

The Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China

Theoretical inconsistencies marked the Report and Constitution placed by Lin Biao at the Ninth Congress of the CPC. Studying the available scanty facts in the light of the logic of probability, Comrade Ghosh made this critical review. Later revelations corroborated his appraisal.

Comrades,

Many questions have been asked on the Report and Constitution placed by Lin Biao and adopted by the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China. I shall deal with the most important ones. However, certain other issues are also involved and although no questions have been asked on them, they need to be dealt with. And I shall do it in due course. Needless to say, I shall discuss all this in the light of the discussion we had in the Central Committee.

Going through this Report of the Ninth Congress we have really been taken aback. Leaving aside the few correct points here and there, the entire Report abounds in gross theoretical inconsistencies. For example, on the same question it spoke in contradictory terms at different places and made no attempts to arrive at a conclusion supported by arguments and facts. Second, in the theoretical matters, too, there are many faulty expressions. Most important, such wild claims have been made in certain respects which have no real basis and in support of which no facts have been adduced. I feel really concerned about one thing. After such a glorious Cultural Revolution — in a word a magnificent event — it was expected they would convene a Party Congress and I had said so in my discussion on *Cultural Revolution of China**.¹ I expected much from this Congress in elucidating the very many complicated issues. Indeed, communist circles all over the world had a great expectation. This Ninth Congress has not only belied it, its theoretical standard, too, as reflected in the Report, cannot but cause grave apprehensions.

Contradictory statements

I had better start, referring to the comments in the Report on the character of the Soviet state and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. We cannot agree fully with their view that the Soviet state led by the revisionist leadership has degenerated into a “dark fascist State of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie”. What, however, strikes me most is that even on a vital question as this, having great bearing upon the international communist movement, they have made three different observations at three places in the same Report. How could it happen in such an important document ?

While discussing the four major contradictions in the world, what they have said amounts to claiming that the Soviet state is no longer a socialist state, it has degenerated into a social imperialist state ; and that is why they have placed the contradiction between the Soviet Union and the imperialist countries in the category of contradiction among the imperialist countries. But where they have analysed the internal condition of the Soviet Union, they have not been able to reach the definite conclusion that the Soviet state has already become a capitalist state. Rather, they have said, the Soviet state has been stepping towards restoration of capitalism. Again, in another context, they have quoted Mao Zedong as saying that the majority of the people of the Soviet Union and of the members of the CPSU are good and communist and want revolution, they will not tolerate this revisionist leadership for long. The question under discussion being the character of the Soviet state and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, do we get from these three different observations any clear idea about what they really mean by all this ? How is it that they allowed such gross theoretical inconsistencies on so important a question ? In that case, would it be possible to show the

correct path to the party comrades and the people at large ? All this is perturbing us very much.

I would like to remind you, first of all, of the four major contradictions of the world in this “era of imperialism and proletarian revolution”, particularly after the Russian Revolution, as enunciated by Lenin and Stalin :

One : Contradiction among the imperialist countries ;

Two : Contradiction between colonies and imperialist countries ;

Three : Contradiction between labour and capital in the capitalist-imperialist countries ;
and

Four : Contradiction between the two systems — socialist and capitalist.

But in Lin Biao’s Report the four major contradictions are described as follows : “(1) Contradiction between oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and social imperialism on the other ; (2) Contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist and revisionist countries ; (3) Contradiction between imperialist and social imperialist countries and among the imperialist countries ; and (4) Contradiction between socialist countries on the one hand and imperialism and social imperialism on the other.”

Two points emerge clearly from the way these four principal contradictions have been described in the Report. *First*, the Ninth Congress did not formulate any new major or principal contradiction in addition to what Lenin and Stalin had enunciated long back. That is to say, they could not or did not go beyond Lenin’s or Stalin’s formulation in this regard, except for branding the Soviet state as a social imperialist state.

Second, it has been implied that the Soviet state is no longer a socialist state ; it has degenerated into a social imperialist state. They have not said that, in spite of the Soviet leadership’s pursuing a revisionist and a very dangerous line, the contradiction of the Soviet Union with imperialism still falls in the category of that between imperialism and socialism. On the contrary, they have clearly defined the contradiction between the Soviet Union and imperialism as one among the imperialist countries.

But note what they say in the same Report where they have alleged that the CPSU leaders betray a big brotherly attitude in matters of inter-party relations at the international level, and try to subdue others : “From Khrushchev to Brezhnev and Company they are all persons in power taking the capitalist road, who have long concealed themselves in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. As soon as they came to power they turned the bourgeoisie’s ‘*hope of restoration*’ into ‘*attempts at restoration*’ and “...the Soviet revisionist renegade clique *has been practising* social imperialism and social fascism more frantically than ever before. Internally, it has intensified its suppression of the Soviet people and *speeded up* the all round restoration of capitalism”, etc., etc. (emphasis added)

Attempts at restoration or already restored

It will be clear from these two excerpts, what they mean is that there are attempts at restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, the revisionist leaders are speeding up this process of restoration, this far. By this they obviously refer to a process. But, as we all understand, between ‘attempts at restoration of capitalism’ and ‘capitalism being completely restored’ there is a gulf of difference. To say that there have been many deviations does not mean that a thing has automatically been converted into its opposite. For instance, a working class party may also at times suffer from some deviations. Does this mean that as soon as there has been a deviation the party has been reduced to a non-working class party ? To show that it has, one has to cite reasons, that is, one has to prove by correlating all the pertinent political, economic and cultural aspects that the party as a whole has been reduced to a non-working class party, that is, the organizational structure and life of the party have degenerated, and that it is not just the case of a party following a revisionist line. Similarly,

one has to specify the grounds on which to conclude that the Soviet state is no longer a socialist state, it has turned into a social fascist state and the entire economic system has become a fascist economy. But they have provided no data in support.

So, as we find, they have declared the Soviet state to be a social imperialist state, while discussing the four major world contradictions and at another place in the same Report they have said that there are attempts at restoration of capitalism by the revisionist leadership. But would anybody say, in describing a capitalist or imperialist state, that there are some people who are leading the country towards capitalism? Can it be said of Hitler's Germany which was reduced to a fascist state, or of any capitalist country for that matter, that there were attempts at restoration of capitalism? How can such an important document once brand the Soviet state as social imperialist and again speak of attempts at restoration of capitalism there? How can there be such gross inconsistency in such a document? Whatever the lowering of ideological standard of the communists the world over and however grave the ideological crisis in the communist movement, there are still some communists, in no mean numbers, who would refuse to accept such trash!

See how an excerpt from Mao Zedong quoted in the Report runs: "The Soviet Union was the first socialist State and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was created by Lenin. Although the leadership of the Soviet party and State has now been usurped by the revisionists, I would advise comrades to remain firm in the conviction that the masses of Soviet people and party members and cadres are good, that they desire revolution and that revisionist rule will not last long." Whereas the point at issue is what should be our analysis of and attitude to the CPSU and the Soviet state and whereas the basic question is whether the deviations we think they have suffered are of such magnitude that these can no longer be called a communist party and a socialist state, the excerpts quoted in the Report by Lin Biao have not touched even the fringe of the problem, have rather bypassed or evaded the question. This quotation is not only inadequate but irrelevant too. Does the advice to the comrades to keep in mind that "the masses of Soviet people and party members and cadres are good and they desire revolution" answer the moot question whether the CPSU is still a communist party and the Soviet state still a socialist state? Does this quotation help in any way dispel confusion? Or does it not, on the contrary, contribute to further muddling of the whole issue? And such a Report has been claimed to have "illuminated the path"! What sort of standard does it reflect? Let alone the question of correctness or otherwise of their contention, just think of the theoretical standard they reflect! Not only the delegates to the Ninth Congress but the members of the Central Committee, the Standing Committee, Lin Biao and all other leaders owe it to answer how such an important document could contain such queer things! They cannot shirk this responsibility.

I am really worried over one thing. Whether the CPC has been able through the Cultural Revolution — which I hailed as magnificent — to isolate and single out those whom they accused as capitalist roaders who from within the party had been allegedly sabotaging the Chinese state and economy as agents of Soviet revisionism is not that important. What I am really concerned about is whether this great Cultural Revolution could uplift in its wake the theoretical and ideological standard of the leaders, organizers and common members of the party as well as the people of the country. This should have been the main object of the Cultural Revolution, because this is the ultimate guarantee against possible emergence of revisionism. This is why this aspect deserved, in my opinion, special attention and importance.

Now to conclude that the Soviet state is no longer a socialist state, but has turned into a capitalist state, or that the CPSU is no longer a communist party, you have to go by theoretical analysis and corroborate it with facts and figures. Mere statement that the leadership of the party and the state have become revisionist does not prove *ipso facto* that

the party is no longer a communist party, nor the state a socialist state. Arguments as this cannot be taken as proof. In the name of substantiation it is actually an indulgence in oversimplification. Suppose, a revolutionary leadership comes to power in the CPSU tomorrow. Would they start saying immediately that the party has again turned into a communist party and the state has become socialist overnight ? Is this Marxism ? I don't think the problem is so simple. In order to prove that as a result of the modern revisionists' usurping the leadership, "the Soviet State is no longer a socialist State", you have to establish, and establish beyond doubt, that the economic system, production relation and the motive force of production in the Soviet Union have undergone a radical change and the socialist production relation and motive force of production have been completely replaced by the capitalist production relation and capitalist motive force of production, thereby changing the entire economic base.

What I mean is, to prove this contention, it is not sufficient to refer to some tendencies or some symptoms. It has to be shown that the capitalist production relation has assumed the dominant character, that is, it has become the dominant production relation. All this has to be proved by comprehensive theoretical analyses and substantiated with necessary data. Unless we approach this question comprehensively by correlating all the political, economic, social and philosophical aspects involved and until this can be supported by materials and facts, we should not conclude that a communist party or a socialist state has been reduced to a non-communist party or a capitalist state. It is a different matter what we think on this question, but even going by what the CPC says we cannot say conclusively that restoration of capitalism in Russia is no longer a possibility but that capitalism has already been restored there. Because the CPC could not provide any such theoretical analysis, nor could they corroborate their contention by facts beyond doubt. Evidently, other than asserting that the Soviet state is a social imperialist state, they have not established their contention by any theoretical analysis or factual data while they discussed the major world contradictions.

Fundamental change not possible through evolution

Quite pertinently, a question has been raised, even if it is assumed that the Soviet state has turned into a dark fascist state in the hands of the bourgeoisie, whether it is proper and correct for the Marxists to say that this change has taken place "through peaceful evolution". For, Lin Biao's Report says : "As soon as they² came to power, ... usurped the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, and through 'peaceful evolution', turned the world's first State of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dark, fascist State of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." The question arises : Suppose, the economic system, the production relation and the motive force of production in the Soviet Union have undergone a radical change, in absence of which it cannot be concluded that the Soviet state has turned into a capitalist state. Now, if there be no resistance, this change may take place peacefully, that is, without bloody seizure of power ; but when it is a question of turning the state of one class into that of another, can that take place through the process of evolution ? Marxism or dialectical materialism teaches us that a phenomenon or an entity undergoes a radical transformation only when, in course of continuous change, bit by bit at every moment — through what we call evolution or quantitative change — it reaches a nodal point, and then through an abrupt change or a break or revolutionary or qualitative change, it turns into an altogether new phenomenon or new entity. So when they say that there has been a radical change in the class character of the Soviet state, that is to say, the dictatorship of the proletariat has been supposedly replaced by the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie — is it in conformity with Marxism to assert that this radical change has taken place through evolutionary or gradual change only ? Had they called it peaceful counter-revolution instead of 'peaceful evolution' there would not have been any such theoretical inconsistency at least, the questions regarding their moot contention itself

notwithstanding. Marxism or dialectical materialism teaches us that when, in course of gradual change of anything, an altogether new thing emerges, an altogether new entity comes into being, the process involves both continuity and break. We have to take cognizance of both these aspects in order to comprehend correctly the nature of change. What I am referring to as break or nodal point signifies a revolution in the sphere of social change or change of the state structure whereby the state of one class is transformed radically into that of another. So this radical transformation from one state into another, from the dictatorship of one class to that of another, can take place *through peaceful means* if there is no resistance, but can *never take place through evolution*. Since it is the communist party which rules there and since the people at large have a sense of allegiance to the working class, the working class party and its ideology, so if they practise revisionism while waving the banner of Marxism and in the long run destroy the revolutionary essence of Marxism from within, the entire system may rot one day and become polluted. And thus, given no resistance, the socialist state may turn into a capitalist state without any bloody counter-revolution. Be that as it may, this can, however, never take place through the process of evolution. It must be admitted, therefore, that ‘peaceful evolution’ is a faulty theoretical expression. For all this, I cannot but brand the entire document as a masterpiece of faulty theoretical expressions !

Again, in another context this Report of Lin Biao says : “Chairman Mao has waged a tit-for-tat struggle against revisionism...”. I would ask you to ponder over a point. The struggle waged against modern revisionism is an ideological struggle, however intense, protracted and all-embracing it may be. Can we call it a tit-for-tat struggle ? If we do, can we characterize the struggle against revisionism correctly as we want to ? Because, we must keep it in mind that every expression carries a specific meaning and has a specific connotation. An expression cannot be used anywhere and everywhere, irrespective of time and context. The expression “tit-for-tat struggle” can be used generally in connection with the struggle waged between class enemies. What has it got to do with the ideological struggle against revisionism ? Whatever the mental satisfaction in putting like this, it can only add to confusion ; it begets complexities in thoughts and blurs clarity of ideas. I feel there is a reason for their saying so. Their understanding of the principle of unity of opposites, as reflected in Lin Biao’s Report, particularly the understanding that the working class party is governed by *this very principle of unity of opposites* and that it operates constantly within the working class party, is mainly responsible for the muddled expression of “tit-for-tat struggle”. I would explain later our view on how the principle of unity of opposites should be understood. Now I request you to think over another aspect also. Suppose, we are discussing a non-socialist system of states — which may be an imperialist state, a resurgent nationalist state or even a socialist state turned capitalist through restoration of capitalism following a long course of deviation that led to a fundamental change ; or, the case of a socialist state which is suffering deviation but has not yet turned capitalist. When we are discussing these different types of states, should we adopt the same approach in each case ? Should we describe them in the same terms, bracketing them together ? If we fail to determine the particularity of contradiction in every particular case, can we have the correct idea about them ? And when the correct idea is lacking, is it possible to lead a struggle on the right course ? That is why this approach of viewing the struggle against revisionism as a “tit-for-tat struggle” will confuse the main issue, even if unwillingly.

In his Report Lin Biao has quoted some excerpts from Lenin stressing that after the socialist revolution is completed successfully, overthrowing the bourgeoisie, and the dictatorship of the proletariat is established, the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat does not come to an end ; rather the resistance of the bourgeoisie increases manifold, though in different form and dimension. And then, elsewhere, Lin Biao has presented a quotation from Mao Zedong on the same subject which is, in a way, a reiteration

of Lenin's teaching but not as comprehensive. Referring to this quotation of Mao's, Lin Biao has made the wild claim that it is a new contribution in the history of theory and practice of Marxism ! What sort of ethics does it reflect ? He quite forgets that he himself has cited elsewhere Lenin's clear and comprehensive teachings in this regard ! Had it been a case of ignorance of the comrades in the CPC and even of Lin Biao's regarding what Lenin had said on this question, there would not have been anything to object to, despite the wild claim. We would have thought then that because of their ignorance of Lenin's analysis, Mao's quotation struck them as reflecting the truth and hence their claim of it as a new contribution in the history of communist movement and that Mao Zedong was the first to provide an original analysis on this question. Some of you may ask : how is it possible that the CPC leaders do not know what Lenin said long back and so what sort of communists are they ? I think this approach is wrong. This may happen, particularly in countries where the leaders had to be so engaged in conducting protracted armed struggles that they could not keep abreast of a valuable analysis of communist authority of any other country. In that event to say that they are not good communists would be wrong in my opinion. But here the case is different. Even if the delegates had not known it earlier, Lin Biao had made them acquainted with Lenin's analysis by quoting him in the Report. So it cannot be said that they made this mistake of claiming Mao's originality in this regard out of ignorance of Lenin's analysis. For your convenience, let me read out the relevant excerpts from Lenin quoted by Lin Biao. The *first* one reads as follows : "Those who recognize only the class struggle are not yet Marxists ... Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Second : "The transition from capitalism to communism represents one entire historical epoch. Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this hope is converted into attempts at restoration."

Third : "...the bourgeoisie whose resistance is increased tenfold by its overthrow (even if only in one country), and whose power is not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie, but also in the forces of habit, in the strength of small production. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously and on a mass scale."

Fourth : "For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential."

Fifth : "The new bourgeoisie (was) arising from among our Soviet Government employees." And the *last* one : "The imperialist countries will never miss an opportunity for military intervention, as they put it, i.e., to strangle Soviet power."

These are the excerpts Lin Biao quoted in his Report. I consider it necessary to draw your attention to some more and very valuable excerpts from Lenin which Lin Biao has not cited to elucidate the point, namely, what would be the nature and character of class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Let me quote those :

One : "Socialism means abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could do to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished at one stroke."

Two : "All classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Three : "The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it merely assumes different forms."

Four : "The class struggle waged by overthrown exploiters, against the victorious vanguard of the exploited, i.e. the proletariat, has become incomparably more bitter. And it cannot be otherwise in the case of revolution, unless this concept is replaced by reformist illusions."³

Five : “The abolition of classes requires a long, difficult and stubborn class struggle, which *after* the overthrow of the power of capital, *after* the destruction of the bourgeois state, after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat *does not disappear* (as the vulgar representatives of the old socialism and social democracy imagine) but merely changes *its forms* and in many respects become more fierce.”⁴ (emphasis added)

Six : “Dictatorship of the proletariat is the continuation of the class struggle of the proletariat in new forms.”⁵

Seven : “Dictatorship is a state of intense war.”⁶

Many such citations can be given from Lenin’s works. I have mentioned only a few. But, as I was saying earlier, Lin Biao, after quoting these words of Lenin, has referred to one quotation of Mao Zedong which I will read out to you :

“The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the different political forces and the class struggle in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will continue to be long and tortuous and at times will even become very acute.”

And just after this, Lin Biao’s Report says : “Thus, *for the first time* in the theory and practice of international communist movement, it was *pointed out* explicitly that classes and class struggle still exist after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has been in the main completed, and that the proletariat must continue the revolution.” (emphasis added)

This is what I object to. The whole affair appears very unethical to me. Even after referring to such a brilliant analysis of Lenin’s, how could they make such an absurd and wild claim that it was Mao Zedong who had for the first time provided this analysis in the history of theory and practice of Marxism ? How blind is the man who, whatever his intentions, can go to such an extent of flattery ? And how could the delegates who went through this Report, stomach such trash ? Why did not they think over whether to praise a leader one has to flatter him ? It is flattery — pure and simple. Can a leader or leadership be strengthened by flattery ? And what sort is he who indulges in shameless flattery ? Taking note of all this, one thing perturbs me, which I have placed before the Central Committee and am placing before you too, is that if Lin Biao succeeds Mao Zedong and assumes the leadership and power of the CPC then I am afraid that the future of the CPC is bleak. I wonder if Mao Zedong himself approves of this Report ! I emphasize ‘if’, because I hold him in high esteem. So far as I know him, he is dead against all this. Is it possible that he has approved ? I have profound trust in his wisdom — not only the wisdom in earlier times, but what he has been showing still and it strikes me how he could have tolerated this. I cannot reconcile this with my impression about Mao.

Class struggle under proletarian dictatorship

What do we learn from Lenin ? Lenin taught that once socialism was established it did not mean abolition of the classes. Classes do exist during the transitional period from the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the heralding of the classless society ; so also exists the class struggle. Class struggle does not disappear, but simply changes form — it continues to be in force.

Moreover, Lenin also pointed out that the class struggle waged by the victorious proletariat against the overthrown exploiters becomes much more intense, all embracing and subtle too, as compared to the class struggle before revolution. We have before us these Leninist teachings.

In my discussion on the Cultural Revolution of China I had said that the class struggle becomes bitter, and in one sense more difficult, after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Because, the class enemy then attacks not from outside but from within. So I

have said that when the enemy is known the struggle is less difficult because then it is easier to identify the enemy and to build up struggle against it. But when the enemy is within, taking us unawares, the struggle becomes all the more difficult. The peculiar nature of this attack is that it gradually pollutes the whole system from within. So, it is very difficult to identify and detect the enemy and also to combat it. That is why Lenin not only said that under the new circumstances class struggle changed its forms ; but pointed out that class struggle at this stage became more fierce. So, as soon as the bourgeoisie is overthrown from the state power, all their industries and properties are confiscated and all means of production socialized, class struggle does not cease to exist, nor does the power of resistance of the bourgeoisie vanish. Lenin therefore characterized the dictatorship of the proletariat as the continuation of class struggle under the specific conditions of socialist reconstruction. Let me add, for clarity, that it is this class struggle which carries forward the socialist transformation. But please don't say, mind you, that this is a new contribution in the theory and practice of Marxism ! No, it is not proper. What Lenin said implies this.

In this connection I would like to touch on another point. Regarding the form of class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat, Stalin had said, in course of a deliberation, that the more we would advance towards the victory of socialism, the further we would proceed to the complete triumph of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the closer we would approach the final disappearance of classes, the more the class struggle would be intensified, difficult and complex. Criticizing this, Khrushchev had observed that by this thesis Stalin had created the grounds for and sought to justify cruelty and abuse of power. It is not difficult to understand that Khrushchev, when he had usurped the power, said all this just to discredit Stalin and as part of his programme of de-Stalinization, and we then had protested against Khrushchev and pointed out that Stalin had been correct on this question.

But it is interesting that the CPC which now admits that class struggle becomes more intense after the establishment of socialism — in fact, the very justification of the Cultural Revolution of China stands on this point — the same CPC had at that time virtually lent support to Khrushchev's stand. In an article in the *People's Daily* they had observed : "After the elimination of exploiting classes one should not continue to stress intensification of the class struggle, as was done by Stalin, with the result that the healthy development of socialist democracy was hampered. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is quite right in resolutely correcting Stalin's mistakes in this respect."⁷

This article was published in China when Mao Zedong was at the helm of the Communist Party of China, enjoying undisputed authority in the Central Committee. But it is also true that the CPC has since corrected its old mistake and rightly so. They are now concretely applying in practice the teachings of Lenin and Stalin. However, although they have rectified their mistake, they have not admitted the same. We think, if they could, it would have been all the more healthy and in conformity with the communist code of conduct, and would have set a good example. But from the experiences of the international communist movement after Lenin we find, leaving aside our party, that the norm of frankly admitting the mistakes committed has been rather conspicuous by its absence. It is a healthy sign that the CPC has detected and rectified its mistakes.

We note that the Ninth Congress has put forward the proposition that 'Mao Zedong Thought' is the Marxism-Leninism of the era — not only in the Report but, as you have seen, also in a clause added to the Party Constitution.

This clause runs as follows : "The Communist Party of China takes Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as the theoretical basis guiding its thinking. Mao Zedong Thought is Marxism-Leninism of the era in which imperialism is heading for total collapse and socialism is advancing to worldwide victory."

I want to state categorically that we have not been able to agree with this formulation of the CPC. It is one thing to speak of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and we never felt difficulty in accepting this proposition. But the way they have characterized Mao Zedong Thought as the Marxism-Leninism of this era and in a language similar to that of the revisionist Khrushchevites described the present epoch as the era of disintegration of imperialism, as a new era denying Lenin's characterization as the 'era of imperialism, war and proletarian revolution' — we think these formulations absolutely wrong and we do not subscribe to these.

When we speak of learning and practising Marxism, we thereby mean to apply continuously the fundamentals of Marxism, that is, the theory and basic principles underlying the concept of Marxism, to concretize these in the specific conditions, elaborate these and to that extent to enrich these. In other words, it is impossible to grasp Marxism correctly without continuously applying, concretizing and elaborating it and to that extent enriching it. Since anyone applying Marxism, is applying it in a particular condition with respect to some specific contradictions, he will have to, in course of this practice, develop and enrich Marxism to some extent. That is why from the very inception of our party we have been upholding this teaching that Marxism cannot be correctly realized without concretizing and developing it. We have wanted to stress thereby that nobody can understand Marxism by copying others or learning it by rote. From this point of view it must be recognized that in course of applying Marxism in the concrete conditions of China during the Chinese Revolution, in the spheres of politics, culture, military science as well as on the theoretical plane — Mao Zedong developed and concretized Marxism and in that sense enriched its understanding. That is why our party considers Mao Zedong a leading Marxist authority. But it would be wrong to say that Mao Zedong Thought is the Marxism-Leninism of this era, since it is tantamount to accepting Mao's thought as Maoism. When we characterize Lenin's thought as Leninism, it is not because Lenin was the first to make revolution successful by applying Marxism nor because he, in course of applying Marxism in the concrete conditions he confronted, developed, concretized and enriched it to some extent. Lenin's thought is called Leninism because it was not just elaboration of Marxism. He concretized and added certain new theses to the treasure-house of Marxist knowledge, to the fundamentals of Marxism in the fields of economics, politics and philosophy — theses which were all new additions, that is, which were not there earlier in the understanding or concept of Marxism, and which he had to enunciate in the period after Marx and Engels, in the "era of imperialism and proletarian revolution."

So before terming Mao Zedong Thought as the Marxism-Leninism of the era, they have to show, point by point, what are the theses Mao has added to the general treasure-house of Marxism, to its fundamentals that had not been there in the earlier understanding of Marxism. Unless and until the Communist Party of China can clearly show this, it is not proper in our opinion to claim Mao Zedong Thought as the Marxism-Leninism of this era. Lin Biao has not cited either any such example of Mao's new contribution. Even the concept of the strategy of new democratic revolution of China was first clearly expounded by Stalin. In order to establish the strategic line of new democratic revolution, Mao had to refer to Stalin time and again. But what Mao did was to present this theory of new democratic revolution very lucidly, very beautifully, most effectively in his own style — this was his unique achievement.

Mao's thought — not Marxism-Leninism of this era

Another point. Projecting Mao Zedong Thought this way without substantiation can have two damaging consequences.

Firstly, such projection without any basis has turned out to be a wild claim, thereby virtually denigrating to some extent the authority of Mao Zedong as a leading Marxist personality. Secondly, it has provided further scope to the long-standing habit in the international communist movement as well as in our country to quote from Marxist authorities out of context in the overzeal to 'prove' a contention. The result will be like — say, Charu Mazumdar will quote something from Mao Zedong's Works and claim the same as Mao's thought, again Nagi Reddy will produce another to contend that not the former but his is really Mao's thought. Then again, if the CPI(M) finds it difficult to hold together their rank and file without chanting "Mao's thought", they will also produce another set of quotations. This will go on and often, because the Report does not clearly spell out what the CPC means by Mao Zedong Thought.

Was it proper not to circulate Mao's speech

But what was the objective of the Ninth Congress ? The main object of the Congress was to establish the thesis that "Mao Zedong Thought is Marxism-Leninism of the era". Let us see from another angle how they proceeded to fulfil this objective. If you observe critically you will find that there is no mention of any important political, economic or social problem of China. So it is more a reportage than a political Report. While the main objective of this Congress was to project Mao Zedong Thought as the Marxism-Leninism of the era, we are astounded to find that the inaugural speech of Mao, who was present in person and who addressed the delegates, has not yet been made available. We have not yet been able to get a copy of the speech. Whereas, Lin Biao's Report has been circulated all over the world. Is it not strange ? It shocked me very much, and we are seriously thinking over it. There may be two possibilities. One is, maybe Mao spoke extempore and because of old age the points he touched were not probably treated systematically ; so it needs time to edit the speech and put it on circulation. This possibility cannot be ruled out.

Trickery of swearing by Mao's name

There is another possibility. We all know that not only the people of Russia, but the exploited people of the whole world hold Lenin in very high esteem. There is no doubt that he still enjoys that position of profound respect. In the case of Stalin we find that some communists of the world accepted him as an authority while many others could not. But it is quite different in case of Mao Zedong. Whatever people outside China may think of him, in his own country he enjoys more love and respect than Lenin or Stalin enjoyed in their own country. When I had the occasion to visit China I felt it strongly. So, I think, under such circumstances if any leader or a group in the party is engaged in a conspiracy against Mao, he or they would not be able to do so by openly opposing him ; they would have to do it invoking Mao's name, referring to him in praise on and often. The reality of the situation in China is still such that even those who want to physically annihilate Mao and eliminate his thought, would have to pretend to be devout followers of Mao, feigning grave concern about what a great loss would it be to the CPC and the people if Mao's thought is not followed. So in season or out of season they would wax eloquent on Mao. They have no alternative. Observing someone eulogizing Mao, if one concludes that the person can never go against Mao, he would be committing a mistake.

Mao was virtually under arrest

The point I want to make is that while it may appear that the objective of this Congress was to project Mao, the situation might have been in reality that Mao Zedong was virtually under arrest in the hands of the Lin Biao clique, he was virtually robbed of all power. I do not mean that he was imprisoned. I apprehend that the Lin Biao clique has usurped the

authority of the party and the state even while worshipping Mao. I cannot rule out the possibility that Mao Zedong, though he was present in person at the Congress, had lost his authority and command over the party, even if temporarily. If the logic of probability is considered a science — and I have no doubt that it should be — then by applying it I cannot negate such an eventuality. Otherwise, although the Report eulogized Mao Zedong Thought as Marxism-Leninism of the era, what earthly reason could there be for circulating Lin Biao's Report throughout the world while the inaugural speech of Mao who was present in person and addressed the Congress, has not yet been published and made available. This is deeply agitating my mind. Because, if we rule out this eventuality, then the questions that arise are difficult to explain. I mean, considering the gross theoretical inconsistencies, faulty theoretical expressions, wild claims and even sheer flattery, in all of which this Ninth Congress Report abounds, it is very difficult to believe that Mao Zedong himself approved of all this and did not object. This is unbelievable. I have already expressed my doubt whether Mao had at all endorsed this Report.

Whatever questions have occurred to me, whatever eventualities I could think of, I am placing before you on the basis of the logic of probability. But this is only for education of the party comrades, for discussion among ourselves, and not to be ventilated to the public. Whatever I am discussing here is meant exclusively for our party comrades. We cannot publish this discussion and circulate it — at least not now. Let me explain why it is impossible for us and you must bear it in mind. Whatever I have said now is nothing more than an apprehension. We have no definite proof as yet. Without any definite proof can we utter anything about this party, the party which is holding aloft, in the main, the noble banner of revolution, and is the only source of hope and inspiration before the international communist movement, that may tarnish its image? Can we do so as revolutionaries, communists? It would be the height of irresponsibility and violation of communist code of conduct and ethics if we do it.

Law — particular and general

At only one place in Lin Biao's Report, is there an attempt to expound something original and that is all wrong. The rest is reiteration of something said previously, elaborated in some respects. But what has been put forward as original is a wrong proposition. Let me explain. Sometime back, I read in a book by Mao Zedong: "The law of the unity of opposites is the basic law of materialist dialectics". Before going into a detailed discussion on this question I want to clarify a point. I have noticed a very beautiful aspect of Mao's genius. He has mastered an art whereby he can present a thing already known — what Marx, Engels, Lenin or Stalin said — in a different style, metamorphosing their expression and doing it beautifully. This way of putting a thing sometimes becomes very decisive and penetrating — it helps people not only of China but of other countries, too, to grasp an idea. But while using such style in theoretical matters, utmost care has to be exercised so that the precise understanding of the theory does not suffer under burden of literary or lyrical expressions. Because, we all know, in the field of philosophy even a slight shift of emphasis here and there, an overemphasis here or underemphasis there, alters the basic contention. While in case of the slightest deviation by others they make hair-splitting analysis of every expression to show how revisionist these theories are and raise unnecessary hue and cry, they ought not to underrate the gravity of lapses in their own case.

Now, I want to discuss whether the principle of the unity of opposites can be described as the basic law of dialectics. In my opinion, 'principle' should not be considered synonymous with 'basic law' — because, sometimes that creates hindrance to grasping a phenomenon correctly. However, as for myself and our Central Committee, we do not find in it anything very objectionable. We think if correctly understood there is nothing to object to when we

speak of a law, since we mean by it a particular law. When the term ‘law’ is used to connote a general law, it implies a principle. Other than this, a law always means a particular law which appears and disappears, comes into being and goes out of being. That is, in a particular situation, a particular law becomes operative in accordance with the specific situation and, in the same way, when, in course of development, a completely new situation arises, the old law becomes inadequate and can no longer govern the new situation ; it becomes invalid, ineffective, and a new law in conformity with the new situation comes into being and governs it. You all know, Stalin dealt with this question in his celebrated *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. We must understand that no law can be created, nor destroyed. What we can do is to study and understand a law, determine its character and harness it for social progress. When Mao Zedong spoke of the basic law of dialectics, he did not mean it to be a particular law, but indicated a general law — at least this is how we understand it and we find nothing to object to. What are the three principles of dialectics ? We know these are :

One : From quantitative changes to qualitative changes and *vice-versa* ;

Two : Unity of opposites ;

Three : Negation of negation.

Contradiction — antagonistic and non-antagonistic

We are to understand these three principles taken together. These three are interrelated and inseparable and so cannot be understood in isolation. However, while discussing the theory of contradiction, if somebody highlights the principle of ‘unity of opposites’ among the three since contradiction of opposite forces is the driving force and central point of change, and, therefore emphasizes that the principle of unity and struggle of opposites is the base concept — although in my opinion the other two principles also work simultaneously within it— I don’t consider it something objectionable. But the problem cropped up for something else. Immediately after quoting Mao, Lin Biao has observed that the inner party struggle of a working class party is also governed by this basic law of unity of opposites. The quotation of Mao he has cited is : “The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of unity of opposites is the basic law of materialist dialectics.” Just thereafter he has observed : “Opposition and struggle between the two lines within the party are a reflection inside the party of contradictions between classes and between the new and the old in society. If there were no contradictions in the party and no struggles to resolve them, and if the party did not get rid of the stale and take in the fresh, the party’s life would come to an end.”

In other words, according to Lin Biao, since unity of opposites is the basic law of dialectics, it is bound to be operative in the case of inner-party struggle, too. I think, it would be wrong to understand it this way. The struggle between two lines may sometimes be there in the inner-party struggle. But that does not mean that any struggle inside the party assumes the character of two-line struggle. We should bear in mind that struggle does not necessarily mean struggle between antagonistic forces ; struggle between non-antagonistic forces also constitutes a particular form of struggle.

Second, we know, in a class divided society the struggle between two opposing classes is the principal contradiction and this falls in the category of antagonistic contradiction. Marxism teaches us that the object of this contradiction is the overthrow of one by the other. The contradiction has to be resolved through its culmination in the overthrow of one class by the opposite class. Specifically, in a capitalist society, so long as the working class is unable to mobilize sufficient strength to overthrow the bourgeoisie from the state power, it has to conduct class struggle with the ultimate object of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, following the principle of unity of opposites.

Inner-party struggle — its object

But what is the character of the struggle within the working class party ? What is the situation there ? The situation, as we understand it, is such that everyone in the party, from the leaders to the rank and file, moves with the same class outlook and philosophy, the same class methodological approach on the basis of the same fundamentals. Still, it is quite likely that differences may arise over how each comrade understands these questions. And the object of the struggle over these differences which goes on continuously inside the party is to strengthen and cement further the unity of the party which we have all built up collectively.

Since we are all moving on the basis of a unity over the base political line, of common fundamentals, this struggle can be oriented to attaining unity. So, struggle continues inside the party centring round the contradiction due to differences of individual experiences of comrades and in their understanding of the ideological line, approach and day-to-day programmes. Conducting intense ideological struggle inside the party is the only course to resolve differences and cement unity. Mao Zedong has dealt with the question of inner-party struggle extensively and explained the character of this struggle in this way. But Lin Biao's contention is different from Mao's. To speak the truth, after he described the unity of opposites as the basic law of materialist dialectics, Lin Biao's contention that the working class party also operates on this basic law has made the confusion confounded instead of clearing it. In fact, he could not provide any correct understanding on the character of the inner-party struggle. What he has said boils down to claiming that whenever a difference on any question in the party crops up, and a contradiction centring round this difference, that contradiction would necessarily assume the character of contradiction between two opposite forces, between two lines ; that is, every such struggle should at once be deemed to be a struggle between the bourgeois headquarters and the proletarian headquarters. So, whatever deliberations may take place inside the party on any difference whatsoever would be deemed to be a struggle between two world outlooks, a two-line struggle.

Taking things in this light will lead to total chaos within the party. Lin Biao's contention implies that if struggle does not continue within the party constantly centring round the contradiction between the two antagonistic classes in the society then the party ceases to be a communist party ; so, this kind of struggle would go on for ever inside the party on the basis of two class outlooks, two class interests and two class objectives, the proof of a living struggle within the party would be in occurrence of this two-line struggle ; every struggle in the party means a two-line struggle, a struggle between two fundamentally opposite forces. In fact, Lin Biao has confused the inner-party struggle with class struggle. Otherwise, if we assume that there is and would always be the two-line struggle within the party — struggle between the bourgeois line and proletarian line — then we have also to agree that the object of this struggle is the overthrow of one class by the other. In that event the party of the working class can no longer be called the vanguard detachment of the proletariat. It has to be called the vanguard detachment of both the bourgeois and the proletarian classes at the same time. The question then arises — who will win ? If such be the reality then the struggle becomes a struggle for building up a genuine communist party. But then, naturally it cannot be governed by the principle of inner-party struggle. So we consider what Lin Biao has said on inner-party struggle to be wrong.

Whether a genuine communist party or not

Veteran comrades surely remember that when Liu Shaoqi's book on inner-party struggle was published — it must have been published with the approval of the CPC leadership — we had made some critical remarks in our inner-party discussions. I had pointed out that, first, it had to be shown whether a party bearing the name of a working class party was genuinely a working class party or not. This had to be shown by analysing, on the test of history and the anvil of science and logic, its methodological approach, its process of formation, character of

its leadership as well as the strategy and tactics of revolution adopted by it in the specific condition of the country in which it worked ; only then could come the question of the object of the inner-party struggle ; only after its working class character had been established could it be said that the object of conducting the inner-party struggle was to cement its unity and strengthen its organization. But if it was argued, without first establishing that the party was a genuine proletarian party, that since the party was named communist, the object of its inner-party struggle was to reach unity then that was bound to create problems ; taking advantage of such argument, the leadership of parties masquerading as communist parties in different countries, which were communist in name only but in reality non-communist in character, would claim that inner-party struggle existed in their parties, too, and that struggle was conducted with the object of achieving unity. They would use it as a plea against the working class interest. I had observed that Liu Shaoqi's book, although correct in a general way, suffered from one-sidedness. I had discussed these points also in the booklet *Communist Party of India X-rayed*.⁸

When antagonistic contradiction turns non-antagonistic

I feel I should discuss in this connection a few aspects of the contradiction theory. I think, and so should every Marxist, that to understand a phenomenon, a problem correctly, we ought to understand critically the nature of its contradiction — not only the general contradiction but also the particularity of its contradiction, the particular complexity of its specific mode of existence. We must try to understand meticulously what form a contradiction may take under what condition. If we analyse this way, we would realize that a contradiction which exists as an antagonistic contradiction in a particular situation may become a non-antagonistic contradiction in a different context. Some examples may help in grasping the point.

Take, for instance, the orbit of the working class of India. Here there are workers coming from workers' families ; and workers who have not yet lost link with the peasant life and who, therefore, are still under the influence of the mental make-up of the peasantry. There are also workers coming from the urban middle class who carry strong influence of the culture and ideas of the urban middle class. These three categories together constitute the working class. Now consider the working class as a whole, or the working class party. We are to remember that in workers coming from these different sections of the society diverse individual tendencies and fads accumulate and persist centring round the tendencies of the different sections of the working class, their psychological make-up, hangovers from these past culture and habits, etc. The contradiction over these, when judged as separate elements, may appear as antagonistic. But as soon as the question of the struggle against the bourgeoisie comes up this same contradiction, viewed in that particular context, becomes non-antagonistic.

This is true also in the case of the opposite orbit, the orbit of the bourgeoisie. The contradiction among the bourgeoisie over the market and profit, that is the struggle between one monopoly house and another, is an antagonistic contradiction. In certain situations, this contradiction takes such a form as may lead to even warfares among countries. That is, the contradiction takes the form of conflict. But the moment the bourgeoisie is confronted with threats of the working class revolution or faces the socialist camp as a whole, the character of the contradiction among them, in the context of this specific situation, changes automatically and becomes non-antagonistic.

Contradictions within a communist party

Now, while determining the character of the inner-party struggle in a genuine working class party, we have to keep in view certain aspects. For instance, it may happen that in spite of his agreeing with the party on the most important and fundamental aspects like understanding of the basic tenets of Marxism, analyses of the national and international situations, methodological approach, that is, the world outlook or class angularity guiding the thought-process in approaching a phenomenon, process of party formation, basic principles of party organization as well as concept of collective leadership, a comrade may nevertheless be influenced by the bourgeois formal methodology while assessing a particular situation or judging a particular issue. Quite naturally, the contradiction that would appear in this particular case cannot but take the form of a struggle between two opposite ideas. That is, although the two comrades who are approaching the same issue from two opposite viewpoints are in the same orbit in regard to the communist ideology, class outlook, process of party formation and such other fundamental aspects, still when judged as a separate element of contradiction within the basic framework of the overall unity of the party, this particular contradiction may appear as an antagonistic one. On which principles are we then to conduct struggle in such cases ?

We should bear in mind that we are to conduct an intense ideological struggle within the party in order to judge, on the anvil of the Marxian science, which idea is right and which is wrong in regard to the specific issue over which the contradiction has appeared and, following this course, we are to resolve the contradiction. There can be no question of compromise, as there can be no question of rupturing the relationship between comrades either. We should not, therefore, view this struggle as one between class enemies. Rather, we are to conduct the struggle in such a manner that not only the mutual relation between comrades is not impaired, on the contrary, the understanding between them becomes clearer, their relation closer, and the unity of the party cemented further through correct resolution of the contradiction, further strengthening the party in the process.

So, we are to fight till complete resolution of the specific question, but do it within the framework of the overall unity of the party — such is the character of this struggle. In other words, the object of this struggle is to achieve further unity of the party, not to break it up. It cannot be a struggle to overthrow each other like the struggle between labour and capital. Had it been so then there would be no meaning in saying that we are guided by the same world outlook on all questions of the fundamentals within the party and move in the same orbit, etc. To elaborate the point further, let us consider the case of two communist parties in two different countries, that is, where both the parties are judged to be communist on the basis of their world outlook and methodological approach, both are dialectical materialist. Notwithstanding some shortcomings of each, both are communist in character. Now in such a case, if some difference crops up between the two over a theoretical question then it has got to be admitted that in the ultimate analysis this is really a difference in class outlook. But since both belong to the same orbit, the same basic framework of unity, this difference should not impair their mutual relation, because the struggle between the two parties over their difference is being conducted within the framework of unity. However, according to Lin Biao, any difference whatsoever, whether within a communist party or between two communist parties or within the communist camp, is a fundamental difference. And so struggle here necessarily means, struggle between two opposing classes — a two-line struggle, a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between their headquarters. Nobody with even an elementary knowledge of materialist dialectics could come to such a conclusion, or to formulate that contradiction means necessarily contradiction of an antagonistic nature, there is no such thing as a non-antagonistic contradiction. I think, this confusion has arisen from the attempt to apply in the inner-party struggle Mao's thesis that the unity of opposites is the basic law of dialectics.

In this connection I would like to discuss another point. Sometimes class influence in thinking is a reality, that is, the bourgeois class thinking may influence the proletarian class party also. But that cannot be called a class trend of thinking. When we speak of a trend of thinking, it cannot but be a class trend of thinking in a class divided society. Because, a trend of thinking means a process of thinking and involves a methodological approach. Naturally, the question arises whether it is possible for several parallel class thinkings to exist side by side in a Marxist-Leninist or working class party. How can multi-class thinking exist in a working class party ? The CPC also does not have such a concept. Such trash can come from the self-styled communists only like the Namboodiripad-Ranadive brand. They used to say once : “Groups do not exist in our party. The struggles in our party are actually struggles between different trends of thinkings”. That groups do not exist in their party is a hollow claim and it seems, they could not comprehend that in a class divided society, a trend necessarily means a class trend of thinking. Only those who have ‘digested’ fully the Marxian classics can utter such trash ! As for myself, I fail to understand all this.

A question has been asked : Why do wrong ideas sometimes arise in the party or in the minds of party workers ? I think it is because of inadequacy of the ideological standard in the main, that is, lack of proper and adequate theoretical knowledge. Inadequacy of ideological standard is the breeding ground of all reactionary ideas of the existing capitalist society, all the petty bourgeois fads, rotten obsolete ideas. Just as birds build nests in the hollows of trees, so also all old and outmoded ideas are bred in the hollowness of inadequate ideological standard. This is why the question of raising the level of consciousness of the party comrades is so very urgent.

How to view four major contradictions

Another question raised is : Which of the four major world contradictions is the principal contradiction ? In my opinion, this question itself is wrong. For, it must be noted that all the four contradictions have been called major contradictions, meaning that they must be considered together in order to understand the character of the main contradiction of the world today. This is the correct understanding. It is not that one of these four contradictions is principal and the others revolve round it. No, this is not the case. None of these four contradictions can be singled out as the principal contradiction. At the same time it is also true that these four major or principal contradictions do not always play the same role and have the same importance in shaping the world events. At a particular moment, depending upon the complexity and turn of events any of these four may become most important. Sometimes the current of national liberation struggles may be strong, at some other time the struggle of the working class against capitalism may become the dominant trend. Which contradiction would become more powerful at a given moment and exert greater influence on the international situation depends on the twists and turns of events, the complexities of the situation and disposition of the forces at the moment.

If we do not understand the point like this it may lead to grave and harmful consequences. For example, if one claims that the contradiction between labour and capital in the capitalist-imperialist countries, that is, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the main contradiction in the world today, then as a result of this wrong understanding of the specific feature of the main contradiction in the concrete international situation of today, the peace movement as well as the policy of peaceful co-existence are bound to suffer and it would not be possible to impose peace upon the imperialists. And this, in turn, would lead to other grave consequences. Of course, it has to be admitted that as a result of usurpation of the leadership of the CPSU by the revisionists and because of the very many shortcomings of the socialist camp the possibility of imposing peace upon the imperialists has receded as such. The point is that these four contradictions together constitute the major contradiction of the world today

and which one of these would assume the greatest importance at a given international situation depends on the twists and turns of events.

Resurgent nationalism

In the post-Second World War situation, for example, when two parallel world systems of states emerged — the capitalist-imperialist world system on one side and the socialist world system, on the other — a powerful tide of national liberation movements in the colonies of Asia, Africa and Latin America led to the emergence of resurgent nationalist states at the same time. Our party considers that in the present international situation these resurgent nationalist states have a distinct role to play. This role needs critical appraisal in relation to all questions of today's world situation, be it the contradiction between the imperialist and socialist camps, war and peace, world revolution or anything else. I think, elaboration of this aspect would help. When Lenin had formulated the four major contradictions of the present-day world, the reality before him was that the Soviet Union was the only socialist state at that time. But some very significant changes have taken place in the post-Second World War situation. With the establishment of socialism in several countries, a socialist world system of states has emerged parallel to the capitalist-imperialist world system of states, and side by side with the capitalist market has appeared a parallel socialist market. Moreover, the attainment of independence by many colonies of Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the wake of a revolutionary surge of national liberation movements in these countries, has also dealt a severe blow to imperialism, weakening its chain further. We must take special note of the contradiction of these resurgent nationalist countries with imperialism, on the one hand, and socialism, on the other. While studying the major contradictions of the present international situation, if the communists today fail to evaluate this contradiction correctly, they would not be able to grasp the significance and prospective role of these resurgent nationalist countries against imperialism. Similarly, they would also fail to understand the character of the relatively advanced among the resurgent nationalist countries in which there is a latent trend to develop imperialist features even as they are playing anti-imperialist role. Further, they would not also be able to grasp the complex nature of the contradiction these resurgent nationalist countries have in relation to the socialist states. Needless to say, it was not possible for Lenin to visualize this phenomenon or this particular contradiction, because it had not appeared in the then international situation. The task of taking note of this devolves on the communists of today, the present leaders of the international communist movement. We think, this new contradiction appearing with the emergence and existence of the resurgent nationalist bourgeois states in the world today should be incorporated as the fifth contradiction together with the four major contradictions formulated by Lenin. Or, if there be any reservation about accepting it as the fifth contradiction, we suggest laying equal stress on this as if it is the fifth contradiction.

In our opinion, it would not be possible otherwise to analyse correctly many complex developments in the present international situation. Lin Biao's Report, however, as I have said earlier, mentions nothing about this new and specific contradiction in the present international situation.

Another theoretical inconsistency

One of the reasons why the CPC could not make appraisal of the particular nature of the resurgent nationalist countries has come to our notice. In some of the old documents of the CPC we have found that they considered all the resurgent nationalist countries to be at the stage of the people's democratic revolution. That is, they have prescribed a general recipe of people's democratic revolution for all such countries. According to them, India, Ghana, Indonesia, Morocco, Sudan, Egypt — all are semi-colonial states, having no basic difference

in the state character. So in all these countries the stage of revolution is that of national liberation, the difference being only in the degree of development. They found no other difference. That is why they have failed to grasp the nature and character of the resurgent nationalism. On this question our party has a fundamental difference with the CPC.

I started with the observation that the Report of Lin Biao's is full of theoretical inconsistencies. Now on this point there is a palpable theoretical discrepancy. According to the CPC's characterization, India, although a resurgent nationalist country, remains at the stage of people's democratic revolution. This characterization, if accepted, leads to the conclusion that the Indian state is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal state and is, therefore, nothing but a satellite state. In that case, in the light of the four major world contradictions, India falls in the category of the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations. It should, however, be kept in mind that whenever a nation is under some kind of oppression it does not become an oppressed nation. Since US oppression is there on the UK, or France also, we cannot say they are oppressed nations. If the CPC considers the theory of people's democratic revolution applicable to India, which means characterizing the Indian state as semi-feudal, semi-colonial, then how could they eulogize the policy of peaceful co-existence or even the *Pancha Sheela*⁹ of which Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the exponents as the executive head of the Indian state, as progressive ? Because, acceptance of India's foreign policy as progressive presupposes the recognition, even if indirect, of an anti-imperialist role of the Indian Government. So, judging from this angle, it becomes clear that, whatever its position, India cannot be placed in the category of contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations. Where does then India belong to ? In which category of the four major contradictions ? However, if we compare these two different assessments of theirs, it transpires that the same Indian state which is in their opinion a satellite of imperialism has been playing an anti-imperialist role ! How is it possible ?

If you note the points of criticism of the Soviet Union by the CPC, you would find that often they bracket the Indian reactionaries with the US imperialists and the Soviet revisionists in a way which implies a character of the Indian bourgeoisie different from what they would otherwise admit. For example, the Ninth Congress Report says : "When Khrushchev came to power and especially when the Soviet revisionists ganged up with the US imperialists and the reactionaries of India," etc., etc. Although they are not explicit, it is not difficult to realize that for a state like India the question of ganging up with the US imperialism, on the one hand, and a social imperialist state (in their opinion), on the other, can arise provided it is agreed that the Indian state has acquired an imperialist character, giving birth to monopoly capitalism, finance capital and a financial oligarchy. How strange ! With regard to *Pancha Sheela* the Indian state has been eulogized for playing an anti-imperialist role and on the issue of ganging up with the US imperialism and the Soviet revisionism the Indian state turns out to be imperialist. Again, such is the magical power of the theory of people's democratic revolution that the same Indian bourgeoisie is branded as stooges of imperialism ! I wonder how they could reconcile such inconsistencies !

On slogan of peace

However, the way this Report has dealt with the policy of peaceful co-existence and *Pancha Sheela* fully confirms our stand in this regard. At the time of the Great Debate between the CPSU and the CPC many blind supporters of the CPC claimed, and many documents of the CPC also seemed to suggest, that the policy of peaceful co-existence was capitulationist in nature and although the revisionist CPSU followed this policy the CPC did not subscribe to it. From the beginning we have been pointing out that the real difference is not over the point that the CPSU is an exponent of this policy of peaceful co-existence and the CPC is not. The real difference concerns the question of correct realization of the

revolutionary significance of the policy of peaceful co-existence and the correct outlook in its application. The Ninth Congress Report contains evidence to show that the CPC neither considers this policy opportunistic, nor is against it.

Here I cannot but emphasize a point. When the ruling bourgeoisie of the resurgent nationalist countries talk of peace, they do so in their immediate interest. They talk of peace because, in the given situation, the slogan of peace would best serve their interest. If the communists of different countries fail to grasp this reality and go on eulogizing those bourgeois governments and confuse this slogan with the genuine peace policy of the socialist countries, it is bound to lead to several complications. We have noted that the approach and attitude of both the CPSU and the CPC on the question of peaceful co-existence have been erroneous. Often they eulogize a resurgent nationalist country unnecessarily when their relation with it is good ; but as soon as that relation deteriorates due to any reason, they treat that country in a way which helps objectively to push the country towards the imperialist camp instead of utilizing the contradiction of the resurgent nationalist countries with the imperialism in favour of revolutionary movement.

Let me cite an example. We have dealt with this in many of our earlier writings. We had pointed out to the CPC that when they were singing in chorus ‘Hindi-Chinee bhai-bhai’ (Indian and Chinese are brethren) or eulogizing Jawaharlal’s peace policy, or when they were in deep friendship with the CPSU, they desisted from criticizing the Government of India on any issue, rather labelled it as ‘progressive’. They never pointed out the difference between the peace policy of the Government of India and that of the socialist countries — not even from the theoretical angle. But, in our opinion, while utilizing the anti-imperialist role of these countries, the class interest behind every move of theirs and the difference of these moves with those of the socialist camp on the question of peace ought to have been pointed out, the underlying class motive exposed. Failure to do this is bound to have serious consequences in future.

We had pointed out then, if the Indian working class could not seize the state power before long then even as it was playing an anti-imperialist role, however limited, on the question of war and peace, the same Indian bourgeoisie having acquired imperialist features — even if latent — in course of development of capitalism will act virtually as the agent of imperialism to suppress the people’s revolutionary movement. We had said this unambiguously. We think, the CPC committed the mistake because it failed to understand correctly the phenomenon of resurgent nationalism.

From my discussion so far on resurgent nationalism it would be clear that two types of contradiction are emerging centring round these countries :

One : Contradiction between resurgent nationalism and imperialism ;

Two : Contradiction between resurgent nationalism and socialism.

Needless to say, the fear complex of working class revolution among the bourgeoisie of the resurgent nationalist countries is giving birth to the second contradiction.

Resolving ideological differences

On the question of Soviet revisionism, too, we could not agree with the stand and approach of the CPC on different occasions. Both the *12-Party Declaration* (1957) and *81-Party Statement* (1960) are in reality specimens of compromise document, since the revolutionary line and the revisionist line have found place side by side, but these were highly acclaimed not only by the CPSU but by the CPC, too. And because the two documents contain both the revolutionary and the revisionist lines, both the sides have drawn upon them to quote excerpts in support of their respective contentions. As a result, not only that a uniform approach could not develop, each side, in maligning the other, could even accuse it of deviation from the base political line. The note of caution we sounded then has been

proved to be true. Ironically, while they unleashed tirades against each other both sides acclaimed these two documents highly.

Everyone knows that up to a certain time the CPC had not voiced any criticism about the revisionist leadership of CPSU. Later they tried to impress that it had been necessary for the sake of unity. We could not agree with them. We pointed out that Marxists never compromised on the questions of basic principle. If basic principles were compromised then not only that the principles were surrendered, the unity for which the compromise was made, could not be preserved ultimately. Actually, this is just what happened. Everyone knows how bitter has turned the relation between China and the Soviet Union. We firmly believe that to cement the unity of the world communists, the necessary task then was to release an intense ideological struggle over the differences on fundamental principles and resolve the ideological differences through this struggle. This is the task even today. Because, unity can never be maintained through patchwork or compromise on the fundamental principles. If, on the one hand, they could carry on discussion, dialogues and polemics till unanimity was reached on these questions, and, side by side, conducted a united struggle against imperialism, the main enemy, then the communists of different countries, their ideological differences notwithstanding, could have led a joint struggle in support of the national liberation movements against imperialism. If they had a proper understanding of this principle of unity-struggle-unity, there would have been no difficulty in carrying out both the tasks together.

We have repeatedly appealed to the communist parties of different countries, drawing their attention to this aspect. We made the same appeal in our article *An Appeal to the Leaders of the International Communist Movement*. It is a matter of great regret that none of the parties did feel it necessary to pay head to our appeal. Only recently have we been observing that whatever the reason, the CPC has changed its attitude. When the Albanian Party of Labour had openly criticized the CPSU, Zhou Enlai had objected, saying that such open criticism should not be resorted to. We could not, however, agree with the standpoint of the CPC. Now we find that the CPC is pursuing a policy of open polemics on these questions — not only on the problems of the world communist movement, but also to resolve the differences which have arisen even in their own country centring round many political and cultural questions, they have taken to the path of Cultural Revolution. This Cultural Revolution is a clear evidence that the CPC has changed its earlier attitude to a great extent. Now they are conducting polemics, involving not only the party cadres but the class and the masses.

On criticism of Liu Shaoqi

Regarding Liu Shaoqi, I agree that he turned an opportunist out and out. But certain ethical questions on the manner in which charges have been levelled against him in the Ninth Congress Report agitate me. I know, even a man who is enjoying a very high position in the party leadership may degrade some day. I do not subscribe to the view that a leader like Liu Shaoqi whose position in the party leadership was next only to Mao Zedong could never degrade. To think that way would be unscientific and, of course, non-Marxist. That is why I have been pointing out to you, it would be wrong to think that because someone has attained communist character once, he can never degrade. That we remained all along a communist till our last breath must be proved through our day-to-day activities. Anyway, we have not objected to the way in which Liu Shaoqi has been condemned as a renegade, a revisionist and branded as the Khrushchev of China in the Ninth Congress Report. Rather, on the basis of the facts furnished by the CPC leadership it must be agreed that Liu Shaoqi's line was revisionist. From the differences, as have come to light, between Mao Zedong and the leadership of the party, on the one hand, and Liu Shaoqi, on the other, on questions of organization, open

polemics, involving workers and all sections of the masses in the Cultural Revolution, or the role of art, literature, culture and education as well as of the different government departments, and, in particular, the importance of continuing class struggle in the Chinese society — the revisionist line of Liu Shaoqi is quite apparent. We have no doubt about it. But I have a few points to raise from a totally different angle — from the viewpoint of communist ethics and code of conduct. Take the case of leaders of the party explaining decisions or analyses of the Central Committee or of the highest leader of the party. While discussing the party line or writing articles, can everybody put the points as precisely and exactly so as to reflect correctly the analyses, decisions and thinking of the Central Committee or of the highest leader of the party ? Obviously not, and hence it is quite likely that certain errors may creep in while they are speaking or writing on the decisions, analyses or thinking, supporting the main line of the party. So if a leader of the party, say, a very trusted leader once or even a leader of very high rank, somehow later deviates and goes against the party, can it be said, by referring to those defects in his earlier writings that he had always played an anti-party role and represented the bourgeois class interest and those defects and lapses were glaring evidence of it ? I wonder how scrupulous are those who say like this ! This is what has perturbed me while going through the observations against Liu Shaoqi in the Report. I am deeply concerned at another thing too. Why had the Lin Biao leadership to take to this course unless they were ideologically weak ? The fact that an erstwhile leader has now turned anti-party and has gone so far as to oppose the very base political line of the party, should have been sufficient to expose him before the rank and file of the party. If a leader of the past who has become anti-party cannot be exposed or his past image shattered, then can it be done by concocting stories ? Otherwise, what is the use of saying that he was an agent of the imperialists since the beginning, always a conspirator and always scheming ? If this be the line of criticism then the cadres, too, would not be able to realize the basic contention of the criticism. If criticism be directed against a leader's activities since when he began to degrade, particularly when he turned a counter-revolutionary, that would help elevate, in my opinion, the level of consciousness of the rank and file members of the party. Otherwise, the entire criticism is bound to degenerate to the level of abuse. It is unfair and wrong to paint him as a conspirator from the very beginning when he was closely associated with the party and the revolutionary movement. This apart, I want to highlight a very important general principle. Can we indiscriminately dub anybody and everybody an agent who has turned anti-party ? A comrade may turn against the party even from a wrong understanding of the party line. Even an honest comrade, being confused because of his lower level of consciousness or under the influence of bourgeois ideas, may completely spoil his revolutionary qualities and become an out and out reactionary, and can thereby cause harm just like an agent. But still, can we judge one who is not really an agent but has done harm like an agent with the same yardstick we apply in the case of a confirmed agent ? Is it not contrary to the teachings of dialectical materialism in this regard ?

How to be a good communist

I have already referred to the defects in Liu Shaoqi's book *Inner-Party Struggle*. Now about his other book *How To Be A Good Communist*.¹⁰ Lin Biao has levelled a queer charge against Liu Shaoqi in his Report. He has accused Liu Shaoqi of not having said a single word against Japanese imperialism. I am really stunned at this charge. What bearing has the struggle against Japanese imperialism upon 'how to be a good communist'? If the book had been about how to fight Japanese imperialism, it would have been a different question. But when the question is how to conduct the struggle to develop ourselves as worthy communists, how does the question of fighting Japanese imperialism come in ? Of course, if they think that a man becomes a communist just by conducting some mass and class struggles, that is different. If really it were possible to become a communist by just taking part in mass and

class struggles, how is it that many of the large numbers of people who took part in the October Revolution in Russia have turned revisionist ? How many of those fighting gallantly in armed battles against US imperialism in the jungles of Vietnam have acquired the communist character ? The point is if those who take part in armed struggles and wage heroic battles, do not at the same time keep up the relentless struggle to uplift their culture and morals, then in the subsequent period of tranquility and stability, the same people can hardly be recognized as revolutionaries. History is replete with instances of partisans who had once fought staking life, falling victims to extreme egocentricism and individualism. This is one aspect. Again, if one thinks that keeping aloof from day-to-day struggles of the masses, and simply by following the communist norms and code of conduct one can become a communist, then that would be indulging in empty ‘code-mongering’.

Identification of individual interest with social interest

So it is true that one who aspires to be a communist must engage in lifelong struggle. Every communist must actively and directly participate in struggles — be it against Japanese imperialism, US imperialism, or against the reactionary forces of his own country. Undoubtedly so. But does it mean that a man just being simply involved in political struggles, would automatically become a communist ? Is it not that only by correlating the struggle to acquire proletarian culture to the day-to-day political struggle and in the process gradually acquiring proletarian culture can one become a communist ? Our criticism against Liu Shaoqi’s book is that he did not deal with these important questions. Not only this ; take for example, the industrially advanced countries like the UK, USA, or even India where the problem of individualism has assumed a very acute form, the bourgeois sense of liberty has turned into a privilege ; what should be the standard of the communists in these countries ? This ought to have been discussed. Is it possible to fight out individualism in a country like India, where it has taken an acute form and appeared as an exceedingly complex problem, with the same standard of communist character with which it was possible to accomplish revolution in Russia or China, where the bourgeois sense of values had not become completely exhausted in the pre-revolution period ? Yet it is true that Liu Shaoqi has raised the question of surrendering personal interest to the party interest. The way he raised it — as I understand — is this : The question of emancipation of the proletariat is inextricably linked up with the emancipation of the whole of mankind, of the oppressed people at large ; and since the communist party represents the proletarian class interest, we can hasten the process of emancipation through submission of our personal interest to the party interest. But it should be understood that the idea of surrendering personal interest to the party interest or social interest is basically a bourgeois humanist concept. We have shown elsewhere¹¹ that surrendering personal interest to social interest is not the same as identification of personal interest with social interest. The question of surrendering personal interest presupposes separate existence of personal interest. But when personal interest is identified with social interest, it no longer exists as a separate entity.

But Lin Biao has distorted Liu Shaoqi’s observation. Ridiculing Liu’s words about “merging private and public interest” he has said that it meant “losing a little to gain much”. My point is that if such becomes the fate of Liu’s theory, it is tantamount to abuse of power. In that event the abuse would have to be fought and any inadequacy in the theory should be pointed out. But why should the theory be distorted ?

You know, our party has a definite stand on these questions. We think, the struggle to acquire communist character is, in practice, the struggle for identification of individual interest with social interest. It is a struggle in the realm of ethics. Here the test is — how far am I really selfless in taste and culture in what I do, what is the character of this selflessness, whether it is being reflected on the ethical plane, these are very important. Because, as we

realize, only he whose sense of values is freed of personal interest, who can engage himself unreservedly and happily in the struggle to identify personal interest with the party and social interest can be said to have attained communist character. So, it has to be seen whether we reflect a high standard of culture and ethics every moment in our conduct, behaviour and activities, as during fierce battles with the enemy so also in day-to-day struggles. Or whether we indulge, knowingly or unknowingly, in asserting or projecting at the slightest opportunity ourselves, belittle others and lose our head over trifles. These should be critically studied. Careful examination would reveal that, whatever the developments, these happen only when individualism or ego gets the better of us. I want to emphasize how far we have been able to free ourselves from this influence of individualism and ego cannot be judged from how nicely we can discuss or denounce it in our speeches. It has got to be judged by the standard of culture we actually reflect in day-to-day life.

This struggle against individualism is important on another count, too. In some earlier discussions, I had already pointed out the possibility of individualism emerging even in countries where socialist revolution had been accomplished, not to speak of the capitalist countries. In the discussion *Cultural Revolution of China* I termed this phenomenon “socialist individualism”. You had better read it up carefully. I should mention only one point here. During the Cultural Revolution the CPC leadership provided no analysis on this problem of individualism, which, in times of peace and stability, may well rear its head as socialist individualism in the socialist countries. No definite analysis was provided of the possible impact of economic stability and increased scope of economic benefits, on the psychology of the Chinese people. What were then the objectives of Cultural Revolution? To merely provide guidelines for combating political opponents? If this be the understanding, it virtually undermines the importance of Cultural Revolution.

On attaining proletarian culture

We know, transformation in the realm of culture does not automatically or spontaneously follow political and economic changes. I have repeatedly made the point that when Lenin spoke of a higher political standard, he implied a cultural standard as well. For example, once he said — “Socialism comes from without” meaning that the socialist ideas do not spontaneously develop from within the trade union movements of the workers. If we understand this point properly, we can likewise say that ‘proletarian culture also comes from without’. It does not spring from the life of the proletariat as such, it comes out of struggle; an intense, fierce struggle covering all aspects of life — economic, political, cultural and ethical. It means a worker does not automatically acquire proletarian culture by birth. The life he leads in the existing society is not conducive to acquiring proletarian culture. Proletarian culture grows out of an intense and arduous ideological-cultural struggle covering all aspects of life — economic, political, social and cultural. Let me explain further. We cannot take it for granted that a worker is a communist and has acquired proletarian culture simply because he is a worker. We know of labour aristocrats as well. How could that happen if a worker could automatically acquire proletarian culture by birth? So long as a worker is not class-conscious, does not build up class struggles on the basis of revolutionary politics and higher proletarian culture and does not cultivate these in the day-to-day struggle — the process of his becoming a communist cannot even begin. For usually, because of the helpless conditions of his life and the particular environment, he acquires a filthy culture. He cannot but be influenced by feudal culture, middle-class mentality, or by crass and vulgar materialism. I have discussed these points in *Why SUCI is the Only Genuine Communist Party in India*.¹²

State exists in socialist society

I want to highlight the importance of identification of individual and social interest from yet another angle. The bourgeois world has repeatedly questioned the existence of individual

freedom in the socialist system. This should be given a clear-cut answer. We know, existence of the state presupposes existence of coercion, for the state is an instrument of coercion in the hands of one class against other classes. So, only with the withering away of the state in the communist society, on which the Marxist-Leninists are all agreed, would the coercion of the state cease, the individual become free from all social coercion and attain the highest form of individual freedom in human history. I think, the right way of achieving this maximum attainable freedom is to conduct correctly the struggle for identification of individual interest with social interest. Because, even after classes are done away with in the economic sphere, when classes as economic categories would not exist, struggle centring round production and distribution would be reflected in the superstructure as an antagonistic contradiction between individual interest and social interest. The new superstructure growing upon the new economic base would have to confront the hangovers from the old superstructure. Thus, in the realm of superstructure the antagonistic contradiction between individual and social interests would still continue and as a reflection of this contradiction, the state would also exist. In other words, so long as the struggle of the new ideas and values against the old ideas and values as the hangovers from the class-divided society would continue in the superstructure, the state will exist. So, the irreconcilable contradiction between productive forces and the production relations as a reflection of which the state exists today would not disappear with abolition of the capitalist state and the antagonistic contradiction between individual interest and social interest would also not be resolved automatically. To hasten the process of withering away of the state, the antagonistic contradiction between individual and social interests needs to be transformed into a non-antagonistic one. And this can be achieved only when these two interests become one and the same. Without this it will be impossible to rid society of the bourgeoisie as a class and free it from bourgeois ideas, values and thoughts.

Liu Shaoqi might not have been expected to make a comprehensive philosophical analysis providing guidelines in solving these questions. But we did not get it from Mao Zedong even. Continuing class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat has been rightly stressed, but does it mean that this struggle will continue *ad infinitum* ? Would this struggle have to be kept up for ever or would it have to be accelerated to culminate in the ushering in of classless society ? It is not that they are considering to keep up this struggle for ever, but they have not shown concretely how to move towards abolition of class struggle, particularly in the present phase. No hint of it has been given. But it is a task to be accomplished by those who are directly involved in this struggle today, is it not ? Frankly speaking, to our knowledge no communist party other than ours, has provided guidelines on these questions. We may claim this with all humility.

Another charge has been levelled against Liu Shaoqi in the Ninth Congress Report, albeit obliquely. Just after revolution, when China faced an acute dearth of capital to be invested in industries, some private entrepreneurs were allowed to invest for marginal profits under the control of the socialist state. Some capitalists accepted this condition and postponed shifting to Hongkong. Now Lin Biao is accusing Liu Shaoqi of having painted capitalism as progressive even while branding the capitalist system as exploitative, and having exhorted workers to extend co-operation to the capitalists. It is also alleged that Liu had pleaded with workers to allow the capitalists to make profit.

I want to touch on a basic point. Around that time I had an occasion to visit China. I found that many CPC leaders used to describe this scope of private investment offered to some capitalists under control of the socialized sector as restricted capitalism. I consider it a wrong way of putting ; it has caused much confusion in our country, too. B. T. Ranadive, the CPI(M) theoretician, even commented that Mao Zedong wanted to restore capitalism in China as he still considered capitalism progressive. Later on Ranadive admitted his mistake, however.

Let me explain why I think it was wrong to describe it as restricted capitalism. By capitalism we mean a particular economic system with a particular production relation and motive of production. So, since the revolution had radically changed the production relation and motive of production in China how can there be capitalism, even in a restricted form? Such confusion arose because of the habit of learning the Marxist classics by rote using the terms in a bookish way. In fact, this system could not at all be termed capitalist, even in a restricted sense. It should have been termed New Democratic Economy. There are, in short, the ethical principles, which I think should have been kept in view while criticizing Liu Shaoqi in the Report. But with all my criticism of the approach in the Report to Liu's questions I have no doubt at all that Liu Shaoqi had turned an out and out revisionist.

Role of political consciousness

Now, to revert to the question of political consciousness. When we call somebody politically conscious, what does that really signify? Generally, those who can talk on theories, engage in theoretical discourses, and keep themselves well informed, are able to write volumes, furnish ready-made references and lecture at length on topics, are regarded as the politically conscious. But this is wrong. First of all, informative knowledge and real knowledge are not the same. Second, these qualities do not *ipso facto* make one politically conscious. Only when he struggles to maintain a high standard of taste and culture, can he be called politically conscious. From the experiences of our own party, too, I can say that there are comrades well equipped with political information, but there are others who are much more alert, conscious and advanced on the questions of party outlook, party interest and identification with the party. So it is wrong to equate a comrade only equipped with political information with one who has attained communist character.

You must not, however, conclude from this that acquiring political consciousness and acquiring a higher cultural standard are two unrelated separate struggles — such is not the case. Political consciousness implies the ability to examine critically different issues. So, it must be admitted that one who can analyse different problems and complex matters correlating these with the environment and relevant issues, has at least attained proletarian culture to some extent. Again, just because the two qualities are closely interlinked it would not be correct to say that intellectual aptitude has no relative independence. It may happen that a man in spite of being involved in the proletarian movement and having manifested some wisdom by virtue of his intellectual adaptability, falls victim to various weaknesses and fads, which in turn, obstruct his further development.

Again, it may happen that a man with outstanding political and organizational ability who is a master in almost all branches of epistemology is not so much equipped in a particular field of knowledge. For example, Lenin had told Clara Zetkin that his knowledge of sex and psychology was quite limited. He said he was not well-equipped in those fields and said he did not have comprehensive knowledge of those aspects of life necessary to deal with related problems and that he had not been able to devote much time to these. Lenin, therefore, had given only some general suggestions on these issues from the philosophical angle. He had called for further developing these branches of science. As he was a great man, attuned to very high cultural standard, Lenin did not lack the modesty to say this. It may happen that while a leader has surpassed all others in political wisdom, organizational ability and intellectual aptitude, having no equal, another leader, though lagging relatively behind in these, has acquired more advanced knowledge in a particular branch of science.

Some theoretical analyses by our party

So, it has now become an imperative task to develop and enrich Marxism as a comprehensive science, analyse correctly in the light of Marxism and on its basis resolve all

newer problems confronting life and society in the present-day world. Marx could not view the questions facing the communist movement at present, nor could Lenin because he died a few years after revolution. But those who are directly involved in these have also not been able to provide any analysis on these questions. Yet this is immensely important. I do not intend to repeat but only like to draw your attention to the fact that it is only our party that has pointed out that in view of the particular nature, character, form and features of individualism in the present-day world mere unconditional surrender of individual interest to the interest of revolution and the party cannot be regarded as the desired standard of communist character ; to be a communist of higher standard, the individual must identify himself with the cause of revolution and the party ; even under socialism individualism may rear its ugly head in the form of socialist individualism ; the state would exist as reflection of the antagonistic contradiction between individual interest and social interest in the socialist system and the question of withering away of the state is interlinked with transforming this antagonistic contradiction into a non-antagonistic one ; there is a gulf of difference between the collective leadership of a working class party and the individual leadership of a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois party. Collective leadership in a working class party can be established only by its personification through a leader. The concept of authority in Marxism is totally different from authoritarianism. It is only our party that has made exhaustive theoretical discussions on these questions. Other communist parties of the world have not even touched the fringe of these problems. At least we have not seen any evidence of this. None of them has taken pains to analyse the phenomenon of resurgent nationalism or the nature of its contradiction with the imperialist countries, on the one hand, and the socialist countries, on the other, and the necessity and importance of recognizing this contradiction as the fifth major contradiction. But who can deny the bearing of these questions on the task of protecting international communist movement from various kinds of deviations, particularly the revisionist deviation ? Without accomplishing this, we think, it is not possible to build up any effective struggle against authoritarianism since we can fight authoritarianism mainly through fighting out blindness. If the questions confronting the international communist movement today are not theoretically analysed and resolved and if the entire party from its leaders to the rank and file, as well as the common people are not educated, blindness would prevail. Please remember that blindness is involved not only in blind allegiance, but in blind opposition, too, although only blind allegiance is generally deemed to be blindness.

A few observations on the Constitution

Now, a few words about the party Constitution adopted by the Ninth Congress. Off and on we find communist parties of different countries changing their party Constitutions. Our understanding of the party Constitution is that the Constitution is an organizational guideline for conducting party activities, reflecting the nature and degree of fusion of proletarian democracy with centralism at a particular stage of development of the inner-party struggle in the context of the problems confronting mass movements, the level of consciousness of the rank and file, their mutual relationship and the ideological struggle going on within the party. In a word, the Constitution reflects the internal reality of the party. Unless viewed thus, a Constitution becomes a compilation of well-intentioned phrases imposed from above, may be mechanically picked up from formulations of Lenin or of some other party — but it would not really work. That is why when the Constitution is changed, then the background and reason for the change should be clearly explained as otherwise it becomes difficult to understand the changes. But nothing of the sort has been mentioned in the Ninth Congress Report.

I have noted your adverse reaction to the way Lin Biao has been declared as successor to Mao Zedong in the party. Everybody knows that in a communist party leadership does not come through inheritance. Whether he is worthy of being the leader of the party depends on

his ability, firmness of character as a communist and on how far he has identified himself with the party. So it is not difficult to realize that the concept of a “successor” is wrong and has no relation with Marxism.

Still, I must admit that this Constitution has provided all the guiding principles of organization briefly and lucidly in a beautiful manner the like of which I cannot recall to have come across in the history of other parties of world communist movement. Undoubtedly, it is praiseworthy.

However, I have noted some shortcomings too. For instance, the issue of democratic centralism, the essence of the organizational principles of a communist party, should, in my opinion, come first in the Constitution, because this is the foundation on which the communist party organization rests. But here it has been relegated to Article 5 of Chapter III. I find no sense in this. Again, while explaining democratic centralism, it has been said : “It is essential to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy”, etc., etc. I consider this expression wrong. What kind of democracy do they mean ? Ultra-democracy, formal democracy or liberal democracy which are all but variants of bourgeois democracy ? Or proletarian democracy ? If the class character of this democracy is not mentioned, it leads to further confusion. We all know that Lenin, when he spoke on this, said that democratic centralism was a fusion of centralism with proletarian democracy. I fail to understand how, in spite of this, could such a faulty, inadequate expression creep in. It has been said that a political atmosphere would be created where there would be “both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness.” Here also it has not been spelt out whose freedom they mean, and from whom ? Is it freedom of the slaves from the oppression of the slave-masters ? Or, is it the freedom referred to in Sartre’s existentialist philosophy where it has been said that individuals are condemned to freedom ? Without any clarification, they have spoken of integrating freedom and discipline. This is somewhat confusing. But I like the phrase “unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness”. In inner-party struggle, there must be unity of will, on the one hand, and an atmosphere within the party, on the other, where all workers can participate in this struggle with open heart, ease of mind and without reservation. This means, everybody would participate in inner-party struggle being free from any preconception, personal animosity, sense of fear, secretiveness and sectarian psychology. These are very important aspects. Because, if the internal life of the party lacks this open and healthy atmosphere, a tendency for hush hush and vile instincts may arise among the rank and file if not the leaders.¹³

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Notes :

1. 1967. English version included in this volume.
2. The Soviet revisionist clique
3. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol.30 pp.114, 115, 117
4. Quoted by Stalin in *Problems of Leninism* p.315
5. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol.30, p.95
6. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p.495
7. *Once more on the Historical Experiences of Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, 29 December, 1956. Later published as a pamphlet.
8. Published in 1954. Original Bengali booklet published in 1952.
9. The policy of five principles adopted in 1954 in Bandung Conference.
10. What has been referred to in Ninth Congress Report as self-cultivation written by Liu Shaoqi had been discussed in his *How To Be A Good Communist*.

11. In *Cultural Revolution of China* included in this book.
- 12 First published in Bengali in 1970. English version published in *Proletarian Era* in 1976. Also discussed later in *Cultural Movement in India and Our Tasks* (English version published in 1973). Both were later included in Shibdas Ghosh *Selected Works*, Volume II.
13. We regret that due to a mechanical fault the concluding part of the speech could not be recorded.