principle of negation of negation has to be understood here in that it is not merely a case of negation of the childhood, but through this very negation changes occur in succession bringing about the transformation of the childhood to adolescence. For facility of understanding we express it in simple language: elimination in the course of development and development through elimination. Both development and elimination take place in the process of negation of negation. If we emphasize only elimination then development is left out. When something is eliminated if we merely call it a negation and leave it simply at that, then the process of change is not fully comprehended. Because, unless this elimination is negated again the new cannot arise and we cannot advance in the course of development. Again, when a phenomenon comes to be eliminated in the course of its development, the process does not come to a stop there. When elimination or end comes to a particular stage, then only by exhausting it, that is, through negation again it goes on developing from the end. This is negation of negation.

I have tried to explain the matter in a simple way based on my realization of classical Marxism so as to make it really comprehensible for everyone. Again I emphasize, the true import of negation of negation is that an entity or phenomenon develops and matures through a process

of exhausting the old, both in continuity with it and with break. In this process of continuously exhausting the old, the principle of negation of negation works at every stage, as a result of which development takes place. Not to negate the old, yet to create the new — such can never happen. Creation of the new is possible only when that which is obtained by negating the old is itself again negated. So it is called double negation. In other words, while exhausting itself a phenomenon goes on giving birth to newer manifestations, newer elements, and these newer manifestations, newer elements, in the course of their own gradual development, go on eliminating the particular phenomenon itself.

In this connection, I might say a few words on what should be the conception of the struggle to strengthen the working class party. Actually, the struggle to continuously develop the class struggle in which we are engaged today is in a sense the struggle for class elimination. That means, the process of elimination of class struggle by ushering in a classless society lies embedded in the very process of the strengthening and intensifying of class struggle — in its further development. So, in the present stage of development of civilization, on the one hand, we cannot advance a single step today without the party and the correct base political line of the party as the instrument in hand; on the other hand, a day will come in the future when with the establishment of the communist social system, the necessity of the party rule will be exhausted, and the party will be identified with society. While it is true that the genuine communists bend all their energy to strengthen the party for the sake of revolution, at the same time it is also true that they never suffer from party fanaticism. Because, they are aware that the day the party will become identified with society there will not remain any separate necessity for it. In that future if one will obstruct the process of elimination of the party, in other words, if one creates obstruction in the process of the principle of negation of negation, one will thereby obstruct the progress of society at that time and that stage. This is why correct realization of the principle of negation of negation is of such vital importance.

All phenomena in the world are governed by the three basic principles discussed just now, and all these principles operate simultaneously. However, there is another vital aspect of Marxism which needs discussion in this context. When with a phenomenon is admixed a number of other phenomena, which is what we call a mixed phenomenon, how are we to determine its basic character? Always keep in mind that you are to determine the character of a mixed



phenomenon by its dominant feature. It applies equally to politics as it applies to the thoughts of a man, and even applies to evaluating the character of a person — whether the person is good or bad. Everybody knows, man is invariably a combination of both positive and negative qualities. We cannot really imagine one who has no faults or shortcomings. No such person is possible. Similarly, you do not find a person who is all bad and has no good in him. So, wherever you may find a mixed phenomenon, in every such case you will have to find out the dominant feature and from it to determine the basic character of the phenomenon. You cannot adopt the correct attitude otherwise. You may also consider the issue in a different way. Suppose, a person spoke in favour of us at one time, and at another time the same person spoke against us. When he speaks for us, comrades take him to be a man on our side. When he speaks against us, comrades think he is hostile to us. Such observations are the result of oversimplification in evaluating a mixed phenomenon. It may be that the basic thought pattern of the person is against us, but sometimes he says a few good things for us. We can occasionally draw him into our activities — this much; but we cannot depend upon him. Our attitude in respect of him should be somewhat similar to that for a class enemy. Even if he is of some use to us on occasions, we shall have to remain extremely cautious. Or maybe he is not our class enemy, but because he is under the influence of confused thoughts he appears anti-party on many occasions. In that event our attitude concerning him shall be as to a friend, not as to an enemy. We need to dispel his confusion. But for this, he is pro-people.

### **Concept of matter or of its dialectical principles of change is not eternal or absolute**

A question has been put to me that when we are saying everything is material, there is no extra-material entity then could we not say that matter itself is the eternal truth? Similarly, what is wrong if we say that the three basic principles which work behind all changes are the eternal truth? It should be understood that when we talk of a particular material entity, we mean it to be some matter which has mass or mass equivalence, occupies some space and all that; but by this matter we do not mean matter as a whole. Because, there is no particular matter which is the origin of all matter. Then how are we to view the entire universe or the whole of the material world? We shall view the universe and the material world on the basis of our concept of matter in general. We should realize that matter is created from matter itself, there is no existence of supra-matter entity. In this sense, a particular matter is simultaneously matter and not-matter.

Lenin gave a beautiful expression to matter concept. He said: matter is a philosophical category. With this Lenin wanted to emphasize that whatever man did conceive in the past, is conceiving at present and will conceive in the future are all based on matter, never supra-matter. By calling matter a philosophical category he did not mean any particular matter or material entity.

But is matter eternal, abstract, absolute? No, such a conception is not correct. Why do I say this? In which sense is matter not eternal or absolute? It is because the matter we are knowing is continuously changing; change goes on in it at every moment, arising from conflicts and contradictions of opposite forces. We are also knowing and comprehending this change and transformation in matter. In this sense matter is not eternal or absolute. The matter concept is not that matter is unchangeable — that is not the correct idea. All changes are, therefore, verifiable and are subject to verification. So matter which pervades everywhere — and there is no extra-material entity at that — does have no possibility to be eternal. Because, matter is ever-changing. But looking at this all material world many people may yet keep asking: since we find matter everywhere then what is wrong in regarding matter as eternal? Actually, instead of calling matter absolute or eternal we should call it here universal. Whatever we find in the universe is matter, no extra-material entity is there. All our thinking, thoughts, acts are based on matter. Again, this matter is not static, fixed, immutable. Matter is matter in motion, ever-changing matter. Therefore, matter is by no means unchangeable, absolute or eternal. So also man's thinking is changing, his cognition developing through the process of interaction with the changing material world.

Hence the understanding and comprehension of the three basic governing principles of change is also developing together with the advancement of knowledge in all spheres – it is becoming clearer, deeper, more lucid and ever-more penetrating. In this sense, the three basic principles do not present themselves as something absolute and eternal. Our philosophy is materialist philosophy for the cardinal reason that nowhere in the universe there is any entity independent of matter. And our philosophy is dialectical materialism because the matter we cognize itself is dialectical; it is changing through conflicts and contradictions. Because of this fundamental dialectical character of matter our philosophy is dialectical materialism.

### **Man's thinking was materialist originally**

I feel, I should now address some other pertinent issues, namely, that before society became divided into classes, primitive man's thinking was materialistic; how and why class-division came about in society; and in what circumstances did idealist thinking appear in human mind. Concrete materialist analysis of these issues is necessary in order to get a comprehensive idea of the Marxist philosophy. While discussing these issues, certain other important points may also crop up. I would discuss them, too, as and when required. But since time on hand is short, there is hardly any scope for going into detailed analyses. It should be borne in mind that since the potentiality or objective condition for thinking was there in the human brain because of its organization and characteristic features, thought began to evolve gradually, born of interaction of the brain with the external world. Early man had to live by struggling against adverse circumstances. Nobody was there to provide him with food and shelter. He had to live in his own way confronting predatory beasts, on the one hand, and the adversities of nature, on the other. Human beings got united in the process of struggle for existence at the time. That is, they had to be together to fight against all the adverse forces; they had to struggle unitedly in order to survive. From that point of view, it must be admitted that man's first consciousness gained through experience was that he could not live alone. So, it can be said that the first consciousness of man was that they would have to struggle unitedly for existence. In this way human beings got united and became social beings. Many other animals, too, live together, but they could not give rise to society because they did not have that level of consciousness, nor could they ever have it.

When primitive man united in society, struggled amidst nature, in the course of many interactions with nature many thoughts struck his brain. At that primitive stage, man had no especial difference with other animals except for his power of thinking. Man gradually became organized into society and strode along, struggling against a hostile environment. At one stage, questions like why the sun rises, why there are the dark nights of the new moon or bright nights of full moon, and why tides and ebbs occur, why there are the changes from day to night, changes of seasons, what is the sky, what are the stars, what is wind, all these struck the brain, appearing again and again in the mind in the particular way of the humans at that stage. In those times, man did not think that there was a creator of everything — the Almighty God. Such a thought did not strike his brain. So, the idealistic thinking or a theory of divinity had not arisen.

Had it been true that “thinking is the contemplation of God”, then its influence would have been discernible in primitive man’s thinking. This would have found expression in the thoughts of someone or other. But by investigating history and through researches we have come to know that no idealistic concept, thought or theory about a divine being arose in society prior to its division into classes. No evidence has been found of any concept of existence of any supra-matter entity in the primitive society. Different researchers, particularly Morgan, found no proof of this. Whatever man pursued or studied, whatever he tried to control, tame or appease was material, or composed of matter. The things they wanted to learn about were soil, water, wind, fire, stones, and such like. None of these are non-material entities. Man in those days did not think about any entity or force outside of matter. Whatever forces he conceived of were physical forces of matter itself. I am discussing it to show one thing. It is that man’s thinking in those days was materialistic. He could not think of anything outside of matter. He thought materialistically, not idealistically, although his materialism at the time was elementary.

Man’s quest for learning about matter began from thereon. Naturally, man tried to know about everything but within his historical limits. The pursuit of primitive man to learn about matter is called primitive man’s science with which the present-day science does not truly have any relation. But since primitive man thought that he could know about and bring the forces of nature under control through such pursuit, it has been called a science. Incantations, charms and spells, or magic comprised this science, although this magic was not what we understand by magic today. Actually man did not acquire any knowledge through such chants or magic, nor was that possible. Whatever man really learnt, he learnt through his experience after suffering many a blow. Whatever things man wanted to control in those days, he tried to achieve it by making various gesticulations in front of those objects. Suppose someone was crushed to death under a stone — they used to gesticulate ritually before the chunk of stone. If things got burnt in a fire, they would light up a small fire, dance around it and gesticulate. The mutterings which accompanied this moving about of limbs, these gesticulations — in our country it is these that got refined through ages into Sanskrit *slokas* to assume the form of *mantras* or incantations of the present times. It is the meaningless utterances of primitive man that changed through time to become the incantations or *slokas*. Belief in God is the main basis of the worships and rituals we witness now. The incantations and rituals we witness in present times came into history on the basis of belief in God through long refinement of the primitive incantations, and, incorporating

many Sanskrit *slokas* in them, they are vastly different from the primitive incantations and rituals.

I have said in the beginning that materialist thinking has a history. Also, there is a history of development and progress of idealist thinking since its inception. But materialist thinking enjoys the primevality of origin over idealist thinking. I have already said that idealist thinking did not arise in the human mind before society became class-divided. Previous to that, contradiction between classes such as we witness now had not arisen anywhere. How did then society progress during that time, for there can be no motion without contradiction? The main contradiction that acted as the motive force behind progress of society in those days was the contradiction between nature and man. That is, man's struggle to know about nature was the principal contradiction in those days. Man conducted his struggle to know about nature, to triumph over adverse forces of nature; to harness nature in this way in order to put it to use for betterment of life. Production began even if in a rudimentary form, and the contradiction between productive forces and production relation appeared. In the present era of intense class struggle this contradiction has further intensified and developed. In the distant future, even after the establishment of the communist society, this contradiction between productive forces and production relation would remain, but the character of this contradiction would cease to be antagonistic. The struggle to know about nature, to know the unknown, to exercise control over it in order to continually develop and advance civilization would still go on. So, social advancement would not halt on reaching communist society, society would continuously advance through higher and higher stages of the communist society.

You know, the present society is class-divided, the contradiction between the exploiters and the exploited is the principal contradiction in this society. But among primitive man organized into society there was no division into exploiters and the exploited, no such contradiction existed then. Society was not yet class-divided. In later stages we find the capitalist owners exploiting the workers, the landlords exploiting the peasants, and the terrible oppression the slave masters perpetrated on the slaves — the tragic episodes of which are recorded in history. But in the primitive society comprising primitive groups or tribes, class exploitation and class conflict had not arisen. Classes had not yet emerged. True, man fought over many things then; they

scrambled for who would first grab a piece of meat, but, despite these, society had not yet got divided into classes. Hence the question: how did society get divided into classes?

In this context, we should grasp a point, going deep into the matter, short of which we shall not be able to correctly understand the cause behind class-division. And it is this : man's needs can never be kept arrested at any one point. Man's needs will continually grow, which is but natural. Primitive man, when he could get under the shelter of a tree during rains or a storm, or he could secure a little space inside a cave, he felt heavenly pleasure as if he was residing in a palace. The idea of heavenly pleasure or palace-comfort of the present-day man is not like this. What you consider today to be the minimal necessities was unthinkable to primitive man. The necessity, for want of which you think you will go mad, and for securing which you may even commit a murder, was for the primitive man like wishful day-dreams. So, with the passage of time, man's necessities have gone on increasing, and even his concept of the necessities has undergone changes. But in the primitive stage the principal problem man faced was scarcity of production compared to his needs. So, strife would erupt among them centring round distribution. At one stage, those who were bodily stronger, by use of physical force and might of arms, became the owners of the lands — the once fallow lands that had been made cultivable through combined efforts of all. The tribal chiefs, the warriors, the strongmen made other people of the tribe — who all had the same natural right to enjoy equal shares — into slaves and usurped the total ownership for themselves. And they started forcing the dispossessed to labour for them as unpaid slaves, while they themselves wallowed in comfort and luxury.

In this process emerged in the course of time the slave masters, or the rich, the powerful, together with their private property. That is to say, with the vast majority of the slaves on the one side and a few slave masters on the other, society split into two parts; two classes were born. Again, in the very primitive tribal stage of society when the tribes led a nomadic life, roaming about to gather fruit or to hunt – for, beyond that they had not learned any method to produce food – when two different groups or tribes met, clashes and conflicts would ensue between them. Those who lost the battle, being defeated and captured, would often be killed. For at that stage the procurement of food was fraught with such uncertainty that to meet everyone's daily necessity for food was a most difficult task. In this situation they were not in a position to carry the extra burden of defeated captive persons. But when stable property was created with the

introduction of cattle breeding and agriculture, then those who were defeated in battle between two tribes were subjugated and forced to toil harder.

Thus, when cattle breeding had begun, and particularly when agriculture had started, when articles produced could be stored up, it was then that the warriors, those with might, and the tribal chiefs started treading down the others by force. In the course of time after agriculture had begun, and following creation of stable property, society became class-divided centring round the contradiction between growing human needs and scarcity of supply. Those who were stronger grabbed everything forcibly by depriving the others. Attempts were pursued even to establish ownership rights on the land snatched away from others. In this process, the laws originated; and regulations, concept of law and order developed from the necessity to protect private property, and the society of slaves and slave masters was established. At first, the commoners were not willing to accept the ownership of the slave masters over land. Because, those from whom land had been forcibly taken away all remembered that they all had toiled collectively to recover the lands for cultivation. But after passage of ages people forgot all these. Gradually, they got used to it and started considering the land to be the property of the established owners and that they had no right at all over that land. They started thinking that they were paupers, born into destitute families. They forgot that in the distant past the forefathers of the present owners and their own forefathers were of equal status. They were made to forget all this. Individual ownership of land, personal, private ownership was established through this long process of injustice and coercion. From that stage on began the contradiction and conflict between classes. This contradiction will not be resolved till the time when production will be sufficient to satisfy the needs of all, and the principle of equitable distribution of all produce is established in practice.

If we begin with the barbaric society, we can say that it was followed by the slave-slave master's society, and then feudalism and long thereafter the capitalist system, bourgeois democratic life and era. This democracy means the bourgeois democratic system, the capitalist system. Following the bourgeois democratic system, socialism or the dictatorship of the proletariat has come to a few countries. After superseding the stage of socialist system, will be established the classless communist society where this social antagonism, that is, the antagonistic contradiction centring round production and distribution, which we see now, will be resolved.

### **Idealist thinking arose in wake of class division**

Now the question is: how did idealist thinking originate in class-divided society? Analysing its cause, after society became class-divided we see that at one stage man found that everything in society was running in accordance with laws and regulations. Some deemed serving their master their duty, and they were doing just that. Those whose job was to husk paddy were doing just that. The employees, the attendants, watchmen and bodyguards were all carrying out the respective work laid down for them. And the master or the king was ruling over all. Since all accepted this, society was running in a well regulated and orderly manner. It is not that man thought about all this in such clear terms. But what transpired was quite similar to what I have now said. At some such time, a thought struck the human mind. It was this : society was running as per laws and regulations since it had a master or a king; it was running in the fashion in which he desired to run it. So, there must be a master of this whole universe who was running and regulating everything. Unless there was someone like this, how were the sun, the moon and the stars, everything in the universe working in an orderly manner? The sun rising and setting as if obeying laws. How were these happening? If there was no master for directing and controlling everything, the whole universe could not work in such an orderly manner. Such thoughts struck the human brain from this analogy. From here began the concept of God, the creator of the universe. That is, the masters who had laid down the laws, regulations and instructions in society got projected in abstraction in this sense beyond society and the universe. The theory of the Divine was the result. Such is the history of the rise of contemplation of God in society. After this began all the novel interpretations of God. In whatever manner could one think, one interpreted God and divinity. Because, there was no necessity of any proof. They did not need to establish whether their interpretations presented by them were logical, rational, or related to reality.

In any way, the current of materialist thinking that had begun from the primitive society was there already, and with the advent of class-divided society the contemplation of God and idealist thinking originated. Since then, these two main streams of philosophical thought have existed side by side. Both these philosophies have gained strength and developed through many vicissitudes, and the contradiction-conflict between the two has gone on without relent. In particular,



after dialectical materialism appeared, it has not only invalidated the idealist philosophy but has also pinpointed the basic defect of all earlier materialist philosophies.

It is true that after the appearance of the idealist philosophy it has mainly been used by the exploiting class to protect its interests through the different stages of social development. However, the thinking of those who hold that the idealist philosophy has always been a weapon in the hands of the exploiting class and that the materialist philosophy has been an instrument of struggle for the exploited classes in all ages is ahistorical, unreal and oversimplified. The idealist philosophy originated in the class-divided society and was mainly used to fulfill the needs of class rule. But even the idealist philosophy, in the course of its dealing with people has also been used as an instrument of struggle of the exploited masses against the exploiting class at different times. Again, the materialist philosophy of that era, which in the main was materialist in character, and which originated before society became class-divided and was a continuation of man's thinking in primitive times — this materialist philosophy, too, has undergone many changes. But still it has been found that whatever might have been the particular forms of materialist philosophy at particular stages, even this materialist philosophy has been utterly misused by the exploiting class at different times. For example, before the advent of Christianity, a group of despotic rulers and slave masters who subscribed to vulgar materialism in the name of materialism opposed the struggles of the slaves.

See again, in the society of slaves and slave masters, the slaves fought against their masters wielding the Christian ideology as their weapon! They reasoned that, as Christianity taught, all men were equal before God. How could then the slave masters inflict upon the slaves such terrible oppression? Through such perpetration, the rulers actually did oppose the teachings and precepts of Christianity. Religion acted as a powerful weapon in the hands of the oppressed and tortured slaves in their struggle against the despotism of slave masters. Thus, it played a progressive role at a certain point of time.

### **Idealism stands in way of cognition of truth**

We have to remember that the main struggle of the Marxists is against exploitation and the exploiting class. Ours is a struggle for emancipating people from exploitation and oppression of all kinds. Ours is a struggle for becoming real man, for attaining higher morality, ethics and

culture by delivering people from the clutches of decadence, against the abuse of science by the exploiter capitalist class, a struggle to win people's emancipation from all sorts of exploitation. Even if someone is attached to religious values we welcome him in this struggle should he will to walk a few paces with us, should he not turn away from struggle on petty considerations. On this point if error in judgement is committed or any kind of sectarianism entertained, this will actually go to undermine the main struggle. But on our part, we Marxists cannot subscribe to any religious belief. Why this? Because, pursuit of any religious belief whatever creates a muddle in the process of grasping the truth. We are in pursuit of truth, and today religious belief stands as the biggest hurdle on the way to realizing truth. Truth cannot be correctly ascertained without scientific verification, analysis and proof. It is in this regard that religious belief stands as the obstacle. Besides, we must also remember, some among our comrades who, too, are not spared of the impact of hangover of the age-old religious belief, understand these questions through reasoning but are yet to be freed of the psychic make-up of long practice under the shadow of religion. Who knows how this weakness worms into whom in moments of frustration, in moments of weakness, or when which comrade unconsciously reposes his trust in God? Time and again I have made a point, and again I am making it now. How many are here among those who have accepted Marxism after critically reasoning all these theoretical aspects, but who will not shiver while passing through a lonely graveyard at dead of moonless nights? By this I mean to point out that it so often happens that while one may accept a point through reasoning but superstitions that are for long deeply entrenched in habit die hard. This is to say, our understanding must not remain at the level of superficial grasping but needs to be brought to such depths of realization that it can free us from all these old superstitions and prejudices.

### **A revolutionary must identify his life with revolution**

I think, this discussion is incomplete without my explaining to you another related aspect. Love, affection, sex, marriage have their place in everyone's life and revolutionaries do not constitute an exception here. It is common to find that many consider these as one's private affair, and they do not bother about it. What I wish to state, however, is that adhering to the party's teaching, cultivating this struggle covering every aspect of life, and following this practice, the leaders who are at the complete disposal of the party, whose life has nothing beyond the party, they ought to conduct their personal life struggle in such a way as makes every aspect

of their life like transparent glass to the party comrades. It is not that since they are revolutionaries and are at the party's disposal so they have no necessity of love, affection, marriage, and so forth in life. However, how could the party rank-and-file and the people at large repose trust and confidence in the party if they see that the individual mode of living of the leaders is not one where there is a complete merger of it with that of revolutionary activities? It is not so much a question with the people whether the living condition of the leaders is plain and simple or one of privation, whether they go on foot or travel by car, or whatever; people want to be sure about whether the leaders' relationship with their spouses is in accord with revolutionary movement. If it is not so, then this relationship is neither beautiful, nor does it strengthen one's character, rather it weakens one.

Such conduct reduces the practice of politics to a profession like any other, as if one who could have taken up a job in any profession is dabbling in politics instead to boss over others. If such a situation comes about, people lose their emotional attachment to the party and its cadres, while as a result of this, the party workers lose their dedication and their wisdom gets impaired. The common people want to repose trust in those who would rouse them. People can repose this trust only when they see that the leaders not only raise slogans but give proper importance to pursuit of all fields of knowledge as well, instead of considering this as superfluous, and also when people find from experience, that along with this, the leaders are conducting a struggle covering all aspects of life. A revolutionary party like ours has to keep a sharp eye on this, because from experience I have found how personal relationships can weaken even many characters of height. So, in a country like India it may become difficult to protect the revolutionary character of the party unless proper attention is paid to this aspect.

Let us now return to the earlier issue. I have already said that man's needs cannot be kept arrested at any point. Just as man's needs have gone on increasing, so have the instruments of production gone on improving and round this has come about the industrial revolution and the great advancements of technology. However, some political leaders, artists, litterateurs and philosophers of our country, unable to grasp the basic cause of the present social ailments, hold the present industrial civilization responsible for all this, and they advocate that we have to return back to the bygone days. Gandhiji, Rabindranath, and many others have said such things. What comes out of their views is that the Indian society of the days long past, when life was

considered to comprise four successive stages or *chaturashrama* of human pursuit, and the hermitages of saints or *tapovana* abounded, was the ideal society. It is claimed that the mere stepping into a hermitage or *ashrama* was enough to instill spiritualism in a man. The essence of their thinking and reasoning is that it is the industrial civilization, the mills and factories, which are at the root of all our troubles. It is because of these that greed among us has aggravated, the social disparity and abuses have appeared. But we want to stress that the root cause of all these is the exploitative social system. Be it social disparities or abuses, all stem from this social system based on exploitation. Besides, greed, malice and animosity are not inborn human traits. When disparity arose in society, it is this which engendered greed, malice, animosity, and so forth. All these are products of history. It was in society established on exploitation that these traits sprouted in man. When society had not become class-divided, or the process of class-division had not begun and when the exploiters and the exploited had not appeared in society, primitive man did not know at that time how to cheat others more or exploit them maximum. Such thoughts never occurred to them. But now day in and day out the capitalists and the standard-bearers of bourgeois humanism are cheating people and exploiting them indiscriminately without batting an eyelid. But the society of those primitive, semi-barbarians who lived in jungles had not yet become divided into classes despite wants and privations. There was no way a man could be exploited in those days. Those who shower advices today upon common people and exhort them to shed greed and who are ever up to preaching this, living upon other people's money, are themselves disposed to enjoying sweet and good things of life at every opportunity. Not for once do they consider that if the needs of man were arrested at one point, then man could never have gained knowledge about the things he knows now, nor could any of the things now being enjoyed by him be created. In reality, maybe a particular person keeps his sense of needs repressed, but nobody can suppress the sense of growing needs of a whole society. So, man's needs will keep on ever-growing — such is the materialist thinking.

### **Production relation united man into society**

So, what we gather from this discussion is that man's needs are growing all the time, and the productive forces also are continuously growing keeping pace with it. It is under the impact of this that production relations change, and so does society. Again, in the new society new needs are arising. As the productive forces keep growing, the increased productive forces do not fit into

the old production relation. With the growth of productive forces the old production relation cannot keep pace with it. It is then that crisis arises, that antagonism appears. This is the contradiction between productive forces and production relation. This antagonism seeks to break asunder the existing production relation in order to lay the foundation of a new production relation. That is, it seeks to break asunder the present production system in order to utilize the increased productive forces. This is because nothing can stall scientific advancement. Even if many an obstacle to advancement of science appears in the crisis-ridden capitalist system and despite occasional stagnation in progress of science, science will continue to forge ahead, technology will go on advancing, and so will the productive forces. No one can arbitrarily do away with this law.

Another point should be discussed here. Primitive man got organized into society from his urge to survive, for fighting against adverse forces of nature, and in order to increase production. Precisely with this point in view Karl Marx said that man-to-man relation is basically production relation. I have heard many leaders known to be Marxists refer to this production relation as economic relation. I consider this understanding of the production relation as being economic relation a vulgarization of Marxism. Marx did not mean it this way. The concept of production relation is not so narrow. It is true that man, by struggling with nature for better living, established relationships among themselves in order to produce. Human beings became socially organized; they entered into relationships in order to produce, and in the very interest of their own development. But this production is not only material production; it is material and spiritual production at the same time. In reality, in a class-divided society, those who control the material production also influence the spiritual production. Without taking cognizance of this aspect, if we consider production relation only as economic relation then we would lapse into economic determinism. Remember, that any spiritual relationship, whether it be love, affection, or whatever else, that constitutes the superstructure on the base of material production. Material production constitutes the base and spiritual production its superstructure. This is the way we have to understand material production and spiritual production. Marx did not view production relation to be a kind of economic slavery or a relation simply based on money factor. Man not only produces the material articles needed by him, every moment he aspires to create many other things. Man-woman relationship, love, fatherhood, motherhood, cultural world or cultural movement, art and literature, science and other spheres of knowledge — in every field man

aspires to create ever newer things in order to beautify and enrich life. Just as we enjoy material production, there is a great role of spiritual production in our life, involving questions of taste, culture, education. Ideology, sense of values, ethics, morality, education, jurisprudence — all these are involved in production relation, although these are not material production, these are all spiritual production.

### **Without love for the class, the party and revolution one cannot be a communist**

Naturally, the question of love for people and for the party in revolutionary life also comes up in this context. There are many who think that because they love people and the working class, they are true revolutionaries or communists. I consider the concept wholly mistaken. There are many among the bourgeois humanists who loved people heart and soul and who made sacrifices for humanity, but they were not communists or could not become communists. Any genuine communist cannot but have love for people and the working class. But in many cases it is seen that this love is nothing more than an emotional response. Unless the leaders and workers of the party which would lead revolution and would free people and the working class from under the yoke of exploitation can transform their love for people and the working class into love for the party of the working class, they cannot grow into true communist revolutionary characters. Because, they should remember, the concretized form of love for the people and the working class is manifested as love for the party of the class. So, all who cannot truly love the party, who lose attachment to the party whenever minor shortcomings and mistakes crop up within, or for trivial personal reasons, or in the event of minor differences of opinion, who easily take to slighting the party to put it down; they palpably fail to realize revolution. Just like one cannot master the class theory without loving the class, so also one cannot grasp the theory of the working class without loving its genuine party. Simply through debates and deliberations the significance of this cannot be realized. I say that those who intend to take on the responsibility of revolution, just as they would have to continually cultivate different aspects of Marxism by way of study and discussion, so also they must take on the responsibility of party work at the same time. You will learn, even at its minimum level, the party's teachings on the Marxist philosophy and about the formation and structure of the revolutionary party just by attending one class or one school of politics — the matter is not so simple. You should understand thoroughly all the many issues, such as, say the fundamental difference between a revolutionary party and

the other parties, or the correct Marxist-Leninist process of forming a working class party in the present era of extremely reactionary and crass individualism. You will have to understand the concrete, definitive analyses of our party regarding the international communist movement and the correct strategy and tactics of revolution in the particular politico-economic structure of India. You will have to understand all these aspects deeply.<sup>6</sup>

### **Marxism is not mere analysis of economics and politics, it is a total philosophy of life**

The true meaning of loving the party is that they who love the party have to bear both pain and enjoy happiness in equal manner. They know revolution is no mere idealization of emotion; they know the party has to be strengthened in the interest of revolution. When a party worker who loves the party lays down his life for the cause of revolution, he does it for the sake of the party. That is a concrete expression of his becoming a true revolutionary. My emphasis is that the concretized expression of class feeling is party feeling, and the concretized expression of love for the class and revolution is love for the party. This is a fundamental postulate of Marxism. In this struggle there is the aspect of discharging responsibilities, there are problems and difficulties which we resolve both individually and collectively through discussions and exchanges of opinion. No one is struggling alone; we are all working and struggling in unison. We are solving problems through discussions, exchanges and common association. If one studies a lot but does not participate in struggle, if one does not carry out any responsibility, does not conduct struggle, then one's understanding is wrong. The danger with knowing things in this way is that it rakes up ego, it hampers development of the correct outlook, it creates confusion. Such is not our method. In terms of Marxist methodology what is meant by 'learning'? It means that one is applying in all spheres of life what one has learnt or understood as the truth and is helping others to learn. He is trying to teach in a manner that would be effective in teaching others; he is struggling to master that art of teaching. At home or outside home, at gatherings of friends, at an office or the place of work — whosoever he mixes with, would understand that it is not just a matter of party meetings or political discussions; it is the mission of his life. It is for this that Marxism is called the philosophy of life. It is not simply an economic theory. Marxism transforms life and teaches to struggle for advancement of the entire society. It teaches us to experience joy in the midst of contradictions and conflicts, to enjoy happiness even in hardship and grief. He who fails to realize this, retreats in fear in the face of hardship and grief.

### **Gulf of difference between ‘to know and to realize’**

Here comes another point of major significance to be understood. Man can retain in memory many things by virtue of his power of memory and he can relate all those things. But this ability itself does not signify that they all have a deep realization of these matters. Often it is seen that on questions of theory or such other issues people reckon those as wise and knowledgeable who have a capacity to recall quite many things by virtue of their strong memory. One frequently comes across confusion of this sort. So, in order to correctly understand what makes the real difference between strong memory and true realization and also the magnitude of this difference, we have to consider whether the standard of aesthetic taste and culture of these persons is going up in accordance with what they are professing. For, if the standard of aesthetic taste and culture does not go up accordingly then there is no other criterion to judge whether one is really applying in one's own life what one is professing. Merely going by the fact that a leading comrade has left his home and family and he is working fulltime for the party, it cannot be said where he stands concerning the correct application of the revolutionary ideology in his life. Do keep in mind these words of mine. You will recount, as a matter of fact, students of school or college levels, and teachers too, can retain in memory a lot of things, and they can teach others as well, but these hardly bear on their life. This is just mindless regurgitation of what one has learnt. For this Marxism emphasizes, there is a gulf of difference between to know and to realize.

If you understand this difference correctly, you will realize why it sometimes happens that a person who is vastly read in Marxism, who has a university degree and is endowed with a measure of intellectual faculty — yet when he discusses all these ideological matters his discourses seem to lack something vital. The discussions do not really create an impact on the minds of the listeners. Whereas, discussions by another person who may lack similar academic attainments or degrees, leave a deep impression in the mind. People of the first category often pick on a mistake in the reference given by someone and make much fuss about such mistakes. But they are completely oblivious of the fact that despite providing many correct references they are not obtaining good results while someone else despite giving a wrong reference, visibly gets good results. At the beginning no great problem arises with the first category of comrades. But if they cannot eradicate their shortcomings then a time will come when they will become severely



afflicted with ego problems, they become totally ego-centric and their ability for self assessment also gets impaired. Unknown to themselves their minds get polluted.

I would, therefore, ask comrades to question themselves every instant whether they truly realize what they are uttering. If they have realized it, they will apply it in their own lives, and the fruit of application will be manifest. So I say, studies, discussions, deliberations will be of some avail only when all these are integrated with the all-embracing struggle in life. If one does not undertake one's struggle in this form of completely merging oneself wholly with the cause, if one does not fulfill one's tasks, then all one's studies, discussions and debates reduce to meaningless exercise. You are studying, discussing, coming to the party office in the evening, and somehow doing your bit of party assignment in a lackadaisical, casual manner – if you study, discuss and debate with this attitude then you may of course get to know in that event quite a lot of things, but you will not acquire true knowledge. I reiterate, to acquire knowledge is to be in the midst of application and practice. Therefore you can easily understand the matter is not that you are acquiring some knowledge and you are reflecting at which appropriate moment you would start your struggle. The matter can never be like that. I must go on with my struggle with whatever knowledge I am acquiring. I am carrying on my struggle even if I may be making mistakes. All my pleasure, my joy I get in this struggle. Whatever pain and sorrow I may experience during this struggle, I find joy in the depths of pain and sorrow. I realize that even sorrow may be a form in which the kernel of joy manifests itself. He who has learned how to conduct this struggle, he who has acquired real wisdom, realizes that joy and sorrow are so intermingled as if they are like close cousins. Joy is subsumed in grief, grief comes alight with inmost joy. A great litterateur of this land, Saratchandra, gave it an expression. He said, sorrow that is free from fear can be relished as pleasure. See, herein also reverberates that tune of struggle. Sorrow that is free from fear means, if one fearlessly applies oneself to a cause with unflinching determination, if one struggles for the sake of values, one's pain and sorrow is not simply and exclusively pain and sorrow but associated with it is also a joyous manifestation. He who suffers from fear, he who is apprehensive and hesitant, for him sorrow is overwhelming, all pervasive. Grief clouds him all over, he cannot see a ray of joy.

### **In revolutionary life, even grief is one face of joy**

There are some in this capitalist system who wallow in money, who are in possession of huge wealth that at times they do not know how to spend it. Ordinary people think, how joyful is their life, how happy they are. People wonder if these persons could have any wants in their lives! But whatever the perception of ordinary people, quite often it is seen that in real life many among these wealthy persons, who have no dearth of money, lack joy and happiness in real life. Many of them suffer from schizophrenia. Extreme want of mental peace distress them, they wander about, but joy is eluding them. Then they get hold of some *sadhubaba* or ‘holy man’ and fall at his feet with the expectation of getting some happiness, being delivered of agonies and mental sufferings. There is nothing in life to bring them joy, because they have turned away from struggle. They are all parasites. They are the ignominies, the blights of civilization. They have no link with man’s struggle. Like thieves they have appropriated all wealth created in society; deceiving and exploiting people, they thrive on riches. With all these, however, they cannot live in happiness, they rot in mind, their education and culture get rotten, peace leaves them, nothing fetches them happiness.

But look at the opposite end. Those who fought in the jungles of Vietnam passed sleepless nights. In apprehension of bombs being dropped any moment, they kept awake with rifle on their shoulders and ever combat-ready. Or, consider the instance of all the revolutionaries in history who fought battles under whatever condition; it happened at times they were better off and at times in poor conditions, at times they had morsels of food, at times went without food. But for that, whether they had any food to eat or not, whether they had sufferings or not, whether they lived at ease or not — nothing could disturb their mental poise. Look at their lives. None fell prey to schizophrenia. They were the epitome of fathomless peace of mind. Did not these people have pain and sorrow in life? Yes, they had. Even so, they were immersed in happiness and joy. The reason was : their sorrows and sufferings presented the other face of joy. They knew how to taste joy amidst pain and sorrow.

### **Real knowledge transforms man**

In this context, I like to dwell on another point. Bookish erudition and a capacity for debate or ability to furnish facts and figures does not entitle one to be reckoned as a man of knowledge.

In particular, if someone has skills in English, if he has a fair measure of memory, a flair for study and initiative, he can recite many things. But by that it is not possible to judge the depth of his realization. Actually, most people fail to understand the difference between true knowledge and erudition. Erudition is somewhat like a burden, in a sense it is sterile. Whereas, knowledge is inalienable from struggle.

On the other hand, through ages the idealists, the capitalists, the parasites have made idea an article of luxury for them — an element of mental extravagance that is detached from life. This cultivation is without application in life, it is simply a matter like discourse for discourse's sake. But this sort of 'knowledge' is of no use to the man who wills to advance, who is inspired with hope, who reposes faith and respect in life, who is willing to forge ahead by struggling with nature, with his surroundings. Therefore knowledge that is devoid of practice is actually denial of knowledge. It is a sort of mimicry. Such knowledge often muddles the natural course of thinking, the process of thinking, free and steady thinking — it makes man mentally ill, mentally unbalanced. In the true sense, this so-called knowledge is not knowledge at all.

### **Knowledge alienated from struggle is idle extravagance**

So, you see, knowledge or thinking is also an action. That thinking or knowledge that is alienated from action, from struggle, is idle luxuriation. You may some time come across a person of high erudition but who is completely muddle-headed. He has read a lot but has failed to integrate or coordinate ultimately what he studied. That is, he has failed to systematize them, failed to grasp them in proper balance. He thinks in a certain way at some point of time, the very next instant he thinks in just the opposite way. I need to emphasize here a point of much significance. I want that all comrades study a host of subjects meticulously, study them thoroughly. That we study so many things, that we exhort you to study deeply — this too is part of conducting our struggle. Why do I say this? Because, we are shouldering responsibilities, conducting struggles, reaching our message to the common people, trying to explain the issues to them, trying to educate them, and with this end in view we are preparing ourselves, we are educating ourselves too. Our studies are thus oriented with a specific purpose, to a particular aim. It is in the course of this struggle that our experience is building up, our faith and conviction growing. To this end we need to discipline, integrate and coordinate our thoughts. Unless one

can free oneself from uncoordinated and disorderly thinking, thoughts get in a muddle and mental disorder may seize one. Precisely for this, we attach so much importance to the process of thinking.

There is one more point you should grasp. It is this: what does revolution mean? Is revolution a term for achieving a particular programme? No. Revolution is the successful culmination of contradiction between thesis and anti-thesis, current and counter-current in the course of social development. Through ages revolutions have taken effect, revolutions will continue to take effect. So I say, revolution is a continuous pursuit or endeavour and struggle. This struggle is without relent, it knows no end — it is a higher form of struggle. You think, your present struggle is extremely hard and tough. Great communist leaders have, however, opened our eyes to the truth that harder is the task to protect and consolidate revolution after its accomplishment. There are excitements and pain and sufferings in the pre-revolution struggle. In a sense, this struggle is much the easier. The post-revolution stage brings a greater scope for comfort and easy life. Lesser are the issues to kindle excitement. The new state machine is no longer the direct enemy. The task becomes then one to carry on struggle against the invisible enemy. A sharp and alert vigil is to be maintained on the slightest of possible deviation from the economic, political, cultural and international policies in the socialist state. These are to be protected against even the slightest of deviation. That is, after the establishment of socialism, an altogether new type of struggle is to be entered into. Is this ideological struggle, which has had to be carried on also before revolution, an easy task? The struggle before revolution was not only political; it had to be conducted in the cultural sphere too. Just as this cultural revolution is essential before the technical revolution, so also there is the imperative necessity for intense ideological struggles to be conducted in the cultural sphere in order to protect revolution itself. This is one basic teaching of Marxism. That is why, before the Russian revolution, Lenin had to fight against Mach, Tolstoy and even had to wield the pen against Plekhanov. Obviously he could not perform this task simply by writing treatises on economy only. Had revolution meant only an economic struggle, we need not have discussed all these things at such length, nor need have entered into all these discourses on philosophy.

## Power of allegiance to revolution is invincible

I shall conclude after discussing one more point. The SUCI has developed as the real vanguard of the communist movement in India. I should sound a note of caution to all party workers about one thing. It is this : often many among the very people for whose cause you have been struggling may jeer at you, may even attack you. SUCI workers will have to be ready to face any such situation. Without understanding the goal of your struggle, or misunderstanding it, the people for whom you are struggling may humiliate you. World history testifies — revolutionary struggles everywhere had to endure such things in the beginning. There is nothing in this to be disheartened at. We have entered into this movement knowing well that many hazards await us in its course. So, a lot of strength is needed in the pursuit of the revolutionary work. This strength is the strength of knowledge, the strength of steadfast application, the strength of allegiance to and firm belief in revolution, and the strength of the struggle to build up ourselves on the base of higher morality and ethics. This struggle is not for emancipation of one's own self alone, but the emancipation of all people and thereby emancipating oneself. With appeal to everyone of you to take on greater responsibilities in this struggle and to engage yourselves in tireless efforts to build yourselves as true and worthy communist revolutionaries, I conclude this school of politics.

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\* Some portions concerning the then international communist movement, the role of women in the struggle for emancipation and correct methodology for building up the party have been omitted and will be published later.

## Notes

- 1 There are idealist philosophies which are atheist in belief.
- 2 Lenin said : “The *reflection* of nature in man’s thought must be understood not “lifelessly”, not “abstractly”, *not devoid of movement, not without contradictions*, but in the ... *process* of movement, the arising of contradictions and their solutions.” (*Philosophical Notebooks, Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 195)

3. Hegel said, “All that is real is rational, and all that is rational is real.” Concerning “real”, Hegel explained, “which at the same time is necessary”, and that “in the course of development all that was previously real becomes unreal, loses its necessity, its right to existence, its rationality, and a new visible reality takes the place of moribund reality.” Pointing out this dialectical logic of Hegel, Engels appreciatively mentioned its ‘true significance and revolutionary character’.

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh examined the Hegelian system of philosophy from the angle of Hegel’s premise of his philosophical system. Comrade Ghosh showed, it was Hegel who had expounded and emphasized the dialectical logic that all changes happen through contradiction; even so, his philosophy engendered problems despite its dialectical methodology just because Hegel had failed to grasp the truth of primacy of matter in its dialectical relation to idea. Consequently, Hegelian dialectics became dialectics of idea. That is, in terms of Hegel’s formulation, idea was prior to matter, idea was the origin of matter, the world came out from the Absolute Idea. From this premise of Hegel’s philosophy it followed that in this world created from the Original Idea all is real because all is necessity of dialectical expression of the Absolute Idea, and that is why it is rational. Which cannot but mean that all which comes into being thus is real and must remain real. Which shows, judged on the premise of the Absolute Idea, Hegelian system of philosophy starts in contradistinction with Hegelian dialectics. Hegelian dialectical logic contradicts the premise of Hegel’s system of philosophy, the two are at cross-purpose.

This is what Comrade Ghosh wanted to show, which by no means contradicts Engels’ appreciation of Hegel’s dialectical logic as revolutionary.

4. In Kant’s philosophy space and time appear as *a priori* concepts. To affirm the objective character of space and time against the Kantian concept, i.e., to affirm that space and time are attributes of matter, inalienable forms of being or existence, Engels emphasized : “The basic forms of all being are space and time, and existence out of time is just as gross an absurdity as existence out of space.” (Engels: Anti-Dühring) Earlier Feuerbach said : “Space and time are not mere forms of phenomenon but essential conditions of being.” Matter exists in extendedness in space and time. In consideration of form of existence or being, space-time are the basic and inalienable forms of existence of matter — space and time are the basic forms of being. Space and time together signify conditions of existence of matter in motion. From this analysis of nature of matter, or concept of matter, Shibdas Ghosh termed space and time as conditions of existence of matter.
5. Later on, they grouped up into different parties under the name CPI(ML).
6. It has been recorded at the end, these issues have not been included in the present booklet.