

Under the Banner of the Great November Revolution

On 8 November 1974 on the occasion of the 57th anniversary of the Great November Revolution, Comrade Ghosh discussed some of the basic teachings of November Revolution, and, in that light, the stage of revolution in India, particularly emphasizing that Marxism is not economic determinism.

Comrades,

You all know that the West Bengal State Committee of our party, the SUCI, has organized this mass meeting on the occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the Great November Revolution in Russia. You have also heard and I hope all of you know that on this day, 57 years back, in the year 1917, in that country alone in the world the first socialist revolution was successful. Under the leadership of their Bolshevik Party and its leader Comrade Lenin, the workers-peasants, the proletariat in that country, were able to capture state power by overthrowing the bourgeois party, or for that matter, the ruling bourgeois class. This revolution which took place in Russia in 1917 to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power is significant in many respects.

In fact, before the Russian revolution, people throughout the world could not even imagine that the ignorant workers-peasants and the illiterate toilers could ever overthrow the ruling bourgeoisie or the formidable monarchical rule like that of Czarism from power. Through the February Revolution of 1917 which overthrew the Czar or Czarism from power in Russia, it can be said that bourgeois democratic revolution was successful. But although Czarism could be overthrown through the February Revolution, the state power went into the hands of the bourgeoisie, the Russian bourgeoisie, which was a partner in the united struggle against Czarism. Thus, through the February Revolution the bourgeois Kerensky government was no doubt established in Russia, but side by side the Soviets of workers and peasants also existed almost in the form of dual power. The February Revolution of Russia not only failed to do away with feudalism-imperialism completely, but, what is more, the bourgeoisie having come to power was found to be keeping intact the old feudal order and also maintaining at the same time a full-scale understanding with the imperialists. As a result, although the bourgeoisie captured state power overthrowing Czarism through revolution, if we analyse the phase of social revolution from the economic aspect, we find that the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution still remained unaccomplished.

This helped create a misconception among many, who were known as Marxists in the revolutionary movement of Russia — the Socialist Revolutionaries, the Menshevik party, etc., and even many within the Bolshevik party who for all practical purposes reduced Marxism to economic determinism. From an old understanding of Marxian theory — that is, the understanding that grew and developed following Marxism somewhat as a dogma and which was not the correct dialectical materialistic understanding of Marxism — they started saying that since in the course of progress and development of the society the stages of social revolution cannot be skipped over, the Soviets of workers and peasants should co-operate with the Kerensky government with the object of fulfilling the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution, on the one hand, and organize people's movements, on the other, to mount pressure on the Kerensky government to get these unfulfilled tasks realized. In this way, the workers-peasants, the proletariat would have to go along the path of parliamentary politics and through this process the bourgeois democratic revolution

would have to be completed first. Till these tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution were completed, it was meaningless to strive for socialist revolution or, for that matter, any other revolution. Such a notion strongly prevailed in Russia after the February Revolution.

Marxism is not economic determinism

But at that time the leadership of the Bolshevik Party was in the hands of the genuine Marxists. And an able leader like Comrade Lenin was at the helm. He was not a Marxist of the type who took recourse to quotation mongering and picked up at random and out of context a few lines from here and a few from there to suit his own contention or to anyhow demolish his opponents' arguments. He realized the basic truth that Marxism was not just what was enunciated in the Marxist classics. To him realization of Marxism meant acquiring the scientific methodology, that is, the Marxist dialectics and the philosophical outlook with the help of which Marx, Engels and other Marxists came to those conclusions, to apply that in practice and to grasp the essence of the concrete conditions in which these enunciations were made. Quotation mongering, citing analogies and drawing of historical parallels — none of these has anything to do with the Marxist methodological approach, that is, none of these conforms to the dialectical method of analysis of Marxism. In the name of Marxism all these are vulgarization of Marxism. Lenin understood this perfectly. Because he understood this, he courageously struck at the root of the ideas prevalent through his famous treatise, *The April Theses*. He said and showed clearly to the communists of the world that Marxism is not economic determinism — on this stands the valuable teaching of Lenin that politics always supersedes economy. That means, with the uneven development of capitalism, the twists and turns, the zigzags and the ups and downs of the revolutionary movements — sometimes going ahead and sometimes retreating, in the midst of such tussles, politics and political events are strongly influencing economic development, so much so that these have become actually the determinant. If someone does not understand the mutual relation between politics and economy in this way, rather thinks that as the economic condition changes so changes the political condition, that is, the political condition changes only as reflection of the economic change — that means he has not understood Marxism, he has accepted something else in the name of Marxism.

The determination of the class character of the state is the fundamental question in ascertaining the strategy of revolution

On the basis of this analysis Lenin showed that with the overthrow of Nicholas Czar from state power, the bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia was attained. Politically, after the February Revolution there, in the place of Nicholas Czar, that is, in the place of an old class, a new class, the Russian bourgeoisie had assumed the state power. Lenin of course knew that from the economic aspect many of the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution remained unfulfilled till then in Russia. In the rural economy, despite infiltration of capitalism, feudalism still continued to exist as a powerful force. Economically, subjugation by and subservience to imperialism, the finance capital of the rich European capitalist countries was very much marked. But still, knowing all this, Lenin said that since politically the main question of revolution is connected with the question of seizure of state power, hence the moment the Russian bourgeoisie had captured the state power by overthrowing Nicholas Czar, that is, a new class had assumed the state power in the place of the old one, to that extent and in that sense the bourgeois democratic revolution was completed and Russia had entered the stage of socialist revolution. So, under the circumstances one cannot move ahead clinging to the old concept of the strategy and tactics of the bourgeois democratic revolution. To cling to the old ideas would mean servitude to the bourgeoisie, completely negating the self-sacrifice and martyrdom of the workers-peasants and surrender at the feet of

the bourgeois class, and hence would constitute a betrayal of revolution. So, he discarded the old slogan of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Instead he raised the slogan of socialist revolution and advanced a new concept on class alliance and class alignment of forces. This important analysis as propounded in the *April Theses* was as yet unknown in the Marxist movement. Hence, at that time, this question was widely debated among the Marxists.

Be that as it may, the essence or the fundamental point which comes out of it should be clearly understood. Those in our country who, finding even the slightest trace of feudalism in economy, characterize our revolution as bourgeois democratic or national democratic and argue how can we reach the stage of socialist revolution by a leap without completing the tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution — November Revolution has left a most valuable teaching for them. Those who are viewing it in this way because of their failure to grasp the issue correctly are in reality, in tune with the leaders of the Second International, the Mensheviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries, and even a section of the Bolsheviks who were still confused at the time of November Revolution, practising economic determinism which is alien to Marxism-Leninism and dialectical materialism and which refuses to accept the dialectical relationship of politics and economy.

But I have already said that November Revolution in Russia was accomplished under the leadership of Lenin at a time when feudalism had a strong sway over the rural economy ; the influence of imperialism was still strong and the capitalist economy could not free itself from the bondage of imperialist finance capital. But notwithstanding his knowledge of all this Lenin showed that after the assumption of state power by the bourgeois Kerensky government since the working class in alliance with the poor peasantry had to capture power by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and since the object of revolution was the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to that extent and in that sense the revolution of Russia was politically a socialist revolution. But as in the economic and social fields many of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution still remained unaccomplished, those tasks had to be incorporated as the derivatives in the main political strategy and programme of socialist revolution, that is to say, in the programme of November Revolution.

And these unaccomplished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution would have to be accomplished under the leadership of the proletariat after seizure of power. Otherwise peasants would get no land, there would be no end of kulaks' domination, feudalism could not be completely abolished, the basis for independent development of the economy would not be established, peace would not be restored in the country and there would be no solution to the food problem. For, in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution or, in other words, in the era when capitalism has turned out and out reactionary, it is not possible for the modern bourgeoisie, unlike the bourgeoisie of the previous era, to accomplish all the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Therefore, if the peasantry has to be completely freed even economically from feudal exploitation, for that the seizure of power by the proletariat, the socialist revolution, is indispensable.

From the time of seizure of power in 1917 till 1919, the working class strove to move in alliance with the whole of the peasantry and certainly with the middle peasantry in order to accomplish these tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Yet the principal strategic slogan and the concept of alignment of forces of the November Revolution, i.e., the socialist revolution, was alliance with the poor peasantry. But even though the principal strategic slogan of the socialist revolution was alliance with the poor peasantry, because the unaccomplished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution still remained as its derivative tasks, which after the seizure of power the proletariat was to accomplish, e.g., complete abolition of feudalism, redistribution of land, saving the poor and middle peasants from utter destitution and poverty and thus to proceed towards socialist

reconstruction step by step, for this reason they had to continue with the slogan of alliance with the whole of the peasantry for quite some time even after the November Revolution.

Without the working class leadership even the bourgeois democratic revolutions in this era cannot reach their logical culmination

So, this concrete lesson that the November Revolution has brought to light is of immense significance. Since then the question of establishing the leadership of the working class over the national liberation struggles throughout the world — the theory of which had hitherto been guiding the international communist movement — assumed further importance. Lenin formulated this theory while combating Plekhanov. Plekhanov contended that because the bourgeois democratic revolution was essentially a bourgeois revolution its leadership must also be with the bourgeoisie ; at the same time because, centring round the world proletarian revolution, the proletariat had already appeared in the arena, the working class should also share the leadership. That is to say, he raised the slogan of joint leadership. Lenin refuted this idea and said : No. Either the hegemony of the proletariat or the hegemony of the bourgeoisie must be established over the revolution. If the hegemony of the bourgeoisie is established then it will mean a treachery to revolution, and it cannot but end half way. On the contrary, if the hegemony of the working class is established, then and only then can these revolutions be led to their successful culmination. Lenin showed through this theory that, first of all, in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the bourgeois democratic revolutions in different countries had also become part of the world socialist or proletarian revolution.

Secondly, he said, in the present era of moribund capitalism when world capitalism had entered the stage of imperialism and turned out and out reactionary, the bourgeoisie in all the countries, even the bourgeoisie who were participating in the national liberation movements in colonial countries, ceased to have a revolutionary character which they had as a class during the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. For, they are also part and parcel of international reactionary bourgeoisie.

So, although the national bourgeoisie will participate in many cases in the anti-imperialist liberation movements, they will make compromises with imperialism-feudalism at the same time out of fear complex of revolution. And if in this era the leadership of these liberation movements remains in their hands, the national democratic revolution or liberation movements cannot reach their logical culmination. Thus, this instability of the bourgeoisie in the national liberation movement — sometimes making compromises with imperialism and sometimes fighting it, sometimes raising slogans against feudalism and sometimes making compromises, now coming in the arena of battle and again entering into dialogue through the backdoor, making compromises, sometimes remaining with the masses supporting their radical slogans and sometimes coming into direct opposition to those — if the working class succeeds in paralysing this instability of the bourgeoisie, being part of the international reactionary bourgeoisie, and give defeat to the bourgeois double-faced policy by establishing its leadership, then only can these national liberation movements attain their logical culmination. Failing that, even if these liberation movements in backward countries become successful under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, through these liberation movements the bourgeois democratic revolutions will end in a half-baked and truncated manner. Independence will be achieved, no doubt, though the main object of freedom will not be attained. The country will not be totally free from the fetters of imperialist servitude, nor will feudalism be completely abolished to bring about revolutionary transformation of the agricultural economy. That is why, in order to lead these bourgeois democratic revolutions to their logical culmination in the present era, what is essential is that, first, they are to be regarded as part of world socialist revolution and, secondly, they must be conducted under

the leadership of the working class. It is after the Russian revolution, i.e., the November Socialist Revolution that the revolutionaries of different countries started to give proper recognition to this theory and realize its real significance which so long had remained as a theory only. The most advanced section of the liberation movements all over the world, that is, those with revolutionary socialist consciousness at once tried to accept it with due importance.

Now, compare the situation of our country today with the perspective of the then Russia. Judge it for yourself whether feudalism in our economy today exists with the same vigour as it did in the economy of Russia after the bourgeoisie had come to power before the October Revolution or at the time Lenin brought out his *April Theses*. In my opinion, in the agrarian economy of our country there is nothing left of feudalism in so far as economic relation or production relation is concerned. What still remains of feudalism in our country is its hangover in the superstructure of the present-day society alloyed with habits, customs, tastes and culture and morality. Those who understand the relationship between base and superstructure in this way that with the change of economic base its superstructure also changes and, therefore, the hangover of the superstructure of the old society does not continue for some time in the superstructure of the new society should better not enter into serious theoretical discussions. They should better not enter the field of theoretical discourses on politics. For, I hold that they are quite unfit for such serious theoretical discussions. They do not even understand what is the relationship between the base and the superstructure. Superstructure develops upon the base — does this mean that as the base changes, the superstructure changes, that is, there is an automatic change of the superstructure along with each and every change of the base? A new superstructure that develops on a base carries within it the hangover of the old superstructure for quite some time as a result of which serious conflict arises within the new superstructure itself. Everything in the superstructure of the old society does not disappear by one stroke following the change in the base. Any thinking contrary to this is unhistorical and I do not know whether such a queer conception about the relationship between the base and superstructure has any place at all in Marxism. Of course, I do not lay claim to be erudite or a scholar. In our country many Marxist ‘pundits’ have appeared. I do not lay claim to have a much better understanding compared to them! But from the little that I understand of Marxism, I firmly hold that this is not a correct understanding of the relationship between base and superstructure.

Advocates of people’s democratic revolution in our country are in reality practising economic determinism

I have already said that in our country those who hold that without the completion of all the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution we cannot pass over to the stage of socialist revolution are in fact practising economic determinism. In this context I would like to deal with another point. Since bourgeois democratic revolution was called national liberation movement in the Second Congress of the Third International, any reference to such independence struggles as bourgeois democratic revolution is considered by some now as a deviation from Leninism and they would make it an issue for discussion. Those who think that to call this phase of social revolution as the phase of bourgeois democratic revolution in general is a complete deviation from Leninism and, without taking into consideration the fundamental point at issue, would start a debate on such a ticklish point should know that in Stalin’s *Problems of Leninism* and later on in many writings of Mao Zedong — not his writings of recent times but his writings of that period when they, too, considered Mao Zedong as a Marxist — this phase of social revolution has been referred to as the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution, time and again. It was recommended in the Second Congress of the Third International that the national independence struggle should not be

termed as bourgeois democratic revolution but should better be termed as national liberation movement instead, because these struggles differed from the old bourgeois revolution in certain respects. For, the bourgeoisie in that era was revolutionary but it is no more so. In this era revolution will suffer if the hegemony of the bourgeoisie is established over the national liberation movements and that is why the necessity of establishing the hegemony of the working class over these movements was emphasized. Taking note of these characteristics of the present era it was recommended at the Second Congress of the Third International that these national liberation movements should be freed from the influence of the bourgeoisie. But in any discussion relating to the determination of the stage of revolution everybody uses the terms bourgeois democratic revolution, socialist revolution. By that heavens will not fall. Again it is not correct on their part to think that by this the bourgeoisie is considered progressive and for that reason it is being called bourgeois democratic revolution.

In this regard, I would call your attention to an important observation of the Chinese Communist Party. The CPC is saying that when one fights against a tendency, a particular act of injustice, another tendency, another injustice may sometimes lie hidden within the struggle itself. This has been prevalent for long in the Marxist movement. For instance, the Second Congress of the Third International sought to remove a confusion — but see the result!

It is known to all that from social, economic and political aspects, the entire bourgeois democratic revolution constitutes a single stage in social revolution. Now suppose, the bourgeois democratic revolution proceeds to some extent under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Thereafter it is found that it is not proceeding a step further and that without the leadership of the working class it is impossible to complete the incomplete phase or the remaining part of the bourgeois democratic revolution or even to successfully pursue the revolutionary programmes of that phase in any way. Then it is clear that the strategy and tactics to be adopted by the working class in completing the remaining part of the bourgeois democratic revolution under its leadership must be different from the strategy and tactics followed by the bourgeoisie in providing leadership to the earlier part of the bourgeois democratic revolution. But from the perspective of the stage of social revolution the entire period belongs to a single stage — the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution. We find that a section of Marxists is making a mess of the whole thing. They have miserably failed to grasp the point following Marxist dialectical methodology. They contend how can the stage of a revolution be skipped over! And as it cannot be skipped over, so they add one more stage of revolution in between. For them, therefore, the stages of revolution are no longer the bourgeois democratic revolution and the socialist revolution only. There is yet another stage of revolution in between the two — which they name as the people's democratic revolution. This misconception stems from two things.

First, they have failed to correctly grasp the connotation and the political essence of the term 'national democratic revolution'. They have failed to grasp precisely in what context, under what circumstances and with what object Lenin used this term. What was the necessity for coining this expression and what is the limit of its applicability? If anybody fails to grasp these correctly then a muddle is inevitable and that is what has happened with them. Secondly, they are under the influence of economic determinism and because of this they contend that until the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution are completed there can be no socialist revolution. They think that with the attainment of independence, one phase of the bourgeois democratic revolution has come to an end — overthrowing the old class, be it the foreign imperialism or monarchy — and a national independent state has been established. The bourgeoisie, according to them, subject to variation from country to country, have gone against the revolution either as a whole or partially. So, the bourgeoisie as a class no longer

remains an ally of revolution and, even if an ally somewhere, is undoubtedly a vacillating ally, and there is no guarantee whether they will participate in the revolution. But from the economic aspect the stage continues to remain at the stage of the bourgeois democratic revolution because the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution and those of industrial revolution have not yet been completed. In such a situation what will be the stage of revolution? They take it that this revolution is an 'intermediary' between the bourgeois democratic revolution and the socialist revolution ! This is the source from which their confusion of people's democratic revolution is actually generated. That is, they have completely failed to grasp what is the real significance of Lenin's observation that 'politics supersedes economy'. They have failed to understand that the main question of every revolution is the question of seizure of political power. Stalin put it more lucidly : which class or classes are to be overthrown from the state power by which class in alliance with which other classes — such is the fundamental question of every revolution.

Otherwise, it is known to every student of history that when Lenin was drafting his *April Theses* all the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks were not completed in Russia. If anybody does not know it or if his knowledge is confined merely to certain points which Stalin was referring to in his book *Problems of Leninism* while answering to certain confused views of some, and in that case, if they also fail to realize the underlying meaning of those answers, that is to say, what were the specific answers of Stalin to which of the specific confusions, where lay the confusion, centring round which concrete historic event was this confusion and how Stalin answered all that — if they fail to grasp precisely all this, they will not understand as to why the November Revolution was a socialist revolution even though many of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks remained unaccomplished after the February Revolution in Russia. Because these anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks remained unaccomplished before the November Socialist Revolution, because the November Revolution declared the programme for their completion and raised slogans about these, a group confused it as the revolution to fulfil the unaccomplished tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Stalin gave a reply to them : No, inasmuch as from the political point of view the November Revolution was a revolution to capture state power by the proletariat overthrowing the bourgeoisie from power, in that sense and to that extent it was a socialist revolution. And the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution that still remained unaccomplished in the economic field would have to be fulfilled as the derivative tasks or byproducts within the main programme of socialist revolution after the seizure of power by the proletariat. So long these tasks were not completed, the Bolshevik Party had to raise these demands of the bourgeois democratic revolution, rally the support of the whole of the peasantry and had to do so, not only before and during the November Revolution or immediately after it but even after the Constituent Assembly was dissolved in 1919.

So, from this point of view the lesson of the November Revolution is very important for the workers, peasants and youth of our country who are engaged in revolutionary struggle. The workers-peasants and youth who will fight the revolutionary battle — against whom will they fight? The question of determining who is the enemy and who is the ally and what should be the tactics of struggle — all this is intimately connected with the fundamental question of the strategy of revolution. If they consider that our revolution is people's democratic revolution then outwardly whatever slogans they may raise in meetings and from platforms, whatever struggles they may conduct, it is sure that underhand they would develop a sympathy for the rich peasants in the villages that would ultimately result in unity with them. Consequently, the peasants' movements that they conduct would inevitably come under the firm grip and influence of the rich peasants. To regard Indian revolution as people's

democratic revolution would lead to either hobnob with the rich peasants this way or that way or towards adventures. This will yield no result. Rather by this the class struggle of the poor and landless peasants and the agricultural labourers against the rich peasants who are the mainstay of capitalism in the rural economy will be weakened and the interests of the poor and landless peasants and the agricultural labourers will be sacrificed in favour of the rich peasants. On the other hand, based on their fanciful theory of people's democratic revolution on the assumed existence of progressive national bourgeoisie somewhere, the party and its leaders would invariably hobnob with the social high-ups. Maybe behind the screen, but happen it must. Contrary to that, whatever may be the sacrifices of the rank and file members outwardly for the sake of revolution, this is bound to happen with their leaders inside the party and this may not be in the know of the rank and file members who make such sacrifices.

For, in this people's democratic revolution the progressive role of the national bourgeoisie is recognized. The advocates of people's democratic revolution do not intend to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power. They aim at overthrowing the monopolists whom they characterize as another class, the monopoly bourgeoisie. I have made elaborate discussions elsewhere on this point many times before and have shown that the rule of monopoly capital is nothing other than the rule of capitalism and that the hegemony of the monopoly capital is the hegemony of the bourgeoisie as a class. Without the rule of capitalism monopoly capital cannot wield state power. From any knowledge of Marxism, nobody can come to a conclusion contrary to this — as for myself with whatever little I understand of Marxism, it is not possible for me to hold any other view. It may be possible for other theoreticians, but not for me. This is simply beyond my comprehension. For, monopoly capitalism indicates a definite or particular stage of capitalism, a higher stage. Once monopoly capitalism is born, rule of the bourgeoisie means rule of monopoly capital. To say that there is domination of monopoly capital and it is to be overthrown but at the same time to call the national bourgeoisie an ally of revolution means, in reality, denial of the existence of the bourgeois state itself and refusal of the fundamental task of overthrowing the bourgeoisie through revolution from the state power.

Ours is a capitalist state

Judging from all aspects you can see for yourself that our state is a capitalist state. Here in our country slogans are being raised for introducing wholesale state trading in food grains. The ruling party is at times bringing measures to introduce wholesale state trading in food grains — whether they are successful or not is altogether a different matter. Levy is being imposed on food grains. The agricultural commodities have been transformed into principal commodities of the national capitalist market and everything relating to these commodities is governed by the laws of the national capitalist market. It is now being debated as how to combat the impact of inflation on the agrarian economy. If you care to examine the issue taking all this into consideration, then you will find that our agrarian economy, too, is entirely guided by the capitalist relation of production¹.

Even a common man can easily understand that an industrial worker produces on the basis of capitalist relation of production. But what are the characteristic features by which we understand that capitalism has infiltrated agrarian economy? Lenin has laid down clear-cut guideline in this regard. He has clearly shown that in determining the character of agricultural economy it is not at all relevant whether the agricultural economy is backward or advanced or whether the cultivation is made with the help of machinery or by the age-old, outmoded method. Further, whether the cultivation is done in small land holdings or in big farms — this too cannot be a relevant point in determining the character of agricultural economy, whether it is feudal or capitalist or socialist. Then what are the criteria for

determining the character of an agricultural economy ? Lenin has said that it is to be determined by the nature of trade and commerce of the agricultural commodities². That is, what has become the character of agricultural produce in the villages? What is the nature of trade and commerce of this produce? These factors mainly determine the character of agricultural economy — whether feudal or capitalist or socialist.

Why our agricultural economy, which is a capitalist one and not a feudal one, is not mechanized is a separate question. This question is related to the crisis of the market of capitalism ; it is linked up with the various factors that stand in the way of uninterrupted industrial development and is connected with the acute unemployment problem which is a serious threat to the state. I hear that some are advancing many queer arguments in this regard. I have heard that some have even gone to such an extent as to argue that because the bourgeoisie want to perpetuate the unemployment problem, that is to say, as it is written in the Marxian classics that the bourgeoisie create and sustain a reserve army of unemployed to have a better bargain with the workers, so our argument that the Indian bourgeoisie are not in favour of mechanizing agriculture thoroughly as it would create millions of unemployed in the countryside, threatening the existence of the state, is tantamount, according to them, to praising the bourgeoisie as if they do not want to create unemployment problem ! What a strange argument ! I would earnestly appeal to those who are dabbling in this manner, they had better not enter into such questions so immaturely. They should study a little more, acquire more knowledge, and should understand a little more. It is not that simple ! The bourgeoisie wants to perpetuate the unemployment problem in order to have a better bargain — simply knowing this we cannot completely grasp the issue. Did not Hitler resolve, even though temporarily, the unemployment problem in Germany by militarizing the economy ? History is replete with such instances. However, that is not my point of discussion here. Besides, here the problem is totally different. It is one thing to say that the capitalists will definitely perpetuate the unemployment problem because this is the general law of capitalist economy. But it is entirely a different thing to say that when in the urban areas the burden of unemployment has already assumed such gigantic proportions that the ruling class is desperately trying to grapple with it, at that time to go in for modernization and mechanization of agricultural economy knowing fully well that it is sure to create millions of additional unemployed in the countryside at one stroke and further intensify the pressure on the state is a risk which the bourgeois state cannot take. From this apprehension they are obstructing modernization and mechanization of agriculture and instead are resorting to working upon unscientific ideas and courses, taking to “Green Revolution”, etc. Although there is so much scarcity of agricultural produce, they are in no way inclined to modernize and mechanize agriculture — they are afraid of it. So, does it mean that the bourgeoisie do not want to perpetuate unemployment problem ? Contrarily, does it mean that because the bourgeoisie want to perpetuate the unemployment problem, they will, on their own initiative, create at one stroke millions of unemployed in the countryside in addition to the already alarming unemployment problem in the city, close down their factories and thereby aggravate the crisis so much so that it will hasten the process of revolution — simply because the bourgeoisie want to perpetuate the unemployment problem? Those who argue like this — why do they at all enter into such political discussions, I really fail to understand! Are they at all competent to enter into discussions and debates on these subjects? Such irrefutable(!) Marxist arguments are being made nowadays, I hear ! I would request them to carry on such ‘profound’ discourses and try to prove that we do not understand a whit of Marxism ! It will do us no harm. We have full faith in the people. They have the power of reasoning. They will judge, they will examine, they will ponder over and ultimately will grasp the issue. All these things are due to their failure to correctly grasp the lessons of the November Revolution.

Movements must have before them the correct base political line

November Socialist Revolution provides us with many lessons, all of which cannot be covered in a single discussion. Much confusion prevails over the fundamental political question in our country. We are moving in a vicious circle, we are trying to find the way out. If we are to come out of the impasse to find the correct path then we have to grasp this fundamental lesson of the November Revolution. We have to understand that if the base political line before the movement is not correctly determined, then, like the innumerable struggles in the past, in the future, too, the struggles for emancipation of the exploited people will inevitably end in a fiasco time and again. Those who say that there is no revolutionary force in our country, nor there is revolutionary will and fervour among the people, the youth lack fighting spirit, lack the spirit to sacrifice their lives, the workers-peasants lag behind in fighting zeal and in the spirit to give away everything for the struggle, deny history, in fact. I say, this is not true. The peasants and workers, the toilers, countless students and youth of middle-class families have plunged themselves in movements time and again. “Fight the oppressors, bring about revolution” — whenever anybody at an opportune moment raised this slogan, having some organizational strength to bring on this type of activities, in that case we saw how waves of movement swept the country. “We want revolution” — simply this passion, this dream alone spurred the youth to get involved in struggles and lay down their lives, again and again. What kind of revolution, where and how will it come about, under whose leadership, what will be its correct line — they didn’t give any thought at all to such questions.

So, that our youth don’t want to fight, that the workers and peasants of our country don’t want to fight, that they do not have the fighting mettle and death-defying spirit for revolution like the workers, peasants and youth of Russia, China and Vietnam, that our youth, peasants and workers want revolution only if somebody can bring it about for them by proxy, otherwise, by nature, they are unduly attached to peacefulness and want to avoid trouble and fighting — all these are not true. The real problem lies elsewhere. They did not have before them the correct path, the correct base political line — here lies the real problem. And if the strategic line is not correct when it comes to determining the tactics of the movement and its object, determining the stage of revolution — if the realization is wrong, in other words, if the base political line and the very object of movement is wrong, then however much struggling zeal and self-sacrificing spirit the people may have, all their sacrifice and martyrdom will go to waste. But does it go to waste for that moment alone? Is it not also true that this failure envelops the minds of those taking part in the struggle with despair and frustration? Doubts about movement and struggle creep in their mind. “We fought so hard, so many people gave their lives, we suffered so much but what did we achieve” — this is what haunts their mind. They start questioning the political cadres of the leftist parties: “We supported the movement. So many gave their lives but what is the result? In our country we have no hope. Oh, we have seen much of you, the political parties. You are all the same. None of you, none of these parties can do anything good.” These feelings of despair cloud the minds of the people as an aftermath of the failure of a movement.

What is of more concern is that with this way of thinking they confuse even a simple general truth — a trend which very much prevails now. I would like to elaborate a bit on this point. Let us assume, as they say, that none of us can do anything good. Even if their presumption is correct, then what will they do? Even if they think we are of no worth, still can they go on living life in this way? Can they continue that way? Can it satisfy hunger? Prices are going up, there is no job security, land is going out of hand, unemployment problem is increasing, families are disintegrating, there is no peace in the families; love,

affection, compassion are all drying up, sons and daughters are developing inhuman traits before your own eyes, you yourselves are also threatened with degradation and about that, too, you are fully aware — will you allow all this to go on? No, this cannot continue for long. So, what happens? At times, humanity, or quintessence of a noble human life in them breaks its slumber. Even if they do not have concern for humanity, they can ill-afford to ignore the dire necessities of their bare existence. Because, hunger is a stern reality. Without consciousness, without a high ethical-moral tone, one may not respond to the call of humanity. But unconcerned certainly one cannot be to one's hunger. So, even after failure, they have to stand up again. But when they rise, they again react in frenzy or like a child — full of impatience and incoherence. For where is the necessary network of organization for the movements? Where is the correct political leadership? In this way, at intervals of five or seven, eight or ten years come waves of movement in the country. And after suffering defeat in each struggle people succumb to despair. To them there appears to be no hope. Yet these defeated people, after some time, become restive again and start to cry for a change, for doing something. So, struggle is needed and they cannot but come into the arena of struggle. Today or two years after, if not after two years, then five years hence, they are to join. When they will join in struggle, they will again show the same infantile reaction, they will pick any path and plunge into fight, chanting some slogan or other, believing that they are treading the path of revolution and they will lay down their lives. They will meet with defeat again. Again they will be misled. So, we are to bring to the fore of every movement this fundamental teaching of the November Socialist Revolution.

The Communist Party of China at their Tenth Congress has again upheld this lesson of November Revolution in their own way, in a lucid manner. They have said that if the ideology and the base political line are incorrect then even if somebody is in possession of enormous power and influence at one time, ultimately he will lose them all. The term 'ideology' covers a wide range. The morals and principles, ethics and culture — all these questions of a movement are covered by the term 'ideology'. There is a trend in the movements of our country that we will fight, we will raise slogans but we feel no need for restraint in our utterances, we feel no need to have any sense of ethics and culture, no business with politeness, no concern for sobriety and decent behaviour with others — this is causing immense harm. Those who reflect this trend within the movement think they have the right to talk in any manner they choose, they have the right to insult the elderly people with abusive words and that there is nothing wrong in obscene gesticulation and body language while raising slogans in the streets — revolution is sure to come simply because the slogans they are raising are for revolution. But they would do well to remember that this does not happen. This can never happen. Because people are starving they may be attracted to movement by slogans but they get scared on seeing the obscene gesticulations and on hearing the vulgar remarks by cadres. People shy away at their utter selfishness. As a result, they become sceptical and suspicious about the very object of movement.

One more essential point we are to bear in mind in this connection, that is, revolution cannot be achieved merely on the basis of organizational strength. For the success of revolution, not only a steel-strong organization of millions and millions of people is needed but what is more, an overwhelming section of the population remaining outside the orbit of organization must become passive supporters of the revolution. If not passive supporters, they should at least be benevolently neutral to revolution and should not go against the revolution in any case. This condition is essential for the success of a revolution. Say, from a liberal estimate, if we accept that half-a-million of people is the combined strength of all the parties standing for revolution, even then it is an insignificant minority compared with the total population of India. If, therefore, we do not care for and are totally unconcerned about

the ideas of morality and ethics, of decency and civility, of character of this vast multitude of our people, then we will simply be rootless.

By ideology we do not mean, therefore, some high-sounding words borrowed from outside. Norms and principles of movement, sobriety and ethics, taste and culture — ideology encompasses all these. Those who take part in the movement, those who lead the movement, they all move among the masses. Hence, if word gets out about something, say, in Calcutta, then by word of mouth it spreads to the remotest village of Bankura just like a rumour without the aid of newspapers, so also the impressions that grow from the mode of life of the leaders and their conduct and behaviour reach the millions. Hence, if some think that people are not going to bother about their personal lives and therefore they are free to lead their lives in whatever way they like and that revolution will come only from pulpit speeches about revolution, they would do well to remember that it is not that simple. Nowhere did revolution come in this way. The Chinese Communist Party once again has reiterated this truth. They have reminded that if the ideology is wrong, if the base political line is wrong, then even if someone has strength at one time, it will not last ultimately. One cannot bring about revolution by strength alone but would only cause harm. They have cited the concrete instance of Lin Biao who usurped the state power, the party power and the military power — he wanted to grab everything, but he could not retain anything. Because the base political line, the ideology, the morals and principles, the cultural-ethical values, the concept of life — all that he stood for were incorrect. So you see, falsehood cannot reign for long. Exploiting the low level of consciousness of the masses, destroying their logical bent of mind, it may rule for some time but never for all the time. From all these concrete instances we are to take lesson.

Those who, from their own selfish ends, foster blindness in the party ranks — even if our party did the same, if it tells its workers not to study, not to engage in debates and discussions with others, not try to know others' viewpoints — in that case, despite all the lofty principles that our party advocates, it will mean in reality that under whatever pretext we want to kill the logical bent of mind of the society. The political workers are called the 'General Staff' of the revolutionary masses, their most advanced and vanguard detachment. At least they are supposed to possess a higher standard of theoretical understanding than that of the masses. Then what happens if even these political workers lose their rational temper? It is one thing if they discard others' viewpoints after giving them patient hearing and making a careful examination. But what happens if they develop a temper of not studying, of not getting to know others' viewpoints? It generates blindness, narrow-mindedness in all strata of society. Then all the obscure ideas get an easy access to the society. And once the logical bent of mind dies out in the society, taking advantage of this the social high-ups having the power of capital and state-backing at their disposal purchase the youth. They promote unethical means of livelihood among the youth and the people at large and pave the ground for fascism in the country. So if any party indulges in this type of activity, be it on the pretext of party discipline or any other pretext, even if it is our party — it should be charged with committing a heinous crime. What to speak of giving leadership to mass movement or revolution, it should stand accused of criminal charge at the bar of mass movement. That is why it is a common experience that the true revolutionaries, the Marxists in any country, did never discourage polemical discussions and ideological struggles. On the contrary, they have given strong encouragement to it within the united mass movement. What was their sole concern was to see that these debates and ideological struggles were not conducted in such a way as to disrupt their unity, that is, caused no obstacle to united struggle against the main or common enemy and were not reduced to the level of physical assaults to suppress others. These and these alone are to be taken care of and guarded against while conducting ideological

struggles. But encouragement to ideological struggle within the united mass movement is an imperative necessity. But this is exactly what is being obstructed in our country.

Change of this situation is inevitable

Before I conclude my speech on the November Socialist Revolution, once more I would like to remind my peasant-worker-middle class comrades who have assembled here of some points. I would like to tell you that however difficult may be the situation today, you have to constantly bear in mind an important point which persons with intellect, the dialectical materialists and the devotees of science knew only, but common people, even if they could understand the reason of that, yet they could not wholeheartedly accept it. They had their doubts as to whether it was at all possible that the starving, ignorant and the illiterate masses could ever get organized to give birth to such an alternative political power of theirs, the force of which could smash the deadweight of the repressive bourgeois state organ which has at its command so much power, so much might of the military, the power of capital, and thus accomplish revolution. The November Revolution, for the first time in the history, proved to the world, not in theory alone, but by concrete instance that — yes, it was possible. The November Revolution, at the same time, provided clear answer to another question about which, too, people had their doubts. People used to think that it was with the help of an army of clerks and bureaucrats, the servitors of the vested interest, that the administration would have to be run even after the revolution — they would stay on even then. As agents, it is they who would do everything, going against the people on behalf of the reactionaries. In that case how can the proletariat bring about a change even if they will seize state power? Lenin gave the answer : No, there is a lot of difference between the two situations. He said : when the state power will really be in the hands of the proletariat — not through words only, not a power through ballots, not a showy fake power, but where the condition has been created that the peasants' committees, the workers' committees, the Soviets or revolutionary councils, after seizure of state power are actually exercising control from the lowest level to the centre and the real revolutionary party of the proletariat is maintaining both co-ordination and centralism of these bodies — that is to say, when the state power is actually in the hands of the proletariat as a class, the proletariat can easily take appropriate steps against those bureaucrats who would defy the authority or who would fail to discharge their duties in accordance with the principles and ideology of the proletariat. Here we must remember another point : they are servants only; they serve their master in exchange of money. So, when the workers and peasants will be their real master and be in the authority, many of these educated sections, the clerks and the officers, just as they are bootlickers of the bourgeois masters now, they will obey the workers and peasants, will accept their authority for earning money, for getting jobs, for retaining their jobs. If they dare defy, they will be removed and it will not at all be impossible then to give birth to that force from among the workers-peasants capable of running the administration. And this was proved by the November Revolution. The ignorant workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party seized the power and afterwards they even succeeded to bring a section of the bureaucracy under their control. This became possible because their revolution was not seizure of power through ballot, or through meetings and processions only, or through stray acts of wielding lathis and brickbatting. Their revolution succeeded because of the emergence of people's alternative political power through a process of gigantic human endeavour. By the emergence of alternative political power of the people is meant formation of the workers' and peasants' committees — these committees being the instruments for leading and conducting their revolutionary struggles through which the ignorant workers and peasants, lacking in formal education, will acquire and develop the organizing capability and talent, that is to say, the talent and capability to keep in full view and tackle the many

problems and complexities of the organization thus developing in different stages throughout the country. So, it is through the revolutionary struggles that the political power of the people develops, and this political power of the people as an alternative parallel system can take charge of the state. Thus, the notion that the workers and peasants cannot run the state — this too was proved wrong by the November Revolution. Taking lessons from and being inspired by the November Revolution, the workers and peasants of Europe, China, Vietnam, etc., came forward to establish their own state in their respective countries.

While recalling the lessons of November Revolution what you are to remember is that a change in the present situation is bound to come. Because the bourgeoisie are powerful, because they have in their hands the mighty state power, they will remain like a millstone round our necks and reign for ever — had it been so, it would have been no doubt good for the bourgeoisie and such a thought might give them pleasure — but this never happens. But how soon will come the change — it all depends upon you. How soon will come the revolution, depends on how much time you will require to develop people's alternative political power in the concrete form of revolutionary councils and people's committees like the Soviets through unitedly conducting movements organized on the correct base political line and ideology and under the leadership of the real revolutionary party of the proletariat. But remember, you can never achieve revolution by shirking the real task, just by shouting slogans, or through tricks in the ballot boxes. You can achieve revolution only when you have been able to give birth to people's own political power on the basis of correct revolutionary base political line and ideology and under the leadership of a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat. Electoral battles that you fight, the democratic movements on economic demands that you build up — if you can view and build up all these struggles as conducive to your main revolutionary struggles, then and then only, these will be purposive. Other than this, all these are meaningless. If you can grasp this, then along with this you also have to understand that the mass movements which you develop have their ups and downs, advances and retreats, successes as also defeats and setbacks — because there are twists and turns along its path. But what is of decisive importance while developing these democratic movements is whether you have been able, on the basis of correct ideology and principles, to correctly determine the base political line and the stage of revolution, i.e., whether you have correctly realized that the main task of this revolution is to overthrow the bourgeoisie that is now in state power in the place of the imperialists.

India is in the stage of socialist revolution

Let us not enter into fruitless discussions and hair-splitting arguments as to what extent feudalism exists in our country. I have shown earlier that feudal economic relation or relation of production no more exists in our country, what remains of feudalism are its remnants in the superstructure of the presentday society alloyed with habits, customs, tastes, morals and the form. Despite all this, even if we accept for argument's sake the contention of those who say that feudal land relation still remains in the rural economy, then also, is it not a fact that the bourgeoisie are in control of the Indian state and that even in the midst of ongoing acute crisis of world capitalism and its concomitant effects on the internal economic situation of the country, they are further consolidating Indian capitalism? If it is so, then they must admit that the Indian state is undoubtedly a capitalist state and here the main programme of revolution is the seizure of power by the proletariat overthrowing the ruling bourgeoisie from state power, that is to say, the Indian revolution is a socialist revolution.

Let me remind you, in this connection, of an important observation of Lenin's. Once Rosa Luxemburg entered into a debate on the question of determining the character of a national state with Kautsky — Kautsky had not yet turned a renegade. It was Rosa's contention that the countries which were politically independent but economically totally subjugated by the

imperialist countries or foreign capitalist countries could not be called independent bourgeois states or national states nor could the state machines of those countries be called capitalist state machines. Kautsky pointed out : No, the character of these states was that of independent national bourgeois state. Rosa replied on the basis of her above conception : No, independence of these states was only nominal; so, the people of these countries would have to direct their main struggle against imperialism and against the collaborating bourgeoisie of those countries, just as the advocates of people's democratic revolution in our country are pleading today. In reply, Lenin, supporting Kautsky, said that those who think that because of their economic subjugation by imperialist capital these states are not independent national bourgeois states have completely failed to grasp the real significance of this era of imperialism. They have completely failed to realize that in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution this phenomenon was quite natural. Due to the uneven development of capitalism, a few capitalist countries have much advanced and are acting as leaders of the capitalist world — the leading imperialist countries — on which the bourgeoisie of the newly independent countries are bound to be economically dependent. He also pointed out that not only the small Balkan states but the mighty Czarist Russia against which some imperialist countries had to wage war — over her economy also the rich European countries had a strong influence. Capitalism that developed there was under the strong domination of the Western capitalists. But because of this, nobody considered the Czarist Russia a colony of the imperialists, rather she herself had introduced a kind of imperialism. Not to speak of this, even America was a colony of Europe from the point of view of economic dependence, till the close of the nineteenth century. Does this prove that through the American War of Independence, no independent national state was founded, no capitalist state established ? Those who do not accept that the independent states are also sovereign national states because of their economic dependence on imperialist capital — Lenin called them mistaken³.

Those who do not accept even Lenin's authority should answer a question of mine. Let them explain how America, which till the close of the nineteenth century was economically dependent on Europe, has practically made all the bourgeois countries, the capitalist countries of Europe, economically almost its colonies ? Certainly, no other revolution took place in America after the War of Independence. If it had not been a national state, a capitalist state since the War of Independence, then how was it possible ? So, in determining the stage of revolution or the character of the state, whether there is decisive presence of imperialist capital or of feudalism in the economy — is all this of that much importance ? This is nothing other than to get embroiled in unnecessary details devoid of the essence of the matter. Say, for instance, if somebody, while trying to determine the stage of revolution, spends page after page to give a vivid description of the distress of the people — about scarcity of rice and cereals, how the peasants are getting evicted from their lands, how much land the poor peasants have under their possession, what is the position in Bihar, that the labourers are not getting fair wages, people are starving, so on and so forth, and then solemnly proclaim that in order to fight all this we are to bring about revolution — this I mean getting embroiled in unnecessary details without getting at the substance. The fundamental question of every revolution is to determine the class character of the state.

Those who are muddling up the fundamental question of determining the class character of the state by getting entangled in a detailed examination as to what extent there is decisive presence of feudalism and imperialist capital in our economy — I would like to draw their attention to another point. Everybody knows that even after the establishment of the bourgeois Kerensky government through the February Revolution in Russia, the Ministry of Defence was in the hands of members of the Czar family. Moreover, it should also be known to those having the ABC knowledge of history that still then, there was strong prevalence of feudalism in Russia. These feudal lords who had political alignment with the Cadets came to

clashes with the Bolsheviks, all through up to November Revolution. Because of this, did Lenin say in his *April Theses* while determining the character of the state that it was a bourgeois-Czarist state headed by the big bourgeoisie ? Why did he not say so ? Because of the simple reason that it was the bourgeoisie which was in the state power. And it was this bourgeoisie that made compromises with feudalism. Before the February Revolution, it was just the reverse. The feudal lords, the monarchs were then in the state power and they came into confrontation or made alliance with the bourgeoisie as per their need. But after the February Revolution the bourgeoisie was in the state power. They were at times hitting out at feudalism and on occasions, out of fear complex of revolution, were coming in close alliance with it. But whatever the bourgeoisie did, it did so as the ruling class from the position of state power. So, Lenin did not make this mistake. That is why Lenin did not approach the question of determining the class character of the state in that way. Rather, it is he who pointed out that the state power in Russia had passed from the hands of the old class, i.e., Nicholas Czar, into the hands of a new class, the Russian bourgeoisie. What do we find therefore ? It is evident, therefore, that in determining the stage of revolution, the fundamental question is : in the hands of which class is the state power.

Answering Rosa Luxemburg on the point, whether a state is an independent national bourgeois state and how to determine this, Lenin beautifully explained that in the context of the prevailing international situation, that is to say, in the background of crisis in the world capitalism and its impact on the national economy, if in the given situation the state strives for the freest, widest and speediest economic development based on capitalist relation of production — in my opinion it would better be said, relatively freest, widest and speediest — then this is but a capitalist state.⁴

If we judge from this perspective then in India, after its attainment of independence and the bourgeoisie coming to the state power, even if we do not clearly understand the character of agricultural production and the land relation obtaining at present but understand this much that the Indian state is trying to consolidate Indian capitalism, it would be obvious that this is a sovereign national state. And in the terminology of Marxism-Leninism, a national state does not mean a semi-colonial, semi-feudal state but it means a bourgeois national state. And a bourgeois national state, according to Lenin, is nothing other than a capitalist state. So, the revolution to smash that capitalist state machine is the revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie from state power and *to that extent and in that sense* the Indian revolution is socialist revolution. Under whatever pretext, under whatever cover of theory, those who want to bypass this fundamental question, and in fact want to divert the attention of the people to unnecessary details, are creating confusion about the base political line of Indian revolution. Because of this, even when they are charged with revolutionary fervour, they will be destroying the revolutionary force by directing their fight against imaginary enemies. Or otherwise, as a reaction, they will seek shelter and security in safe parliamentary politics. Nothing can save them from either of these eventualities — either going to the safe and secured shelter of parliamentary politics, joining the bandwagon of revisionism-reformism or, in the reverse, wasting the revolutionary force through adventure.

Ideological struggle is an essential prerequisite of united mass movement

If the base political line is muddled up then there is bound to be confusion on the tactical questions, the purpose, principle, practice and mode of democratic mass movements. Because, the democratic movements which the people are organizing on so many demands on food, land, against eviction from land, on curbing of prices of essential commodities, fighting corruption, confiscation of foreign capital and so on and so forth ; if the main object of these democratic movements is not the overthrow of the capitalist state machine, then the tactics of struggle, conduct, norms and principles, tactical selection of time of struggle, alignment of

forces, programme and approach — all these will be different. So, in this connection I would like to place before the people another important point. We are very much misunderstood in the united movement. We stand for united movement. But in the united movement, we, the different political parties who participate, have our own respective base political lines — and if it is not something casual, if we really mean it, as our party surely does, then this difference in base political line is sure to have its reflection in the programme of the united mass movement. Differences are therefore bound to appear amongst us over the selection of time for movement, its tactics, political goal and object, how to develop it, with what political tuning and angularity is it to be developed. We are against any compromise in this conflict that appears within the united movement, centring round the base political line and ideology of that joint united movement. That is why they paint us as disrupter of unity.

Those friends who say that criticism within united movement disrupts the unity, I think, they are not reflecting the correct approach on the question of unity-struggle-unity. The Chinese Party in their Tenth Congress has once more reiterated this principle. They have said that all unity, no struggle, or all struggle, no unity — such a concept of unity is erroneous. While criticizing us, those who say that criticism within the united movement disrupts the unity forget that even when we carry out an intense struggle within the movement, we at the same time again and again examine the possibility of unity. This, we hold, is the correct approach on the question of unity-struggle-unity. So, even when we develop a united mass movement, difference over the question of tactics of movement, that is, over the selection of time of movement, the manner in which the demands are to be raised, style of conducting the movement, the goal and object and to what extent it can be led towards that end — all this is quite natural due to difference in our respective political lines. Since the programme of movement is the same, hence there can be no difference between us on such questions — such a thing never happens. Say, for example, those of us who are developing united mass movements, we all consider capitalism and the party of the capitalist class, the Congress, as the main enemy. Otherwise, why are we coming into the arena of united struggle ? Those who do not consider capitalism to be the main enemy are not joining in the united struggle. So, fight against capitalism is a common point. But is it not equally true that there is difference between us on the tactical approach to this struggle against capitalism, based on our respective base political lines ? So, this united mass movement which all of us are coming forward to develop on the basis of a common agreed programme of democratic movement — how can it be saved from the tendency that lies hidden within that very united mass movement to mislead or divert it from the fundamental goal of anti-capitalist struggle to which it should be led, without conducting relentless ideological struggles ?

And if we cannot guard against that, then people will fight against Congress no doubt — no doubt, they will make self-sacrifices but all these struggles will go astray. So, you see, Stalin emphasized that intense ideological struggles must be conducted to defeat the social-democratic forces from within the revolutionary struggles at all stages of co-ordinating the legal with illegal movements both within the Proletarian United Front and the United Front of democratic forces in the phase of democratic movement, if it is a revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie from power. Otherwise, capitalism cannot be overthrown. If the revolution is not one to overthrow capitalism then the ideological struggle is to be directed against a completely different force. For example, in the united anti-imperialist freedom movement, in which the national bourgeoisie takes part, ideological struggle is to be directed against the national bourgeoisie in order to isolate its influence from over the mainstream of national freedom struggle. Again, where the national bourgeoisie is in power, it is against the social-democratic forces within the united movement, the forces of compromise between labour and capital, who talk of socialism and Marxism but, in reality, are sham socialists, sham Marxists — it is against these forces that the ideological struggle has to be conducted in order to

isolate them. For those who talk of fight against capitalism, Stalin provided this important thesis : “It is impossible to put an end to capitalism without putting an end to social-democratism”. That is to say, it is his warning that in this anti-capitalist movement, if through fierce ideological struggles within the united movement, the different social democratic trends and tendencies that lie hidden within the movements to lead it astray at critical hours by making compromises between labour and capital — if these cannot be disarmed in order to free the working class and its movement from the influence of these social democratic trends of thought, the anti-capitalist revolution can never meet with success. He said that this is one of the main strategic aspects of the anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Those who grasp the essence of this thesis of Stalin’s, those who realize how many trends and tendencies lie hidden within the struggle itself, can very well understand why we insist so much on ideological struggle, why we fight so much on tactical questions, questions of policy and principle and the base political line within the united movement. We do it not from any malice, nor do we want to spread any malice. During this ideological struggle, they may feel injured from some expressions here and there. But our purpose is not to spread venom or ill-feelings. Sincerely we want unity of movement, friendship with others and an attitude to understand each other. That is why we try to point out the mistakes committed by others and in turn we expect they too will show us any mistakes committed by us. We wish, to show them in this way their mistakes and that they too will try to show ours. And let this struggle be in the open before the people participating in the united movement, so that they can judge for themselves which line is correct and which is wrong, who are providing the right arguments and who the wrong ones ; who are confusing the main issue by citing quotations out of context and who are making painstaking efforts to illumine the truth. To provide the people with this opportunity to judge for themselves is an indispensable necessity and a precondition for united mass movement. This is the lesson that we must draw from the November Revolution.

Three essential preconditions of revolution

The lesson that we must draw from November Revolution is that for the success of a revolution there are three preconditions. The first is, on the basis of a correct revolutionary theory, ideology and base political line, the emergence of a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat with adequate organizational strength to provide leadership. Evading this basic issue and undermining the importance of the base political line, those who speak only of organizational strength, confuse in reality the main point at issue. This I have already shown, referring to the observation of the Tenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Time and again, the various teachings of Lenin’s and the history of world communist movement have upheld the same truth.

The second essential condition for revolution is the United Front. At the initial stage of democratic movement, building up of United Front of left and democratic forces and after passing this phase, giving birth to the proletarian United Front — a front essential for the anti-capitalist revolution.

The third prerequisite for revolution is to develop through the united mass movements or joint struggles people’s own instrument of struggle, meaning thereby, giving birth to the political power of the people, which will be unlike the municipal committees or the local and district committees of the representatives of the constituent political parties of the United Front. These will be organizations, more or less like the Soviets of the workers and peasants in Russia, developed through united struggle of the workers and peasants having the competence to accept or reject any programme, as also having the initiative and capability to apply them concretely and independently. Unless these three essential preconditions of revolution are fulfilled, movements may come in wave after wave, millions of people may

plunge in these movements and lay down their lives again and again, but there will be no revolution. Revolution and revolt or agitation are not one and the same. By revolution we mean the politically conscious, organized and armed uprising of the masses on the basis of a definite aim and object, a correct ideology and the genuine revolutionary political line of the proletariat. And the more the people will advance towards fulfilment of these essential conditions, the brighter will become the prospect of a radical transformation of the present situation in India and the more purposive will be the observance of November Revolution anniversaries in our life. With this I conclude.

**Long Live Revolution !
Long Live November Revolution !**

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1. Our great departed leader Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, in his address as the chief guest at the delegates session of the Twelfth Conference of Paschim Banga Krishak-O-Khetmajur Federation held at Suri in the district of Birbhum in March 1970, had analysed the capitalist character of the agricultural economy of India from various angles. In that detailed discussion he had shown that “Concentration of major portion of land of our country in the hands of a few, gradual transformation of the major sections of the rural population into proletariat and semi-proletariat, transformation of land into the means for investment of capital, owner-wage earner relationship governing agricultural production, and, above all, transformation of agricultural produce into commodity of the national capitalist market — all this conclusively prove that the agricultural economy of India is out and out capitalist in character”. This speech was later published in the form of a booklet, captioned *Bharatbarsher Krishi Samashya O Chasi Andolan Prosange (On Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movement in India)*, and is included in this volume.
2. *The Agrarian Question in Russia towards the Close of the Nineteenth Century* — Lenin.
3. *The Right of Nations to Self-determination* — Lenin.
4. *The Right of Nations to Self-determination* — Lenin.