

# **United Front Politics and Our Task in the Present Situation**

*In the backdrop of the crisis of the CPI(M)-led United Front which precipitated resignation of the UF ministry in Kerala in the late 60s, at a time when United Front of left and democratic parties was the only alternative force against the consolidation of reactionary forces, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh shows that this back turn goes to demonstrate the abject bankruptcy and total failure of the self-styled Marxist-Leninists to advance the cause of democratic mass movement, the only instrument in people's hands for waging their struggle for existence.*

Comrades,

In the present extremely complex situation which the United Front politics is passing through, what is to be done by members, supporters and sympathizer-friends of our party and what they owe as responsibility — it is to discuss all this that this meeting takes place today. Comrade Dasgupta<sup>1</sup> has discussed different aspects of the developments in Kerala. I shall not go into these elaborately. I shall concentrate my discussion on what today constitutes the main political question. The developments in Kerala have conclusively established one thing, and that is the absolute political bankruptcy of each constituent party of the United Front, particularly of the powerful parties there who claim to be Marxist-Leninist, and their abject failure in the matter of leading the people's movement, which have landed the United Front politics in Kerala in its present impasse.

## **United Front, only alternative at the moment**

Taking into consideration the political and organizational abilities of all the parties such as the CPI(M), CPI, RSP, etc., and according to their own view on the question of providing leadership single-handedly — from what they say themselves — no two opinions are there that the United Front is the only alternative force against the reactionary forces like Congress, Jana Sangh, Swatantra Party, etc. That is, as long as no such political force emerges before the

democratic movement which by organizing and consolidating all the movements on its own strength is capable of leading the revolutionary struggle towards its real goal, till then the United Front is not merely an exigency — it remains an indispensable instrument of democratic movement. That is, despite the fundamental difference between those Marxists who advocate peaceful revolution and those who hold revolution as involving inevitable bloodshed — either do recognize the indispensability of united front politics in the concrete situation obtaining today. Therefore, all who hold that in the course of carrying through revolution, the present phase of democratic movement is necessarily to last for some time – to them the United Front, at this juncture, is the only effective instrument for conduct of united democratic movement.

If the United Front can really be turned into an instrument of struggle, people's movement can be raised to a higher stage and the non-revolutionary parties can be gradually isolated from the masses, and in the process thereby the political and organizational leadership of the revolutionary party over the people established — then only can the necessity of the United Front politics get exhausted. This alone is the correct understanding of the Marxist-Leninists regarding the theory of United Front. If this be the theory then the responsibility of maintaining the existence of United Front politics devolves, in the main, on those especially who consider themselves as revolutionaries. This sense of responsibility has actually to be realized and proved in action. On our part, we do realize about this responsibility but then we have not achieved strength sufficient for giving it a concrete shape — we are yet not that strong. Therefore, those within the United Front who call themselves revolutionaries, and who it is that assert: we are the main constituent, ours is greater responsibility, at least when it comes to allotting of ministries, and who, when it comes to enjoying power and self claim: we are big, the key portfolios should come to us — they are the ones on whom lies the foremost responsibility of protecting the United Front. But today we find that they sorely lack this sense of responsibility. The attitude they display is somewhat like this that the onus for disruption is yours, the right to the spoils is mine. I say, you are big and since grabbing the spoils has for long become your habit – grab as much as you can, we have no objection. But the party which considers itself Marxist and revolutionary and which claims itself to be the most powerful in the United Front — which is of course a reality, has naturally to bear also the major responsibility of protecting the United Front from many a turmoil and complexity that it will encounter provided, of course, if they are truly Marxist and revolutionary. The main concern of a responsible, true revolutionary, Marxist party

obviously comes out to evolving that policy and approach based upon the dialectical principle of unity-struggle-unity following which it will be possible to maintain unity within the United Front even in the course of conducting ideological struggle among them. Those who firmly believe that as the situation stands today no single party can provide single-handed leadership to democratic movement and cannot provide a massive instrument of struggle by itself whereas in order to advance the course of revolutionary preparedness, it is very much necessary to intensify the course of democratic movement — to them it is quite clear that to keep alive the politics of united front is essential in a fighting state of existence.

### **Principle of unity-struggle-unity and United Front**

Therefore, on the one hand, in such a situation the task is to intensify these democratic movements and, on the other, conduct an ideological struggle remaining simultaneously within these united movements and in the process expose before the people the real face of others and isolate the pseudo-revolutionaries from the masses. That is, in conducting day-to-day mass movements, while unity of various constituents must be maintained, at the same time, the ideological struggle against these parties has to be carried on. If this complex method of struggle can be correctly pursued, then only can the real significance of the United Front tactics be properly grasped. With this objective alone the revolutionaries do join or build up the United Front. It is however a reality that at the level where people's political consciousness stands even today they are — rightly or wrongly — as such divided because they remain under the influence of different political parties. These parties that claim to be democratic, progressive and Marxist and talk of democracy, of progress and appear before the people with the stock-phrases of class struggle — all of them should be brought onto one platform on the basis of an agreed minimum programme. As a result the people will have an opportunity through the united struggle to determine the real character of the parties they have so long regarded as democratic, revolutionary and Marxist and who rend the sky with slogans of class struggle. If, on the one hand, the unity of the struggle against the main enemy is maintained, and, on the other, a parallel ideological battle correctly conducted then even in the midst of prevailing hullabaloo it will be pretty easy for the people to identify the real character behind the façade of these so-called revolutionary heroes — the votaries of class struggle ever cheered by the jotedars and industrialists and backed both directly and indirectly by the bureaucracy. Therefore, so long as

this politics is not exhausted, that is, till its utility comes to an end in the process of building up revolution, which again means as long as we cannot isolate the pseudo-leftists, pseudo-socialists and pseudo-communist parties from the masses and gain enough strength to provide leadership single-handedly to the democratic movements on an all-India plane, till then it is the duty and responsibility of the revolutionaries to make all-out efforts to keep the United Front alive. Is the CPI(M) at all discharging this responsibility?

**Not to protect United Front but to shift responsibility for breaking it on to others’  
shoulders is CPI(M)’s main concern**

The real concern of the CPI(M) is not whether the United Front goes or survives — if the United Front breaks up, let it be so — this hardly matters to them; their real concern is if only they can manage in some way to shift the blame for the break up on to the shoulders of others, then they are happy. That is, their stand is somewhat like this, we have not broken up the Front, it is the others who have done it. If only this message can somehow be brought home to the masses, they think, then their main purpose is served, that is to say, the material ground for attaining majority in the coming elections is prepared. What they do not understand is that even if attaining single majority through election becomes possible today, even then to a genuine revolutionary party this cannot be the prime objective of conducting democratic movement. Therefore, a genuine revolutionary party, not to speak of disrupting this instrument of united democratic movement in return for electoral majority but what is more, it cannot act in any manner whatsoever that does, even if indirectly, hasten the process of a breakdown. We should be aware that those who behave in this manner are but out and out parliamentarians in the garb of revolutionaries — they are wallowing in the mire of parliamentary politics. From this conduct and activity of the CPI(M) it is clear that they do not at all see the issue in this way. Herein lies the clinching evidence that it is a mere petty-bourgeois parliamentary party, though masquerading as communist in the cloak of Marxism. Hence, a little analysis of their conduct, the pattern of their political stand and especially the explanations they put forward concerning their almost daily clashes with the constituent parties will lay bare to any one with even rudimentary understanding of Marxism that the CPI(M) confuse and equate the contradiction between the constituents of the United Front with the contradiction between the entire United Front and its main enemy. That is, they are simply unable to correctly analyse the very

characteristic distinction that exists between the inner struggle among the constituents of the United Front and the United Front's struggle with its main enemy. As because they equate the two contradictions, they are handling the inner contradiction of the United Front in the manner of waging a battle against the main enemy and calling it class struggle. As a result of this type of revolutionary movement of theirs, the real enemy is quite comfortably resting behind the smokescreen created thereby. Therefore, if you observe a bit closely you will notice that even the bureaucracy are gleefully and cunningly carrying on a propaganda campaign in their favour.

What the CPI(M) fails to realize is — if the breakdown of the United Front in Kerala is brought about by their wrong politics, intolerance and incompetence and in Bengal too, if it is on the verge of a collapse, it is they who will be harmed most if they had considered themselves to be truly revolutionary. That is to say, if the form of conducting ideological struggle among different parties in the United Front is reduced, in reality, to violent clashes in the name of conducting class struggle and ultimately destroys the unity of the United Front and jeopardizes democratic movement, it must be understood that they could not at all grasp the nature of contradiction existing within the United Front. They simply hold that if only they can shift the blame for breaking up the United Front on to others and through mid-term election manage to somehow form the government single-handedly, they would attain their ultimate goal. What has then all along been noticeable in their political conduct is that they are not free from regionalism, provincialism and pragmatism. Therefore, if any regionalist or pragmatist sense prompts them to consider that a particular action may contribute to temporary gain of strength, they get at once carried away by that. But it is one of the elementary teachings of Marxism that if the immediate interest is not conducive to the ultimate interest, i.e. the interest of revolution, then the immediate interest has to be always abjured. Because, it is pragmatic, that is, opportunistic. This is the basic understanding of Marxist theory of revolutionary necessity.

**Main reason of why Bangla Congress, CPI and others criticize misuse of administrative machinery by CPI(M) in partisan interest**

But today in the case of United Front governments we experience that what has become the bone of contention for all those parties is to what extent one is in a position to increase its organizational strength by exploiting the administrative machinery and one is not in a position to

do so. That is to say, those who oppose the CPI(M) for misusing the administrative machinery in petty party interest are not opposed to it for the reason that as its fall-out the democratic movement is being severely harmed, its militant character destroyed and it is being given a reformist orientation. The others who oppose exploitation of the administrative machinery by the CPI(M) do not oppose it from the standpoint that attempts to build up worker-peasant's class struggle with the backing of the government, or with the police and state backing, ceases to be a class struggle and ultimately ends up in breaking the very backbone of the revolutionary movements. Their mindset is – the others are misusing the administrative machinery in the party interest but are not allowing us to do so. Though they do not say it in so many words, what the views of these parties amount to is: they are getting their party expanded but preventing us from doing so. In other words, if the matter could have been like this that, 'let all of us do it', the spirit being 'you do it, we also do it — just as the quota of ministers is determined on the basis of respective strength; if in regard to use of police and administration, lining of pockets, providing employment, there could have been a proportionate arrangement of sharing like this: if you provide jobs to such a number of people, we must also have the scope to provide jobs to some people at least; if you can use the police, I can also do so — then it seems even if there would have been some local fighting, the conflict-situation would not have assumed such severity'.

The problem has become so severe and complex because the CPI(M) is having its organization expanded by taking advantage of all these. It is they who provide jobs, who have bagged all the major portfolios, as if the others are there for okaying things by putting their seal of approval. The others feel that they are getting no benefit, no fruits. The word 'fruits' does not stand for movement, does not mean revolutionary organization – the word fruits here connotes solely that they are deprived of the opportunity of expanding their party by making use of administrative machinery. This precisely is the real cause of conflict between the CPI(M) and the Mini Front in Kerala, and between CPI(M) and Bangla Congress, CPI, etc., in West Bengal. In our opinion, both these politics are obnoxiously dirty and are causing irreparable harm to the democratic movements. If the real import of CPI(M)'s revolution turns out to be what it has been doing day in and day out under the label of revolution and behind the smokescreen of propaganda, then the earlier the people discard that revolution, the better for them. Again if the real import of CPI's democratic movement turns out to be the scheming manipulations and politics of cliquism that they have been pursuing, then the sooner the people forsake that, the

better for them. Yet, the tragedy is that these pseudo-Marxist-Leninists, these so-called communists still possess clout among the people even today – whatever the reason. There is no denying the fact that we cannot afford to keep our eyes shut in this matter. We are trying to keep ourselves free from this politics. How far we are successful, only history will tell. History spares none and neither would it spare us, I dare say.

According to our analysis, we hold that under the present circumstances in order to sustain the class struggle and for the sake of intensifying democratic movement, and in that sense also in the interest of the party itself, one of the principal tasks of a revolutionary party should be to preserve and protect the United Front. But the CPI(M)-CPI are not viewing the matter at all in that way. Of the CPI(M) I have already said that they become happy if the onus for the collapse of the United Front can be shifted on to the shoulders of other parties. It hardly bothers them whether the Front stays or goes. Rather, it appears that if the blame for the break up of the United Front can be passed on to the others, they are very much inclined to break the United Front itself. Perhaps this is the reflection of their political aspiration to attain single majority through a mid-term election. If one critically observes the propaganda let loose by the CPI during the crisis of United Front in Kerala, it will be evident that their real concern is also not whether the United Front government survives or falls – this matters little to them, their real concern is what kind of propaganda, what moves they should make that would fix the blame for break up on the CPI(M). Nobody cares to consider whether the problem is to shift the onus for disruption on to others or the real problem is how to save the United Front. We think that the protection of this Front in Kerala was mainly the responsibility of the CPI(M) as the biggest party and next of the CPI. However, to save the United Front by all possible means, this was their foremost responsibility. For, the future of the United Front politics in India as a whole is inseparably linked up with it.

### **Activities of CPI(M) and CPI create misgivings about future of United Front politics throughout India**

Viewed in the context of the promise that the United Front made to the people of Kerala, does this stance of these parties simply constitute a betrayal of them? What is more, by that serious doubts and a climate of uncertainty have been created about the very prospect of the United Front politics that had been so bright throughout India. A kind of impression has also

gained ground that the United Front because of being a hotchpotch-like arrangement, does not last.

Maybe they are thinking – no matter, we shall go it alone. Well, you may go it alone in Kerala or at best in West Bengal. But what about the whole of India? What about the remaining states? What will come of it if indeed they manage to form a single party government in Kerala tomorrow? When the party was undivided didn't they once do so in Kerala? At most the CPI(M) may again form a government in Kerala and West Bengal, so what of it? If they succeed our party will extend whole-hearted congratulations to them. If they could really understand our politics they would realize we are not afraid of it – rather we would be happy. We are not CPI. The sooner they form a single party government in those places where we are very much present, the better for us and for the people – as then only they will come out with their true colour in no time. It is because, being in opposition always gives opportunity for fiery and revolutionary phrase-mongering, or running the government together with others provides opportunity of apportioning blame on John for what Jack has done. But there is less scope for doing such type of mischief if a single party runs the government. The confidence with which the people still look to them due to their lack of political consciousness, will then fast be disappearing. That is, if they alone remain in the saddle of governmental power they cannot resort to the fiery phrase mongering as is usually done in opposition, nor will there remain any opportunity of shifting Jack's fault on to the shoulder of John, as they used to do during the United Front regime. The people then will directly question them what they have done to strengthen the democratic movement. In what state is the class struggle today? To what a pass have they dragged the militant working class movement? To what a state have they reduced, to what a low level have they brought whatever militant character the democratic movement had had? You are aware that last time (First UF government in West Bengal, *Ed. P.Era*) the labour ministry was not in their hands in spite of the fact that even then they were a big party and we a small one. But as because they were not in control of that department, they had not that absolute control over the ministry and could not use the police as they are doing now. And for this, you can easily see that whatever militant character the labour movement had in those days, even that is missing today. There is no denying that some excesses did occur then, but the tone of the movement was militant. As there had been excesses, it had its harmful consequences, and as a matter of fact, much harm was caused. We know adventurism does cause harm. But nonetheless a point underlying it deserves



to be taken note of. While it is true that adventurism causes harm it is equally true that it has in it an element of militant, sacrificing and staunch fighting mentality. If those under its influence could be provided with the right leadership and thereby could be freed from the emotional attachment to adventurist mentality then obviously that can result in much more powerful strength of revolution. But no such potential force exists in opportunism, in reformist and revisionist politics. I do not support adventurism, because it causes disastrous consequences. At times, it acts in such a senseless manner that thereby it destroys the very possibility of development of all kinds of movements. But this is a different aspect. What I mean to say here is that a person given to adventurism taking risks, is at least prepared to fight. But he is misguided, misled. But those who under cover of revolutionary verbiage in a very subtle manner drag the workers into legalistic movement or, in other words, into legalism and in their attempt to push the workers on the path of realizing some demands without conducting any movement, induce the workers to pick up devious means and tricks, surreptitiously germinate in the revolutionary working class movement the worst form of opportunism and by the twin tactics of blowing hot and cold ultimately dampen the spirit of struggle in the people. If the spell of this type of politics continues to grow, the pernicious influence of economism and election-centric politics will surely destroy the very prospect of building up democratic and revolutionary movement in India. Therefore, despite the fact that adventurism is harmful in a thousand and one way, from comparative point of view, this brand of revisionist politics is the main obstacle before the revolutionary movement in our country today.

**Struggle to wrest economic demands from capitalists does not by itself make it a  
revolutionary struggle**

What we see today is that struggle for realizing emoluments, the struggle for wresting economic demands from the capitalists are regarded as super revolutionary struggles. But what we get to see from the history of Russian revolutionary struggle is that Lenin and Stalin, as Marx and Engels earlier did – gave a good dressing down to those who considered that the struggle of the workers for wage increase was a super revolutionary struggle.

For, we must bear in mind that the movement for wage increase is no revolutionary struggle. It is the struggle for seizure of power by the proletariat overthrowing the capitalists from power

that is the real revolutionary struggle. When in the midst of day-to-day economic struggle of the workers, this aspiration, this yearning and this consciousness are fostered, when such a mindset has been created to unhesitatingly relinquish all attachment to wage-earning mentality if necessary for the advancement of the revolutionary movement — then only can it be concluded that the trade union movement is conducted in the sense of a school of communism.

The point to be always borne in mind is that economic consciousness of the workers is no revolutionary consciousness. Even if there is intense battle in the trade union movement, that by itself does not make it a revolutionary movement. Even the moderates, the bourgeois trade unionists too often stage such aggressive trade union movement. By this the unconscious workers may be befooled but it is no proof of advancement of the cause of revolution. That is why Lenin cautioned, whatever the number of demands and democratic rights achieved in a capitalist set-up — that cannot bring about emancipation of workers. In a capitalist system, no matter how many demands are wrested and whatever democratic rights extended, the worker even thereafter remains a wage-slave. Hence the real struggle of the workers lies in the battle for the overthrow of the capitalist system, in the revolutionary battle for establishing socialism and dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, the movement to increase wages is one of the many ways for advancing the struggle for seizure of power. So, to a revolutionary the key question is not how many of the demands have been realized through trade union movement – the real issue of consideration is the outlook and way in which the struggle to realize the demands are directed. But with utter dismay we are observing that by passing off the severe clashes that the CPI(M) have engineered in the trade union movement to break the unions led by other parties as revolutionary class struggle, they are misleading their workers and the public with great skill and cunning and for all practical purpose digging the grave of revolutionary working class movement by arresting these within worst form of economism and legalism. No doubt, were Marx-Engels-Lenin alive they would have given a good dressing down to these self-styled revolutionary ‘heroes’! as they did to all bourgeois economists in their time. To tell the truth, to my mind the CPI(M) has probably surpassed all the modern revisionists when I see this party’s Police Minister, Jyoti Basu, and what is more, even the Politbureau of the party proudly announcing that one decisive proof of their successful conduction of the United Front government lies in the fact that this time they have ensured what a big amount of bonus for the workers and that too without resorting to any kind of struggle! That means, according to them, without engaging in

any kind of struggle against the capitalists there will be intensification of class struggle, revolution will be accomplished and ultimately the emancipation of the working class. But don't think they are not engaged in any kind of battle or that there has been no intensification of that battle of theirs!

**CPI(M)'s 'class struggle' is directed not against the capitalists and jotedars but against the constituents of democratic movement**

No doubt, they have been fighting and it has intensified too, however that fight is not against the capitalists – the main enemy. That battle is being directed against those with whom they have formed the United Front, with those allied forces of the democratic movement, that is, with the constituent parties. It is being found that taking refuge behind various forms of deceptive ideological postures, blowing hot and cold, on the one hand, they actually have been pursuing a policy to win the confidence of the industrial houses and bureaucracy and, on the other, with single-minded attention they have engaged themselves in the task of destroying heroically the organizations of allied parties of the democratic movement with both direct and indirect backing of bureaucracy and police. And by propaganda manipulation they have been confusing their party workers and the public at large by passing it off as class struggle. Really what a wonderful Marxism-Leninism! On seeing all this, I often wonder – perhaps we are really fools. For, even after repeatedly observing this absolutely novel tactics of applying Marxism-Leninism — what a pity, we could not grasp its great worth! Don't laugh — they consider us nearly that.

Be that as it may; our party workers will have to show the true colour of their politics to their honest party workers and the public in general; with all patience and forbearance by illustration through simple and easy expression and with the help of theory they will have to expose the true colour of their politics. For instance, in the district of Bardhaman in West Bengal they themselves claim that their peasant organization there is most powerful, and that is also the reality. You all know it is in this district of Bardhaman that the largest number of jotedars is found, and it is this district of Bardhaman in West Bengal which is the habitat of shrewd and notorious big jotedars. But what is the picture there of struggle against those jotedars? What is happening there to class struggle? The policy they pursue there is one of friendly co-existence with the jotedars. Yet in all such areas where the agricultural workers, poor peasants and

sharecroppers have to their credit a long history of protracted and glorious struggle against the jotedars, as for instance in the vast expanse of the districts of South 24 Parganas, Birbhum, Murshidabad, etc., where under the banner of Krishak O Khetmazur Federation<sup>2</sup> led by our party SUCI, the agricultural workers, poor peasants and share-croppers have been organized through many an extremely painstaking and self-sacrificing struggle against the jotedars – these peasant organizations are being wantonly targeted for destruction by them with the help of the jotedars, who so long had nestled under the wings of the Congress, and with people hired from outside and, above all, with the backing of police and bureaucracy. And by taking recourse to guileful propaganda they indeed are trying to pass this off as class struggle. But I must, of course, admit they may as well pass these off as class struggle, since one cannot deny that the attack against the peasants perpetrated by the jotedars under their patronage is from their end, no doubt, also a class struggle!

We all know that when peasants and workers launch a class struggle against the jotedars and capitalists they have to confront the state power. For, in the present capitalist system it is but natural that the state power comes out in support of the jotedars and capitalists. But what kind of class struggle is that, being led by the CPI(M) which enjoys the backing not only of the bureaucracy and bourgeois press but even of the police and state power itself? After all this, is it hard to understand what kind of class struggles these are where the main enemy itself, that is, the industrial houses and big business go on handing out a certificate. In this connection you should take note of the showering of praise on CPI(M) by *The Statesman* and *Anandabazar Patrika*, etc. Had they really conducted class struggle then in whose interest have the police and bureaucracy – the sentry of the capitalist system – been patronizing them?

If the attitude of the capitalist class and industrial houses in the present situation is judged in comparison with their attitude in 1967, it will not be difficult for anyone to understand the true significance of the police and bureaucracy's change in attitude towards CPI(M). Today the picture is one of total reversal in the attitude of the capitalist class, bureaucracy and big industrial houses from what it was in 1967. This time a heaven and hell difference is perceptible in the reaction and stand of the big industrialists, bureaucracy and the police high-ups who in 1967 had raised a hue and cry that things are on the verge of collapse. What is the reason behind the sudden change in attitude compared to that during the first United Front? Have the cadres and

members of the CPI(M) ever pondered deeply over the phenomenon? How could the tone of a big monopolist like Birla, of *The Statesman* here or of *The Guardian* of Britain become so soft about these so-called votaries of class struggle? Have they at all deeply pondered over this question?

So, what I was saying, had they unleashed a real class struggle against the jotedars and industrialists – the CPI(M) would have had to encounter the most vitriolic tirade and attack from the big industrial houses, from the entire capitalist class and the movements conducted by them would also have had to confront, in the main, the repression and attack of the state power, that is, in this case the bureaucracy and police. But what do we see here? Are the so-called class struggles being led by the CPI(M) actually confronting the police and the state power even in a single instance? Or instead, is not just the opposite happening – it is bound to be the case. Of course, by this I don't mean to suggest that the CPI(M) workers are never and nowhere fighting against the tyranny of the capitalists and jotedars, being imbued with a sense of class struggle. It has to be admitted that in some cases honest workers of their party do engage in such struggles. But the point to which I want to draw their attention in particular is, what attitude is reflected by police and bureaucracy even in case of these struggles? These would inevitably have to confront the naked repression of the police and bureaucracy if the politics of their party working behind these struggles of theirs would be the politics of intensifying revolutionary class struggles. But they are being given to understand, it is because we are in power today that the police is not allowed to directly take the side of the jotedars and capitalists – they are being restrained. Though, however, in the case of peasant movement being directed by our party, SUCI, we find that the police, by openly taking the side of the jotedars, unleash repression on our party workers and peasants. Still, however, let it be assumed for argument's sake that the police under the pressure of the United Front government are unable to openly side with the jotedars and capitalists and to resort to direct repression on those CPI(M)-led movements. It is one thing that the police do not unleash repression on them owing to the existence of the United Front government and especially the fact that the Home Ministry is in their control. One can at least understand that. But why the sentries of the capitalist state – the bureaucratic administration and the diehard arch reactionary police officials should gradually be growing so sympathetic towards the entire CPI(M) party and its 'revolutionary' cadres, can by no reason be comprehended.

Be that as it may, barring some stray agitational movements here and there by the CPI(M) workers, it is not very difficult to comprehend that by raising the bogey of fighting against the capitalists and jotedars these so-called class struggles of theirs are being conducted chiefly to launch assaults on the workers' and peasants' organizations of the allied forces, that is, of the constituent parties. Hence, the police and bureaucracy as the trusted custodian of the exploitative social system are quite naturally playing their due role.

### **Attitude of police and bureaucracy towards so-called class struggle of CPI(M)**

In what role do we find the police and bureaucracy today with regard to these so-called class struggles by the CPI(M)? The police and bureaucracy here are not only backing surreptitiously and at places even openly these so-called class struggles of the CPI(M) — the identical statement made by local CPI(M) leaders and the police report on every incident, if taken note of, will bear out my observation — but what is more, in the prevailing state of affairs whenever the police and bureaucracy get any opportunity they are frequently unleashing attacks upon the revolutionary organizations and movements of those agricultural workers, poor peasants and share-croppers who are already under attack by the CPI(M) and jotedars. Like what has been happening to the movements of the agricultural workers, poor peasants and share croppers led by SUCI and KKMF against the jotedars in the districts of South 24 Parganas, Birbhum and Murshidabad. Ours is but a small party, but a comparative assessment will reveal that the police oppression on us was and still is the worst. To a genuine Marxist its significance should not be difficult to understand. Of course, the version of Promod Babu<sup>3</sup> and people alike is different. For, in their queer opinion with the Home Ministry being in their control, the police of the capitalist state have turned out to be a compliant force of revolutionary class struggle!

Had there been adequate understanding of Marxism-Leninism, the members, the activists of their party could easily have realized that if under their leadership true revolutionary class struggle really grew in intensity, in that event, on the question of handling administrative machinery of the capitalist state a contradiction at all levels between the police-bureaucracy and their party, and more particularly with Jyoti Babu, would meanwhile have assumed severe proportions. But strangely enough, the top brass of the police and bureaucracy are eulogizing Jyoti Babu, designating him as the most competent and tough administrator with the industrial

houses joining in the refrain. What does it bring into sharp relief if this role of police and bureaucracy is put to scrutiny? Who are they that conduct the class struggle in the truest revolutionary spirit? Who – the CPI(M) or SUCI? By dishing out concocted stories, continuously turning things upside down and resorting to all sorts of lies, it is possible to mislead some people for some time but not all the people for all time.

**Courtesy CPI(M) and Jyoti Babu the police, custodian of capitalist system, turned into servant of people today**

The bureaucrats and the top brass of the police find that in having gone to serve the Congress during the Congress regime, they ended up earning people's disdain only. But today they find that their conduct, approach remaining the same; their pocketing of bribes continuing in the same way, and their going about with the same bureaucratic attitude notwithstanding, merely by serving the CPI(M) their status has somewhat gone up. The police opinion and versions which so long had always been looked upon with contempt and dismissiveness by every democratic-minded person – today as because the Home Ministry is in CPI(M)'s control, and more particularly thanks to Jyoti Babu and his other colleagues, much more importance is being attached to the opinion and reports of the very same police. But in reality no change whatsoever can be traced in the attitude and basic character of the bureaucracy and police. Despite the most earnest service rendered to Congress and the Congress decorating the police with many a medal, etc., in order to project them as servants of the people, the police had always incurred boundless hatred of the public. Without any change regarding their conduct, principles and approach the bureaucracy and police have improved their status simply by pleasing the CPI(M), then why would they not come out in support of the CPI(M)?

That is to say, Jyoti Babu and his other colleagues are a much better force and there is at present no danger whatsoever in supporting them – this is the line of thinking of the top bureaucrats and high-ups in police. So, the character of the bureaucracy remains the same, so also does the character of the police – daily bribe taking, all the misdeeds and misdemeanours continue unabated, and the manner in which they administer their rule remains the same, yet a windfall comes their way, they have just got a certificate of being progressive. Whom else then would they support other than Jyoti Babu? Are they to support us instead? The majority of those

who are known as progressive in politics are overzealous in showering praise on the police: “The police too, after all, are human beings – they too are servants of the people.” If such accolades had come from the Congress earlier, everyone would simply have been enraged.

Don't you gauge the state of people's mindset today? If the Congress ever criticizes the CPI(M), even if it is on any justified point, instead of going into the merit or otherwise of the point they at once clamour, the very fact that the Congress opposes it, proves that what the CPI(M) does is correct. This is their irrefutable logic! As for instance, Sidhartha Shankar Ray<sup>4</sup> criticizing the excessive budget allocation for police by the United Front reportedly said in the Assembly, when the Congress was in power the entire opposition would severely criticize the Congress for the increased budget allocation for police. But today it is being found that the budget allocation for police in this United Front regime has been increased much more than was done during Congress rule. Therefore, having come to power was it not incumbent upon them to substantially bring down the budget allocation for police which they had lambasted in the Congress period as being inflated? But what we notice is that immediately after coming to power, far from reducing it, they increased it even further. Then what kind of principle is this?

But since Sidharatha Shankar Ray belongs to the Congress and the Congress is reactionary so even his just argument for reduction in budget allocation for police has at once become reactionary. And as it is Sidhartha Ray who opposes it, for that very reason a despicable act like pushing up the budget allocation for police — the sentry of the exploitative capitalist system — by a party calling itself Marxist-Leninist at once becomes progressive. Because the opposition is from Congress, so in their opinion it implies that the strengthening of the police is now conducive to mass movement. The police — the sentry of the capitalist state — as they assert, are now protecting the interest of workers and peasants against the capitalists and jotedars. When an MLA from our party rose to criticize the police budget, it created a hue and cry in the entire Assembly. They went on barracking him: how come you are criticizing us for increase in police budget just like Sidhartha Shankar Ray has done! So, it is amply clear that you and Sidhartha Ray are the same. Hence, it is clear you have turned out to be reactionary. What an ingenuous argument! This is the standard of the votaries of democratic movement! If you ever listen to their speeches you will see this is the way Promod Babu-Jyoti Babus argue and all these speeches are being strongly applauded. And those who applaud they are cadres of democratic movement. The



democratic force and anti-Congress masses who you so proudly parade – just see what their level of consciousness is! And herein lies the main problem for the revolutionary struggle and revolutionary party. It is here, therefore, wherein lies the stupendous responsibility of the revolutionary party workers to undertake the task of ideological and theoretical struggle.

### **Our approach is to keep, not to break United Front**

I have already discussed a point. Our approach should be to keep the United Front – not to break it. If despite all our attempts the United Front collapses – that is a different question. We are, however, of the opinion that if the United Front survives and is led along the right path, the democratic movements will get all support and patronage from the United Front government. An opportunity to rein in the coercive instruments to some extent will be available, the democratic movements can be broadened and given greater dimension, and the people from within the United Front will become able to identify the true colour of the constituents, in other words, it will be possible to unmask the real face of the pseudo-revolutionary parties before the masses. At present the political propaganda is being conducted by the parties, each from its separate party platform; now if the ideological struggle is stepped up within the united movement, it will become easier to bring home to people's consciousness the issue of characterization, or in other words, the criterion for correctly judging parties. Herein lies the effectiveness of the United Front. No revolutionary party can shirk its responsibility in this respect. The CPI(M) who parades itself as revolutionary — it is on them as a major party on whom rests the responsibility of keeping the United Front alive. Had we been in CPI(M)'s position, then the fact that someone else had brought about disintegration of the United Front would not have caused us any satisfaction. In the event of our failure to prevent the break up, the disintegration becoming inevitable, we would explain the reason. But it is only after we had exhausted all attempts to protect the Front that we would come up with such an explanation – what was the reason for our failure and where lay our weakness that contributed to it – we would explain these also. We would never have attempted to suppress it from the public. Even if some others attempted to bring about the disintegration of the Front – if we really feel we are a revolutionary party then obviously we also realize best of all the necessity of preserving the United Front. The others understand the necessity merely partially. But it is the revolutionary party that can best of all understand the necessity of the UF and why in the context of the prevailing overall situation it is

indispensable in the interest of revolutionary movement. It is but common knowledge that others will try to break it up. As for example, I have heard many people say, “Why has the Hindu-Muslim divide come about in our country? It could come about because of the ‘divide and rule’ policy of the English”. What is the real import of such talk? As if the English were supposed to try and unite the Hindus and Muslims to enable them to fight the English unitedly. Is it like that? From their end they did the right thing. Then what is the use of all this talk? Here the case is similar. The Marxist Communist Party, CPI(M), alleges that some constituents of the Front are conspiring against them. If the inner contradiction born of difference of opinion that exists among various parties is not correctly resolved, it is obvious that this difference would flare up into an open conflict among them. Was it unknown to them? But they did feel that the United Front has its utility yet, didn’t they? Is it not precisely for this that they have joined the United Front? In their opinion, the other partners are but non-Marxist parties, pseudo-Marxist parties. But this they also admit, don’t they, that by uniting this hotchpotch of parties and by implementing the 32-point programme – which is to some extent concrete and to some extent vague – at least some headway in the democratic movements can be achieved? Therefore, so long as the task of implementing this programme is not completed and all the other parties isolated from the masses, and as long as they are not in a position to provide leadership over the democratic movement single handedly on an all-India level, until then the responsibility to preserve the United Front in alliance with all other parties lies with them - of course, if they are a true revolutionary party. Because, in the eyes of the masses they are the principal powerful party. We do not have that strength. But making it a point that we do not have that strength, can we behave in such a manner that as a result the United Front breaks down? With our limited strength we will endeavour to keep the United Front alive as an instrument of struggle by striving to bring clarity in the prevailing political atmosphere and through persuasive ideological campaign inspire everyone to become responsible. Despite being in the United Front we are at the receiving end of all attacks. You are aware also of the fact that we are incurring the maximum number of casualties. Till date according to their own account the CPI(M) has lost around 15 to 16 workers, we have lost 8 workers. Whereas everybody knows how many times stronger is their party compared to ours. But what is intriguing to note is that their leader Promod Babu has already made a false statement. He said two persons belonging to SUCI were killed in inter party clashes and one at the hands of jotedars. When he said three, we had already lost seven

comrades. And thereafter one more. Deliberately did they show the number to be fewer lest the SUCI should come into prominence. We know that many more such comrades we will have to lose during the United Front tenure. But for that, being enraged, we have not taken to the path of Naxalite politics. Even when we battled against the prolonged and oppressive Congress rule – even then not so many were killed. Even the number of killings by the jotedars was not so high then. The jotedars then would not dare to mount attacks with firearms so openly and desperately. But today, after induction of the United Front during Jyoti Babu's tenure as Police Minister, how is it that they dare do all this? During the United Front tenure the jotedars are shooting down the peasant cadres at random which even during the Congress regime they would not have dared. Because then there was a strong Opposition. But now whenever the Opposition raises a serious matter like an act of firing, even that at once turns out to be progressive. Such a queer state of affairs we find today. This cannot go on for long – it cannot simply be allowed to go on. But that does not mean that it will go away automatically. Notwithstanding all this, despite the death of so many party men of a small party like ours in so short a time – we cannot leave the United Front like the Naxalites.

Whatsoever progress we have achieved in our programme of building up democratic movement, gaining in party strength and intensifying the momentum of the movements; notwithstanding the death of all these comrades, if we leave the United Front we will not be able to go on doing so, and we will become totally isolated like the Naxalites. The Naxalites are unable to realize the necessity of forging this instrument indispensable for democratic movement. This instrument may have and, as a matter of fact, has many defects. Nevertheless, it is an instrument for building up democratic movement, which just now is an indispensable necessity for a revolutionary party. If it cannot be saved despite all attempts – that is a different matter. Then the challenge of the new situation will have to be met. But because in that event the challenge has to be met, does one in advance push the situation towards that end? If fascism gets established doesn't a revolutionary party confront it? But does it mean that long before the advent of fascism a revolutionary party destroys whatever limited possibilities of democratic movement still remain and thereby paves the path for the establishment of fascism? Here, the approach is the same. So, in the overriding interest of sustaining mass movement the United Front needs to be preserved.

### **The approach of either arm-in-arm, or at each other's throat**

Another problem coming in the way of facing the situation is that the politics of other parties have to be exposed through ideological discussions, polemics and ideological struggle even while keeping the united movement intact under the leadership of the United Front. But proper care has to be taken to conduct the ideological struggle in such a way that it does not impede implementation of the programme adopted unanimously. Both these tasks have to be carried out together. Just as a true revolutionary party does not compromise in respect of ideological struggle, so also it cannot hinder united movement. But what we witness in case of parties like CPI(M)-CPI is that whenever they are being criticized they regard us as their enemy. Why is this? Because we are not dittoing their policies, rather we are criticizing them. Therefore there is simply no scope left for united struggle with us. Or else, if we move together with them, if we struggle unitedly – this in their opinion means the option for criticism is closed. That is why I said earlier also, that the only thing they understand is, 'either arm in arm or at each other's throat'. This means, they do not understand the principle of 'unity-struggle-unity' at all. They are by no means prepared to move adhering to the Marxist principle 'struggle in unity' and 'unity in struggle'.

When they feel the necessity of upholding a principle, then in the name of struggle they endanger the united movement and unity itself. What is more, they have no scruple even to indulge in physical assault against one another. That is to say, the contradiction between the revolutionary party and all other constituent parties in the Front can in no way be identical with the contradiction between the United Front as a whole and its main class enemy – that will have to be correctly realized. Apart from this, what needs to be ascertained at the outset is, at a particular stage who is the main enemy. What has to be always kept in mind is that the internal contradiction among allied forces in the struggle against the main enemy, that is to say, the contradiction among the constituents in combination with whom we have forged the United Front is not one and the same as the contradiction with the main enemy, and the way of dealing with it is also not the same. Therefore, it is clear that while conducting ideological struggle among the Front constituents, its form can never assume a character which is appropriate in battle against the class enemy, for the very reason that if it is viewed in the same way, it will strike at the very base of the United Front. Yes, we agree, we also criticize and we want you to

do the same to us. But where we differ from you is that you have reduced criticism to slander and dragged it down to the extent of physical assault. You have even made clashes among the constituents into such a routine affair that our basic struggle, that is, the struggle against capitalism-imperialism, against jotedars and capitalists is almost becoming nullified. Whereas the fact of the matter is, with regard to the implementation of this programme we all stand committed. Why should that be jeopardized? We have been unable to make them see it, but then that is also not expected of them. The only language they are accustomed to is either that of bosom friends or sworn enemies. 'Either arm in arm or at each other's throat'. And for a small party to move arm in arm with the big party means the subjugation of the one to the other. Hence, the air the big ones assume is, we can show magnanimity to a small party, we have no problem with that – if necessary we can accommodate a seat or two for them. But the smaller ones must stay subjugated to us – they must do what we ask them to do. The air they assume is somewhat like this: we have made even worthless people into leaders overnight; moreover we have even managed to get a ministry for them! How many parties are there which without our benign help, on their own strength, would not get a single seat — even for them we managed to obtain some seats. Among them there are some such leaders who unless constantly propped up would sink straight to the bottom. Let me refrain from naming them. And if the SUCI could align with us that way, then could we not have acceded two, three more seats, or would it at all be necessary for us to go all out for destroying their organization as aggressively? Had they been with us, that is, had they remained so subjugated — all this would not have been necessary. But the SUCI is so head-strong that unlike the other parties or above-mentioned celebrated leaders, it doesn't even have the sense to realize what is good for it. But what we say is that we are very much with you. But that does not mean we can blindly appease others. We are all for maintaining unity and fraternity with you and at the same time for carrying on the ideological struggle too. Just as it is true that we want unity, so also it is true that our ideological struggle against you will continue. We firmly hold that both these tasks must go together; we can do that. When we extend our hand to you for unity with the resolve to fight the Congress, the capitalists and jotedars, you will find we are prepared to give up our lives for you. But since we are prepared to lay down our lives for you – we will not discuss that you are a Gandhite or a pseudo-Marxist or that your theory is wrong – that can never be. Even when giving up our lives we will assert that you are wrong – that your politics is wrong. We will also expose how disastrous is the

effect of your wrong politics on the country. But they do not understand such language. Who can really understand this language? Only those who are true Marxists can understand it — those who have not merely read Marxism, but have indeed grasped it.

### **Appeal to cadres and supporters of the party**

This is, broadly speaking, the problem confronting the United Front politics as well as the problems of the different parties' attitude towards the United Front. We have to proceed keeping all these in view. The point that I have stressed repeatedly is that in the interest of intensifying democratic movement, in the interest of mass organizations and conducting the revolutionary class struggle along the correct course the United Front politics is at the moment the only alternative politics. The other parties, at this moment, understand the necessity of protecting the United Front only partially, in a half-baked manner. But the way we understand the necessity in its totality, none of the others do. Therefore, the greatest responsibility of sustaining the United Front as the only and effective instrument of mass movement lies with us. It is however an incontrovertible fact that compared to our strength our responsibility is far greater. Under these circumstances we cannot afford to waste even the least bit of resources at our command. I think we will be able to discharge this historic responsibility only when we all, starting from the leaders to the rank and file, resolve to move in a uniform way, in a planned way; if every individual without awaiting instruction from the leaders come forward with personal initiative, if we can shake off the lackadaisical attitude, the stereotyped approach and lack of individual initiative – if we can get rid of complacency that still remains among us to some extent, if we abjure bureaucratic style of activity and also free ourselves from the harmful features of being over-formal or contrarily, at times dispensing with even the minimum formality necessary in the interest of the work itself – then I think we will be equal to this responsibility. To the supporters also of our party my appeal, whatever service they can render – each according to his own ability, however limited their strength may be, that needs to be rendered regularly. For all the cadres we have, this is of course a must.

Whether comrades are discharging their own responsibility properly or not, each one will have to be made duly aware of it through discussion. This has to be pointed out not merely with an attitude of giving instruction but with sympathy. Those who instead of attending their own

business are busy discussing the work of others, in whom these negative traits are found, they should with all sympathy be made to see this.

Besides, each and every approach of ours should be political. Starting from propaganda to issuance of circulars, tackling personal problems and carrying on day-to-day activities – all these must be based on political approach.

So, if we carry out our work, getting rid of these defects and shortcomings, consolidate all our strength and perform our task without any laxity whatsoever, then only we can meet to some extent the challenge of the present situation and can do so very soon.

While being engaged in the endeavour to free ourselves from these defects and shortcomings, the other vital points to which we must pay attention are:

One: each comrade must, on his own initiative establish mass contact on a wide scale, that is, he must go to the masses, open talk and discussion with them, apply mind to their problems and take part in every struggle the people wage against oppression. Under no circumstances must one become isolated from all this.

Two: attention must be paid towards building up mass movements and mass organizations must indeed be built up. Special attention will have to be paid to building up the DSO where possible, the DYU at some places, and in rural areas the KKM; in industrial zones trade unions and among women MSS, etc., and other such mass organizations.

Three: earnest efforts have to be made in order to keep up unity with the constituents of the United Front and more particularly to maintain cordial relationship with the cadres of these parties, disregarding all sorts of provocation. On this question we must not equate and mix up the leadership of these parties with their rank and file. Notwithstanding provocation from their side we will forge ahead with a sympathetic approach. Obviously, those who behave in a hot-headed way are not worthy comrades. Of course, those of the other parties who are moving with ulterior motives are to be singled out.

While carrying out these triple tasks, the attendant political campaign must have a focal point. That is, all political campaign must have the ultimate objective to bring home that the

main problem today is the crisis of leadership. Herein lies the root cause of all these, of the frustration that is prevailing in the mass mind today. It will have to be impressed upon the people that so long as the leadership of the true revolutionary party does not emerge, the stumbling problem that confronts the mass movements and United Front will persist. That is, those who ardently desire the United Front today have to be convinced that so long as the just and due dominant role of the true revolutionary party and revolutionary leadership is not established and so long as the United Front continues to be led by the Gandhites, fake democratic or pseudo-Marxist parties – all the complicated problems appearing in the United Front are bound to appear time and again. This is because all these so-called Gandhites and fake democratic or pseudo-Marxist parties – none of them have an adequate realization of the necessity of the United Front in the overall interest of democratic movement and why it is indispensable in the interest of revolutionary struggle. Hence, it is not possible for them to realize appropriately what well defined principles, programme and planning need to be pursued in order to steer-gear the United Front as a unified body.

Hence, those who want the United Front to survive – will invariably have to strengthen the SUCI. So that in the place of those others the SUCI can assume the leading role in conducting the United Front. For, the SUCI is the only party whose line is correct, who has the necessary ability, but it is short of strength. Under these circumstances this type of totally undesirable outcome is bound to be there. So, there is no way out other than strengthening the SUCI. It will have to be brought home to all that SUCI, despite being a small party, is sincerely trying to uphold before the people the correct political line. However, it all depends on whether the people subscribe to this view or not. If they do not, the party will not gain in strength, will have no growth. Is it sufficient to have a noble ideology, a correct political line? Much of it depends on acceptance. Does the good seed sown on a rock ever germinate? The seed only perishes. So, if a correct theory, a noble ideology, a worthy spiritual contribution by the SUCI is not accepted, if there is no real interest to acquire it, it will lose its significance. Hence it is not a fact that there is none to offer correct politics.

While carrying on the political campaign in this way, we should keep in mind that in our country those who are involved in Marxist-Leninist movement may be grouped, by and large, into three categories: 1) Those who have not only studied Marxism but have also grasped it, have



realized its essence in a way that they are able to apply it in any situation. Their number is very insignificant in India. 2) Those who have broadly read Marxism but have grasped nothing. They are very adept at citing quotations on and off. Among them there are some who have read many books, have a lot of information and who carry the notion that they are pundits, but in reality have failed to grasp a whit of Marxism. Again these very people happen to be either leaders or leading groups of various so-called Marxist parties, or so-called communist intellectuals. Though their number is a bit higher than that of the first group mentioned — they too are very small in numbers, that is, they constitute the minority. 3) The remaining section constitutes the majority – their number is very large indeed. They are the supporters of Marxism and ardent supporters at that: Marxism, progress, class-struggle – everything they support. But they understand nothing of Marxism, progress or of class struggle. Unceasingly they enter into arguments about or indiscriminately pass comments on anything and everything – making and unmaking revolutionaries and revisionists according to their fancies. In West Bengal, take the CPI(M) or CPI – they are gaining in strength themselves based on that section of the masses who, regardless of whether or not they understand Marxism and class struggle, are ever eager to lend their support at the very mention of Marxism-Leninism and class struggle. It is with the support of this number of people that the CPI(M) and the CPI are gaining strength. They are people with extremely low level of consciousness. Whereas these people are completely ignorant about the real understanding of Marxism, yet it is they who happen to be supporters of Marxist movement and class struggle, etc. The CPI(M) is expanding its organization taking advantage of this lack of consciousness. Therefore, one of the aims of our propaganda will be to bring awareness about Marxism into this unconscious section who are either in the fold of various other parties or outside them. I have already pointed out that our approach towards them should be sympathetic. But this sympathetic approach notwithstanding, we shall not give up our struggle to criticize their ideology and prove its incorrectness. But while conducting this struggle we shall keep our cool, our mind will be full of sympathy and tenderness.

Among many of them a notion prevails that the very fact that a party goes by the name Marxist party means it is a real Marxist party. I have just heard that Jyoti Babu reportedly said in a speech at the Maidan recently that there are a number of small parties who call themselves Marxist — may be he had us in mind — yet how is it that they are opposed to the Marxist Communist party of ours! They have taken it for granted that it is they themselves alone who are

the Marxists. They are not aware even that we do not at all recognize them as a genuine Marxist party. But they hardly bother about such things. Because their party goes by the name of Marxist, so it is they who are the Marxist party! And as we oppose them so we are not Marxists. And were we not opposed to them we would pretty well be Marxists! Then theirs would be a Marxist party and ours too would remain a Marxist party; and if another one supported them that would also be a Marxist party! These two conclusions are really unique! You see, I bring up all these just in order to show that such like is the standard of those who deliver speeches at gatherings of thousands upon thousands, and who are frantically trying to make a name for themselves as leaders. And what to say about the standard of the people who cheer them on hearing their speeches! To raise the level of political consciousness of this segment of people is one of the major objectives of our ideological struggle. Another point to be kept in mind is that apart from the people connected with various parties of the United Front or with the Congress and other reactionary parties, the vast masses who remain outside this periphery constitute the majority. It is on them that we set our hopes. Hence, it can be seen that we need to give special attention, on the one hand, to the communist supporters with a vague understanding and the so-called communist intellectuals both inside and outside various parties, and, on the other, to the vast sea of people who stand between the Congress and the supporters of these parties. So, we shall have to direct attention both to the pro-communist masses and these pro-communist intelligentsia, on one side, and, on the other, to the common people. We shall have to make them conscious about Marxism, about proletarian revolutionary politics, about United Front politics and build up democratic movements and class organizations under the party leadership. We will have to make use of both these weapons. Just as this calls for dedication, so also is needed a sustained propaganda campaign and that has to be invariably conducted with a correct political tuning.

### **Direct propaganda campaign in a political way**

If this is not done, then while you build up mass movements your opponents may brand it as dacoity – as an attack against peasants on behalf of jotedars. And again, similarly, if someone on the jotedars' behalf forcibly evicts peasants from their land or seizes land belonging to supporters of other parties it may come to stand for class struggle through propaganda. Such politics has become rampant these days. These incidents remind us of Goebbels. Of course, it is true, the politics of this sort can at best last five years, can be victorious for the time being, but it cannot

continue for long. But in spite of that, this kind of propaganda that turns white into black depresses the fervour of revolutionary movement, at least for some time, and causes serious harm.

Comrades, reflect yourselves how many of you build up daily mass contact at your own initiative and to what extent. How many of you comrades discuss with the common people the various political issues and problems, the history of the party, history of struggles and accounts of various struggles in such articulate manner that people feel attracted to us? You will have to get to know from the party leadership about the various day-to-day issues and developments. If the leaders are not forthcoming in acquainting you, then you will anyhow get them to acquaint you and project before the people our political stand relating to such issues. In order to make this propaganda campaign successful you will have to do it, for one, with character posters on various incidents and problems – you will have to carry on with the task of highlighting and focusing the fundamental propositions of the party on all issues round day-to-day problems. The task of conducting this ideological struggle is of vital importance indeed. The objective of this political campaign is to effectively present before the people, having reference to incidents and together with our theory, the stand of other parties vis-à-vis that of ours. The form of presentation of the incidents should not be such that we can clarify neither our own politics nor that of the opponent party before the people. The people are, indeed, confused today. They don't know what exactly our party's stand is. To what extent we are fighting and with what object, they do not know. Who will acquaint them with it? Will the bourgeois press do it? Will the CPI(M) do it? Or, is it our workers only who are to do it? Our comrades must study our party organs and our literature through and through, and that, too, very meticulously. They must commit to memory the portions of vital relevance. Moving from door to door, our politics, our stand, will have to be conveyed to the people.

Finally, passing to one more point I am going to conclude my speech. What indeed is the reason that has actuated the CPI(M) to come into direct confrontation with us? Organizationally, we have not yet become their main contesting force, at least to the extent parties like the CPI, Bangla Congress, Forward Bloc, etc., have become. These parties find that increase in CPI(M)'s strength becomes a threat for them. It is in this sense that the CPI(M) is their enemy. And they also see that the CPI(M) and SUCI are at loggerheads. So, being moved by the dictum – the

enemy's enemy is my friend, they may be seeking to be closer to us – nothing more than that. So, what I was saying – why is the CPI(M) hostile to us? Because CPI(M) is finding that the pro-communist masses that support them do consider the Bangla Congress as the party of jotedars and Forward Bloc as reactionary. And because of CPI(M)'s orchestrated propaganda campaign branding CPI as stooge of the Indira Congress<sup>5</sup> and as a Dangeite clique, it also stands out to the masses to be aligned with reaction. But to say something adverse with such ease about us to the pro-communist masses is a bit difficult. In West Bengal people who somewhat know about the SUCI have been given the impression that the SUCI falls in the extremist category, that the SUCI is pro-China. Whether we are extremists or pro-China is a different issue. The bourgeois press, capitalist class and intelligence department in a concerted effort have created such a notion about us. The essence of this notion is that they do not reckon the SUCI to be the party of jotedars. So, the way these leaders can make out anything and everything about the CPI, Bangla Congress and Forward Bloc – in case of the SUCI they cannot get away with just about anything. So, bracketing the SUCI's name with that group has enhanced their respectability, especially to the rank and file of the CPI(M). That is why the CPI(M) is today branding the SUCI as a band of dacoits or paddy looters. What they want to make out is that the SUCI was not so initially, but why the SUCI has turned out to be so these days, we do not know. However, by repeatedly branding us as a party of dacoits and anti-socials and continually tagging our name with that combine they want the people to get used to and gradually accept this version. Just see, the very same Goebbelsian tactics! So, this way if they succeed in creating such a notion about us among the masses and pro-communist ranks then they think it would be much easier to offset the impact of attraction that SUCI's ideological campaign is creating. Because the leaders know it well that though organizationally the SUCI is not a contesting force of the CPI(M), yet despite so much blindness among their rank and file SUCI's ideology has already created quite an attraction in them – a serious problem which the leaders do not have to encounter in case of any other party. Faced with this problem the leaders have taken recourse to vilification of SUCI. This is the very reason for CPI(M)'s tirade against SUCI – no other reason is there.

So, the task of our cadres at the moment is to uphold the indispensableness of the United Front politics, strive to isolate the pseudo-leftist parties from the masses in the midst of struggle based on an agreed programme, without however disrupting the unity. The task is to establish mass contact taking individual initiative, build up mass movement and mass organizations,

simultaneously continue the political campaign and maintain fraternal relation with cadres of other parties of the United Front despite all instigation, and while carrying out these tasks conclusively establish the fact that today the main crisis is the crisis of leadership. And this crisis can alone be overcome by strengthening the SUCI. This has to be brought home to the masses at large, on the one hand, and pro-communist elements, on the other, by raising the level of their political consciousness. If we can carry out this task by shaking off our lethargy, lack of initiative and lackadaisical approach, we can ably discharge this historic responsibility that has devolved on us. And I am confident we can do it very well. With this I conclude my speech today.

**Long live revolution!**

*Speech on October 29, 1969.  
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## Notes

1. Sukomal Dasgupta, member West Bengal State Secretariat, later member Central Committee.
2. KKMF, organization later changed its name to All India Krishak O Khetmazur Sangathan (AIKKMS).
3. Promod Dasgupta, the then Politbureau member of the CPI(M) and Secretary of its West Bengal State Committee.
4. Former Congress Chief Minister of West Bengal.
5. Yet it was also noted that Jyoti Babu and Sundaraiya dashed to Delhi at that time just before their Politbureau meeting in order to develop a clandestine link with the Indira Congress.