



“There are two types of men — one who is afraid of facing problems while other has the guts to confront and combat. We, the conscious revolutionary workers are not afraid of problems. We are always ready to face all sorts of problems, our only problem is how to tackle them correctly and manly . . . The essence of revolutionary life is to find happiness in the stress and strain of struggles and problems — life without problem is sterile.”

—Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

***Proletarian
Era***

Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA (Fortnightly) Founder Editor in Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

In the Light of the Teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

Approach to the Vital Problems of People's Life And the Correct Way to Resolve Them

Many a burning problem besets the lives of the people today. Under the stifling burden of the problems which appear insurmountable, the common man gasps and pines for a respite, for a solution. What are the underlying causes of the problems? How can these be eradicated? What is the way out? What is to be done? Such are the questions that haunt the people.

Concrete answers to such and a host of other related questions are to be found in the teachings left to us by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader, teacher and guide and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era. In the course of his life-long arduous struggle through which, in the process of building up the SUCI as the genuine revolutionary party of the working class on the Indian soil, as the instrument of revolution, and conducting the mass movements conducive to that, he concretized and enriched Marxism-Leninism.

On this occasion of the 16th anniversary of the demise of Comrade Ghosh, we pay tribute to his revolutionary life and recall his teachings by citing below some salient excerpts from his speeches and writings.

ETHICAL-CULTURAL DEGRADATION CAUSING UTMOST CONCERN

Economic, political and social exploitation and problems are there and these are no doubt very important issues, but Comrade Ghosh analytically pinpointed that the moral-cultural degradation that we see all around has assumed the utmost importance. As Comrade Ghosh showed: "Today, moral depravity has assumed such a proportion and has taken such a naked form that it may seem just like a biological natural affair to many people. Indeed, there are empiricists engaged in so-called scientific research work, who have concluded almost like this. As if the race living in India today has got a biological naturalness of not feeling any concern for any kind of values.... as if some biological intrinsic factors are inherent in our people for which they are basically incapable of having such concern. To conclude like this is not only unscientific and unhistorical but simply preposterous. Be that as it may, what is agitating the mind of every honest thinking person is — why this suffocating situation? ... you will have to probe deep into the problem... if we cannot correctly handle the question and find out the correct answer, I am afraid, whether we can also

correctly lead the political battles in our country to their logical conclusions, whether we can solve, we can take active measures and steps, concrete steps to bring about a fundamental change in our politico-economic and social structure and thereby solve the burning economic and other problems of our country."

Addressing the youth, Comrade Ghosh once said: "The aspect of mentality of the present-day youth, particularly the educated middle class youth, that is very vividly appearing before our eyes, is that the youths in the country are becoming socially indifferent day by day. ... Everyday we find a completely indifferent highbrowed attitude to society, to any progressive movement, growing among the people, the youth and the educated. ... The biggest problem today is that the boys and girls do not bother about ideology and sense of values. An indifferent attitude to the society, a self-centred attitude is more and more enveloping the youth. 'I should be busy only about myself, there is no necessity of going into all these botherations' — such a mentality is increasing day by day. Though gradually, an irrational abhorrence to politics is growing amongst them ... if you have eyes, you can see that most of the men and women who now pursue love in their youth, do not ultimately gain true love. It has largely become like chasing a mirage. Nobody can be trusted, no trust can be placed upon love even. No family can be called a happy family. The cause of all these is that the social mind is becoming crippled. It is to be understood why. A despondency about life is appearing—an attitude to pass the life somehow. On the other hand, a desperateness is on the increase, particularly among the youth. But this desperateness that we see is not for changing or improving life or for remoulding it in consonance with an advanced ideology. It is, as if, for anyhow burning up oneself. This desperateness is aimless really, go on doing anything, whatever be the outcome. ... The mentality to think or ponder is becoming extinct. This is a horrible craze. Such irrational, uncritical crazy mentality is enveloping the whole mental make-up of the society. ... Once you probe deep into this problem with the help of history and logic, you would clearly understand that unprincipledness of political movement and bankruptcy of ideological movement, in a word, the bankruptcy and extreme opportunism of the political leadership for long is basically responsible for this condition. So, you have to tackle the situation simultaneously in two ways. Firstly, to build up

the youth movement through directly participating in the democratic movements and class struggles of the people developing all the time against exploitation of all sorts. Secondly, to conduct the cultural movement by integrating the ideological-cultural movement with the main revolutionary political struggle of the proletariat of the country and through this to usher in a countrywide new atmosphere of cultural revolution. Only if you can thus correctly integrate the ideological-cultural movement with the main political movement of the proletariat class, would you be able to smash up the immovable grind-stone stifling the country. ... the society is writhing with birthpangs of new ideology. The old ideology has degenerated and become rotten through the inexorable law of history. With the establishment of bourgeois rule, the bourgeois exploitative system, the sense of values of bourgeois ideology, the bourgeois humanist sense of values of the days of freedom struggle have lost their erstwhile character and become reduced to privileges conducive to exploitative rule of the bourgeois class. There is nothing to be surprised in this. It is in this way that in every era an ideology arises and takes the society forward—but when newer necessities spring up in society with change of time, then that very ideology based on the old interests becomes the stumbling block resisting the growth of new ideology. Then the new sense of values, the new ideology based on new necessity has to establish itself by dislodging the old ideology through intense struggle against it. Such is the law of history. ... So, India needs a new ideology. We are in a transitional phase. The old ideology has become rotten but the new revolutionary ideology has not yet reached the masses. As a result, this frustration, this indifference. So, the thinking and concepts of Scientific Socialism are to be established at the roots of mass life and mass movements."

CRISIS IN ECONOMIC BASE IS REFLECTED IN ETHICS AND CULTURE

The distressing problems, the degeneration in all spheres—economic, political, social and cultural—make the people wonder: is this the free India the martyrs dreamt of as they fearlessly faced the bullets of colonial rulers or went up the gallows with heads erect? What is the root cause of the problems, misery and moral-ethical-cultural degradation and what is the way out? The answer is to be found in Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's teachings: "... political, economic and all social problems are always closely linked up with certain questions,

with certain vital questions, without solving which you cannot solve any of the items of these problems. These are questions relating to power set-up, politico-economic and social system of the country. These are all related to the class character of the state and the particular and peculiar character of our economic system, which we call capitalism, a capitalist economic system. Everything, every social malady affecting our life is cropping up from the material base and from these two important factors. ...Comrades, we are living in a capitalist country, maybe backward in comparison to the Western rich imperialist-capitalist countries; but no doubt ours is also a capitalist country. And what is the character of this capitalism? It has already become imperialist in nature, in so far as the formation of finance capital and a financial oligarchy through the merger of banking and industrial capital controlling the entire economic life of the society are concerned and in so far as the extent and amount of export of capital are concerned. ...here in our country we have got a form of state, which can only be called as the bourgeois national state, i.e. a capitalist state machine. And the ruling bourgeoisie is doing everything possible for further consolidation of the capitalist system in our country. And the capitalist relations of production and the capitalist motive force of production that have already become obsolete in so far as the forces of economy are concerned, are acting as a brake in the process. So, it is giving birth to crises, one after another. One measure is taken by the bourgeoisie to come out from, to get out of the impasse of a crisis only to be swamped by a greater crisis.In this way, our economy is arrested in a vicious circle. It cannot have and is not getting a breathing space for development. It is a reactionary capitalism, part and parcel of the present-day decadent and moribund world capitalist system. ...So, this crisis and instability in the economic field are being reflected in the superstructure, in the moral and cultural activities of the society. By superstructure we mean the ideological, political, ethical, cultural, philosophical, artistic views of the society—these we mean to be the superstructure of the economic base. So, the economic uncertainty, the crises, the acute crises, and the instability are naturally reflected in the superstructure. Comrades, herein lies the crux of all of our problems, our social maladies.”

CAPITALISM CANNOT SOLVE BASIC PROBLEMS

Spokesmen of the ruling bourgeoisie, apologists for the exploitative bourgeois order are all the time busy devising various stratagems to shield the exploitative character of capitalism, to project the capitalist order as something immutable and eternal and to hold up a picture of rosy future so that the people get confused and deceived and with their vision clouded, cannot take to the anti-capitalist revolutionary line which is the historically determined path towards their emancipation. Starting from Nehru's socialistic pattern of society through the Green Revolution, Indira Gandhi's *Garibi Hatao* and Rajiv's 'Leap into the 21st Century' to the present high-tech New Economic Policy of Narasimha Rao Government, the Indian people have been

deceived by successive hoaxes while the ruling capitalist class has been amassing fabulous wealth and more and more consolidating its class rule and further sharpening its exploitation of the people.

Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh showed by his penetrating analyses the hollowness of all such bourgeois claims of ushering in a millennium within the capitalist system. By concrete analysis, point by point, he showed that there can be no solution of the basic problems of the people's life within the capitalist system.

In a nutshell, Comrade Ghosh posed the problem thus: "... to implement in practice the slogan of *Garibi Hatao*, we have to rack our brains about three basic problems. Firstly, it is to be seen how agriculture can be modernised; and how can the path of unobstructed industrial progress be opened up, that is, how we can proceed with continuous industrialization in order to provide employment to the people rendered surplus in the villages as a result; and how can the unemployment problem of the country be solved through these two efforts.” Analysing, Comrade Ghosh showed: "... Many of you know that more than seventyfive per cent of the Indian population live in these rural areas and... have a thousand and one problems. But ...providing round the year employment to every able-bodied peasant has emerged as the principal problem among all these problems of rural life. How a poor man, either through cultivation or some other work, can be kept engaged for the whole year and can have a minimum income as wages so that he can lead a healthy social life, that is, broadly speaking, he can feed and clothe himself and the family throughout the year, provide medicines in cases of disease and ailments and a minimum education to the children that everyone should get—this has become the basic problem of rural life. Please remember that distribution of all available land among the agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants,.... is no doubt an important problem in our country but it is not the solution... Because, about twenty years back, at an all India Conference, we had estimated by calculation that the minimum land needed to sustain a peasant family, which we call an 'economic holding', was 12 *bighas* (about four acres). In view of the ever increasing prices, this would now amount to at least 15 *bighas*. Not to speak of this, considering the total number of people—the agricultural labourers, landless and poor peasants in the Indian rural economy and the total amount of land that can be made available by recovery of all '*benam*' land, reclamation of all fallow land and using up all '*khas*' land—not more than 7 to 9 *bighas* of land, which according to me is not an 'economic holding' these days, can be allocated to even half of the peasant families even through equitable re-distribution of all the available lands. So, the remaining half will get no land at all. ...What will happen then? If they do not find employment in the villages, they will leave their dwellings and villages and will move over anyhow to the urban areas. Men from villages are in this way rushing to the cities and towns in the hope of wage earning. But even after reaching there they are becoming beggars, or those who can, are leading sub-human existence on the streets by working as porters or by any other means. Many of them are again returning to the villages after some

time and inflating the ranks of rural unemployed or semi-employed. firstly, all of them (the peasants—Ed., *Proletarian Era*) will not get land through implementation of the programme of land distribution; secondly, even those who will get land will not be able to retain it. For, as you know, the population in society, in each family goes on increasing while land does not. ...There is a limit to the total area of land as also to the continued increase in productivity of land.”

Due to population increase, the distributed land will undergo fragmentation and before long, will be divided into such small holdings as even the poorest peasant family cannot live upon. So, the peasant, "will again have to mortgage his land or again become a landless peasant by selling it out when pressed by want. ...This is the inevitable outcome of rural capitalist economy in a backward country like ours and in this way, the ranks of landless peasants and agricultural labourers in the villages are swelling day by day at a rapid progression. ...The focal point of peasant movement lies in arranging employment for the surplus rural populationby uplifting rural economy through modernization and mechanization of agriculture and by opening up the path to industrial development of the country; ... If there is unhindered development of factories and industries in the country, then there will be efforts to modernize the agricultural economy as well. Industries auxiliary and complementary to agricultural economy will then start coming up in the rural areas in order to increase agricultural production rapidly. As a result, a part of the surplus population who would become surplus as no land could be allotted to them, would find work in the industries that would come up to serve the need to modernise agro-economy and place it on a scientific footing. Those who could not still be provided for, would find jobs in factories in nearby urban areas if industrialization is on there. ... The output of factories cannot increase much as the Indian production system is run on the basis of capitalistic relations, i.e. production is made under private ownership for the purpose of making maximum profit This is because the prices of industrial goods that are produced in the mills and factories under private ownership are fixed by private owners on the basis of earning maximum profit and, as you know, these are marketed by them only if the people have the capacity to purchase at those prices. But most of our people do not have that capacity as, firstly,... purchasing power of eightyfive per cent of rural population is nearly zero. ... So how can they buy various industrial produces, no matter how much needed?... Secondly, it can be seen from a comparative study of commodity prices that real wages of even those who are working in the factories in the cities... have diminished a lot compared to earlier. Hence most of those working in industry in our country do not have the capacity to purchase industrial goods as needed. Besides, the millions of educated and semi-educated unemployed thronging the urban areas whose number is ever increasing at an accelerated rate, do not have any purchasing power. Naturally, in this condition, the industrialists' market inside the country has contracted greatly and is daily contracting further because purchasing power of

most of the people is absent or diminishing. But an abundant market in other countries even no longer exists where these industrialists could market and sell their products. ...The world capitalist market, although plagued by various crises at different times before the Second World War, had a relative stability. But the present crisis is of such a nature that even that relative stability no longer exists and it has become a daily, almost hourly crisis. So you realize that whereas the advanced capitalist countries had to take recourse to two world wars among themselves in order to capture markets... conditions do not exist now for the industrialists of a backward capitalist country like India to sell industrial products at will in competition with the advanced capitalist countries. So, ... there is no 'market' for whatever little is produced by the Indian capitalists, not to speak of increasing production continuously... How will new mills and factories come up? Rather, ... even the running factories are being closed down one after another as a result of market crisis of the capitalists due to the present capitalist economic system. In such a situation, ... it is the established productive system in our country on the basis of capitalist production relation aimed at maximising profit, that is the capitalist economic system that has become the main hindrance to uninterrupted industrial growth and is brining about crisis in industry even in a backward country.'

Why the capitalist rulers of our country are not resorting to mechanization in agriculture? Comrade Ghosh said: "... if capitalistic farming with tractors and machines is resorted to, then tens of millions of rural population will be rendered unemployed at one stroke. The very capitalist system will be on the verge of collapse under pressure of the situation created by addition of these tens of millions rendered surplus in agriculture to the millions of unemployed in urban areas.... That is why the ruling bourgeois class of this country is taking recourse to various patchwork palliatives to increase agricultural output like 'green revolution', 'Japanese method of cultivation', 'Taichung', 'IR-8' etc. ... But they are no way feeling courageous to come forward with plans of merchandised big land farming or state farming on a wide scale. Hence a solution along this path is not possible while the capitalist economy and the capitalist state are intact.

Summarising in conclusion of the detailed analysis, Comrade Ghosh declared: "... solution of the basic problems is inextricably linked up with overthrowing the national bourgeoisie from state power and freeing the whole production system from the capitalist motive of production and production relation. After considering and analysing all these, we have reached the firm conclusion that the basic problems of the country can be solved only through anti-capitalist socialist revolution. All other paths are wrong and are helping to preserve the Indian capitalist system directly or indirectly.'

CORRECT BASE POLITICAL LINE : THE CARDINAL QUESTION

If we just dream of anti-capitalist socialist revolution or merely pine for it, it will not come about. We have to understand the

historical laws governing the social development that the class struggles are to be intensified to culminate in revolutionary transformation of the society from capitalism to the classless communist society when the state will wither away, through the transitional phase of socialism in between the two and resolutely strive for accelerating this historical process. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh taught us, "... you should always bear in mind that ours is a class-divided society. Our nation is not an indivisible whole. Whether we like or dislike it, if we are conscious, we cannot ignore the stark reality that our society, too, is a class-divided society. ... antagonistic classes and class struggles appeared in the society at a particular phase of development of production in history and from then on, classes and class struggles existed and are still continuing to exist, something like independent of our will, and class struggle is acting as the lever in the process of development of human society. Until the classes, class exploitation, the class struggles and the class instruments of oppression and coercion, i.e. the state disappear in course of development of class struggle from the arena of development of human society, the society remains as a field of intensive class battle ...All approaches to problems, whether progressive or reactionary, whether serving the interest of the bourgeoisie openly or in disguise, or serving the interest of the toiling masses and their revolutionary struggles are to be judged on the anvil of class struggle and class political outlook. All other ways to find out a correct approach and programme of struggle are not only deceptive but dangerous too. Any honest thinking people, who talk of revolution, will have to understand this question. Because, if they are really interested in bringing about social transformation, in bringing about a fundamental change in the politico-economic and social structure, then they will have to know the laws, the very laws which are governing all the activities in the process of development of class struggle. Unless and until we get to know this, we cannot accelerate the process of change in the society. We may have a dream of social change and revolution. We cannot have any impact or influence on that process. In that case, all our theories will be sterile and our action will be a blind one, in spite of our devotion and dedication ...You are to understand first of all what is the nature and character of the Indian revolution that you will have to accomplish. That is to say, what is the root cause of economic exploitation in India, what is the character of the state, which class or classes are wielding the state power. So long as our conception about these basic questions is not clear, we will not be able to determine the correct base political line which in political terminology we call the strategy and tactics of revolution. And here on this point, if anyone with fanciful idea, on the basis of wrong conclusions builds up a party with the avowed object of revolution, organises the people and conducts struggles on the issues of people's sufferings and exploitations then he can at best build up a strong party but will never be able to bring about revolution. Rather, by this, the fighting zeal of the people being diverted to wrong course, the revolutionary potential will be exhausted and as a result, the capitalist class and reactionaries

will further gain in strength. ... Just the other day, the CPC at its Tenth Party Congress made a very important observation which I really liked. A giant party as this which successfully led the revolution, then organized the cultural revolution, which enjoys an overwhelming command over the masses of as big a country as that—even such a party does not plead that it is correct because it enjoys so much popular support, has so vast a membership strength with so many committees behind it. They are saying on the contrary that if the base political line is not correct then even if there is mass support and strength, the army at command, and even if the organisation is very big today, these cannot be retained in the long run. If the line is incorrect, everything will be lost today or tomorrow. So, the Chinese Party reiterates that a party, even if it begins with just one person, will double itself, treble itself and so on and thus multiply its strength manifold to give birth to people's own political power and capture the state power one day provided its base political line is correct. ... This is an important question before the mass movements of our country too. You have participated in many a struggle, many a movement earlier too. When in the arena of struggle, you do not want to listen to anything. You lose your head and start leaning towards those with bigger organisation and more strength

and deemed to be the alternative. You do not even examine whether those with more strength are on the right course. My point is, let us all go and join them if they are correct. But if the path of the stronger is wrong, mistaken or one of deception, then we should not tread upon it. In such a situation, we have to go against the prevailing current because if on the wrong track, they will do more harm since they are more powerful. You will sacrifice, face bullets and die but the conditions will not change. Let me tell you one thing. In all these movements, the leaders are usually unscathed. Nothing happens to us (leaders). It is you who suffer the consequences. So, if the path is wrong, you are afflicted with despondency and defeatist mentality after being mauled in the struggle. Then your attitude becomes: 'we have seen all, all parties are the same. None can deliver the goods.' And the reactionaries, the capitalists, the ruling class seize upon the opportunity to further strengthen their state machine."

CAPITALIST STATE MACHINE MUST BE DESTROYED TO USHER IN SOCIALISM.

The typical class argument of the ruling bourgeoisie put forward directly by the branded bourgeois parties and aired indirectly by the social democratic parties runs like this: Why all this fuss about revolution and capture of state power? Why the fighting and bloodshed? The people can surely vote to power the party of their choice, and the government thus elected can surely pursue a pro-people policy and even usher in socialism through radical reforms, enactment of progressive laws and even amendment of the Constituion if necessary.

Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had blown to bits through detailed analyses such

arguments nurturing parliamentary illusion. He had shown : "State and government are two distinctly different words—in Bengali as well as in English. Separate terms are used for the two in all languages, barring limitation of the particular language. The two terms are different because they denote different things. By state is meant a system, concept of law and order, a concept of principle and morality, a concept of some fundamental rights and on their basis, the array of bureaucracy, administration, judiciary and armed military forces for protecting them. And the government is, in my language, the watchman of the state, its caretaker. The state is like, say, a loom. It is a machine working in accordance with a law that is inviolable . . . so long as the loom machine is in order, yarn will pass into it as per the same law and cloth will come out of it and get folded as per the same law. Similarly, the state machine is much like a loom. The social system is a machine like this and the government is the weaver. So long as it is a loom, it has to weave cloth irrespective of whosoever is made the weaver. . . . I say that changing the government is like changing the weaver. And the change of state, change of the social system is like installing another machine by replacing the loom itself. Now consider the loom to be the state machine from which exploitation comes out, like cloth from the loom.

Capitalism, the capitalist state is a machine like this loom through which exploitation will come out continually, which creates unemployment, gives birth to speculation, brings about anarchy and crisis in production, itself creates slump and market crisis, crisis in production, crisis in the name of scientific advancement and only augments profit of the owners—such is a social system. And the structure comprising Constitution, laws and regulations, armed military forces, police-bureaucracy, administration and judiciary suitable to look after such a social system is the state—what I am calling the loom. It is like a loom and the government is like the weaver. I say, how limited is the weaver's capacity! Can the weaver crush sugarcanes with the loom if he wishes to ? Similarly, can any government usher in socialism through this capitalist state, economic system or state structure because it wishes so, or bring about freedom and emancipation of the people ? No, it cannot. And because it cannot do so, the working class masses will have to generate adequate political leadership on the basis of correct revolutionary theory in order to establish socialist society free from exploitation by replacing the exploitative capitalist system through the blow of successful revolution." From this, it is clear that it is the prime task to defeat the social democratic forces ideologically and organisationally because it is they who confuse the people most by skilfully fostering parliamentary illusion under cover of radical slogans and thus save the exploitative capitalist system from collapse by alienating the masses from the path of revolution.

SHUN LEGALISM, GENERATE NEW MORALITY AND ETHICS

In order to bring about a radical transformation of the society, the anti-capitalist movement is to be so directed as to generate

new sense of values, new concepts of ethics, morality, social justice and law and order among the masses, not bound by the bourgeois sense of law and order now prevalent and free from the pernicious influence of legalism. Only in this way can be released the social forces of change—fearless and resolute in breaking up the old bourgeois order and ushering in the new. We quote here from the invaluable guideline provided by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in this respect:

"Every student of ethics and jurisprudence knows that everything legal is not necessarily legitimate, justified and moral. Naturally everything illegal in the eye of law is not necessarily unjustified, illegitimate and immoral. . . . If the history of social development is studied, it is seen that a particular system and its law-and-order structure that develop on the basis of the sense of values and ethical concept which evolve at a particular stage of social development to satisfy the needs for social growth and advancement—although these can satisfy the needs of the then society, with the change of times those particular sense of values, ethics, concept of social justice and law-and-order structure become reduced to privileges for the handful of the dominant class and become reactionary in character. So, new sense of values, ethical concept, concept of social justice evolve within the society on the basis of new needs in the interest of social progress. The conflict between the old sense of values, morality and concept of social justice and the new sense of values, concept of morality and social justice evolved in the interest of social progress is in reality a conflict with the old social system and its law and order, the struggle to establish a new social system and its law and order based on the concepts of new morality, sense of values and social justice. Through the ages, the concepts of human values, morality and social justice and the concept of law and order based on these have been changing through such conflicts and struggles to attain the present status. . . . The lackeys of the bourgeoisie say that law is the same for all. This, too, is a lie. In a class-divided society, law is the same for everyone on paper only. In practice, law is a mockery for the common man. The owners have the advantage of law. So, law protects the capitalists in this society. A handful of capitalist owners are indulging in robbery and roguery and thousands of people are crying for redress. The administration, the press, propaganda and even the central government are backing those handful of capitalists. To them, the country means those capitalist owners, but the workers who produce and generate the country's wealth are nobody. So, the function of law in the country, in the last analysis, is to protect the interest of the capitalist class—not to protect the interest of the worker. The peasantry is in disarray through onslaughts, many a family is being ruined but to protect them is not a compulsory task of law and the police. But when the common peasants build up a movement against oppression by a *jotedar* (rich capitalist farmer) and the *jotedar* feels endangered, the sword of law comes down upon the poor peasants on the pretext that 'life and property of citizens is in danger'.

"But what a pleading the so-called intellectuals of our country are doing in favour

of such law and order ! While conducting mass movements, the people are to be made conscious about this 'law and order' of the country. . . . the legitimate mass movements, even if they are in violation of existing laws, are to be resolutely supported and helped. Whether a movement on some demand is legitimate, rational and humane depends on whether it is in consonance with the interest of the majority of the people and conducive to social progress. If a mass movement is legitimate and moral in that sense, then if it goes against an existing law, attempt should be made to change that law. To crush the obstacle to changing the law, the mass movement is to be supported by all means. If one serves and eulogises the law that has been reduced to a privilege in the hands of the capitalist class, reduced to an instrument in the hands of the privileged and has lost its progressive character, how will ethics, morality and justice triumph ?"

TO CONTINUE AS WAGE SLAVES, OR TO REVOLT ?

The first step is to understand thoroughly the utter domination of this society by the ruling bourgeoisie, the wage slavery clamped down upon the people and to form the indomitable resolve that stifling though the situation may be, we shall not be overcome by it. We disown the present exploitative system and, come what may, we shall work for its downfall. In Comrade Ghosh's stirring words, "A set of parasites are lording it over the wealth created by their (the workers') labour. They are the powerful, the influential, the honoured. A protest by even one of them is splashed in the newspapers. But the heart-rending cry of the thousands who generate the country's wealth do not have any outlet in the press. Those who lord it over the wealth created by the workers and live almost like uncivilized beasts—there is a countrywide commotion if they say something. But what is the innermost feeling of thousands, what are their real needs and genuine demands and what they are saying—there is no newspaper in the country to reflect these. . . . That this thing is going on in the society as you can see, is because the mental make-up of the whole society has been and is being patterned this way. But why ? Because our present society is subservient to the capitalists and patronises them. So, everything must serve them, nobody can do otherwise. Therefore, either revolt is to be declared against everything of this society and courageous fighting conducted, or else servitude to it, in whatever manner, will be the lot. . . . What should be the basic aim of your movement, struggle ? Whom shall you fight against, why and how ? What should be the ideology and goal of such struggle ? You have to understand clearly what you want whereby there can ultimately be a solution to your basic situation, fundamental problem. Is it only the struggle on day-to-day demands ? I say, it is of course there but this should never be the main aim of the struggle. . . . There is only one significance (of present struggles). That is, by making use of these rights (gained through the present struggles), to strengthen the day-to-day mass movements and generate through this an invincible revolutionary organization so that this

exploitative capitalist system itself can be overthrown one day and working class rule free from exploitation established in its place. But instead, if wage increase by a few rupees becomes the main aim of your movement or struggle, a type of opportunism is bound to grow in working class movement and if you perceive a little, you can see that such opportunism has already largely undermined the revolutionary spirit of Indian working class movement. ...To struggle for just gaining and extending democratic rights and securing day-by-day demands without a definite and conscious political aim means to fight for gaining some advantages within the very exploitative capitalist system. To conduct struggle just for change of laws and securing economic demands without a concrete and comprehensive planning to overthrow capitalist exploitation boils down to this: 'Let the exploitation continue as it is, you are ready to continue as slaves as of now—you are agreeable to this, this does not hurt your self respect; you do not desire emancipation from capitalist exploitation, the main aim of your movements is just to lessen and mitigate a bit the torment of exploitation. That is, the owners remain owners, you workers remain wage slaves, the capitalists' right to exploit you and his individual ownership over social production remain unimpaired and to earn personal profit continues to remain the aim of production. If this persists, the worker can never gain emancipation from capitalist exploitation.' "

NOT SPORADIC OUTBURSTS, BUT SUSTAINED MOVEMENT

Since emancipation of the people is not possible without overthrowing the hated capitalist order and since the ultimate aim of the anti-capitalist movement is to organise this socialist revolution, should the battle for seizure of power be started here and now centring round sporadic popular outbursts of discontent? Comrade Ghosh has cautioned us against such petty bourgeois left adventurism skipping the essential task of augmenting the revolutionary preparedness of the class and the masses. He has analysed: "Remember, the revolution we cherish and the war we want to wage against the state is a class war, it involves the people—it is the people's struggle. This protracted people's struggle can be organised and led only after a major part of the entire people has been organized under the banner of the revolutionary ideology and political consciousness developed among them. This protracted people's struggle does not grow from sporadic and spontaneous popular outbursts or agitations which flare up from time to time from pent-up resentment, but lack the direction and conviction of the revolutionary political ideology. ...they are not afraid of the brickbats and crackers. They are the organized state power, they are not at all afraid of this. Rather, they desire that brickbats and crackers be hurled in an unorganized situation. It is to their advantage. Because, then they can let loose the steamroller of oppression even more firmly in the name of protecting law and order using these as pretexts and can further strengthen their instrument of coercion and repression. In view of such incidents, it will be easier for them to swing the intermediate sections, the common people in between the

capitalist and the working class, towards reaction. They will be able to isolate the workers from the widest sections of the people, from the people at large. ... But they are afraid of a powerful, restrained organization imbued with political consciousness which they cannot budge even an inch in combat. It is the task of the revolutionaries to guide these sporadic popular outbursts by giving them a revolutionary orientation and inspiring the people with revolutionary consciousness, establish and consolidate the political leadership on the organisations, develop the people's instruments of struggle from the grassroots level and finally give birth to their own alternative political power."

TOWARDS REVOLUTION

This is not an easy task. It involves conducting mass movements on the burning issues in people's life, study and spreading of the noble revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism, lifting the mass movements to higher and higher stages through various twists and turns, training the party workers, the class and the masses and imbuing them with ideological, political and party consciousness and remoulding them on the basis of higher proletarian ethics and culture — so that people's struggle committees develop as their instrument of struggle and pave the way for emergence of people's own alternative political power. Comrade Ghosh has provided comprehensive guidelines on all these aspects to the party workers, the working class and the people. Due to lack of space, we shall refer here only to some salient points of these aspects.

TRADE UNIONS SHOULD BE THE SCHOOLS OF COMMUNISM

On the cardinal importance of ideological-political study, Comrade Ghosh has said, addressing the workers, "What happens in this country? You express satisfaction through claps and applause, but do not exercise your brains. But everybody says that only muscles or mere excitement do not achieve anything—intelligence and brain are needed. And leadership is the brain. So the workers will have to think, study and ponder, will have to practise politics day and night amidst works. Those who say that workers should not indulge in politics and politics should not be introduced in trade union movement are swindlers and impostors. They are a band of parasites who do trade union work, secure house and property and go on bossing—to exercise authority is their profession and sole concern. They spread the lie that politics should not be introduced in trade unions. But in the words of Marx, trade union is the school, the training camp of politics. Portraits of Marx and Engels are hung up by the workers and all the parties and groups bearing red flag. Marx showed in a single expression what trade unions are. Without going into so many words about struggle and instrument of struggle, although these are there, he wanted to signify that trade union is a school of communism, a massive political training centre for being inducted in, receiving education on communism. This is trade union. Now if the trade unions are not viewed

as such training camps and do not grow as nerve centres of practice of politics, then these are ultimately bound to be reduced to tools in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie for creating dissensions and confusions in workers' revolutionary movement. In such situation, the trade union movements, instead of heightening revolutionary political consciousness of the working class, ultimately give birth to economism and opportunism in workers' movement."

ART & SCIENCE OF MASS MOVEMENT

Regarding mass movements and the various forms of painstaking revolutionary work, Comrade Ghosh has taught: "You have to remember that the people are to be moulded into an anti-capitalist orientation through all the movements whatever be their origin—be it on the demand for food, democratic rights, an agitation or economic struggle. ... During these struggles, the people have to practise politics and through it develop correct political line, correct political party and the instruments of struggle.

"Revolutionary struggle does not always and necessarily mean a particular form of direct confrontation, say, barricade fights or pitched battles. Such struggles do not materialise in a day. And when they come, as they sometimes do at the height of democratic mass movements, they do not continue for long, but last a few days rather. In order to create a situation when a protracted revolutionary struggle can be transformed into the struggle for seizure of state power, the revolutionaries have to wage a sustained and painstaking struggle, everyday at that, by coordinating three tasks—the struggle to build up the party organization on the one hand and, on the other, the struggle to build up the organisations of democratic mass movements, and, thirdly, propagating the revolutionary ideology. ...We should realise, the revolutionary struggle has so many stages of development. It has different phases of growth. Then, how to begin and carry on the struggle? It has to be built up step by step; this is a difficult struggle indeed. It will be a grave mistake to think that the revolutionary struggle means only armed insurrection or barricade fights, and the various forms of struggle that the revolutionaries have to wage before that in order to build up the revolutionary organization and pave the way for armed uprising are not revolutionary struggles. Such a trend of thinking arises from petty bourgeois pessimism, romanticism, frustration and despair. ...All forms of struggle which are conducive to revolution are, in fact, revolutionary struggles. The ideological campaign to build up the party organisation is an arduous revolutionary struggle, because winning this battle is often much more difficult than winning sporadic barricade fights. ... you will have to learn clearly the art and science of developing a movement or struggle, its myriad complex processes—say, when will the struggle take which form, when does it take the form of direct confrontation, when is the time to retreat, when will it take the form of campaign work, when to consolidate organisation and when simultaneously to recruit cadres, bring out party organs, carry on propaganda work, expand organisational

activity, build up democratic mass movements and conduct agitational movements. All these indicate particular stages of organisational development. And in course of carrying out these tasks the revolutionary party steps up the movement to a stage where direct confrontation with the ruling bourgeoisie can be launched. Through this struggle, the party exposes before the people the real character of the state, the police and the administration—their exploitative and oppressive nature.”

ERADICATE BOURGEOIS INDIVIDUALISM

Stressing the importance of conducting collective struggles to eradicate bourgeois individualistic traits among the party workers, Comrade Ghosh said : “The point is that everyone has to struggle collectively. And the routine work is part and parcel of the revolutionary struggle, it is a form of struggle, an indispensable part which teaches patience. By acquiring the habit to work collectively we can fight our individualistic trends and the ego in us which tends constantly to deceive and mislead us. When our rational judgment directs us to one course, our ego and individualistic tendencies tend to obstruct and misdirect us. We have to realise that this struggle within ourselves between two opposing forces is also a reflection of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the present society. We have to abide by the conscience and the rationale which urge us to struggle collectively. Either one convinces the collective to see eye to eye with one’s own plans or point of view, or one abides by the collective decision—even if one remains unconvinced of the rationale of this decision. For, one cannot advance remaining divorced from the collective. If a comrade lacks this mentality to abide by the collective decision voluntarily and happily and follows majority decision with grudge and discontentment, then actually he is nursing in him this bourgeois trait which manifests itself in the form of his individualistic trends, concept of ultra-freedom, or the so-called independent attitude. ... Remember, our individuality or conscious entity has emerged and developed through the conflicts and contradictions of society. It exists in the midst of this contradiction and, therefore, the only objective way to free ourselves from these fads is to correctly grasp the character of this contradiction so that this understanding can help pattern our activities in the proper manner, thereby influencing the course of social progress and our self-development.”

FOIL CONSPIRACY TO DESTROY MORAL BACKBONE OF NATION

The question of remoulding not only the party workers but also the working class and the masses is of vital importance indeed. This is why Marx said that the workers of this society would have to transform themselves into revolutionaries first and only then could they lead revolution. In this connection, we recall the guideline provided by Comrade Ghosh and his clarion call : “A worker in this society is but a worker influenced by the bourgeois thinking. It is to be always kept in mind that their very existence and culture are constantly influenced

by the vile bourgeois culture. It is true that since he is a worker it is easier for him to acquire a revolutionary class character, but even then he would have to free himself from the bourgeois ideology and elevate himself to the level of communist consciousness and thus transform himself into a communist ... Now, in this process of becoming communist the middle class cadres must have to give up their middle class mentality, petty bourgeois vacillations, individualistic behaviour and conduct, and above all the ego-centric thinking, while the workers will have to give up their rustic habits—that is, they will have to free themselves from the influences of the old feudal prejudices, variants of degraded bourgeois culture and vulgar bourgeois individualism. The ruling class in India is engaged in a conspiracy to destroy totally the moral and ethical standards of the character of the nation. They are shrewd to the bone; they know that even by extreme oppression and repression, and by keeping starved, a nation or a people cannot be kept for long under foot with the help of the coercive apparatus of the state, of police and military alone. The history of oppression and tyranny of the despotic rulers of all ages tells but one thing—that no amount of brutal and coercive forces of the police and the military can ultimately defend the rule of injustice, or put down the organised power of the people. People’s power asserts itself and stands up if the masses can keep their moral strength intact and find correct revolutionary ideology. The Indian bourgeoisie, the ruling clique, has not learnt the good part of the lessons of history. Devil as they are, being the exploiting rulers, they have not failed to take that part of it which serves their need—that is to destroy the moral-ethical strength and ruin the very character of the nation. I cannot but emphasize

here that a nation going without food, suffering the worst kind of oppression and exploitation, and half-fed and half-clad for days together, can also stand up, fight against, acquire the power to combat, organise itself and rise up holding its head high, provided its moral strength remains intact and the people have a correct ideology before them.”

DEFEAT SOCIAL DEMOCRATISM

Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had analysed in detail the politics, programme and class character of parties like the CPI and the CPI(M) to show that despite their ‘progressive’, and at times even ‘revolutionary’ phrasemongering, they are in reality social democratic parties, the compromising forces between labour and capital whose function is to shield the exploitative character of capitalism and actually strengthen its hands under cover of their ‘revolutionary’ verbiage and show of movements. Comrade Ghosh had reminded us of Stalin’s profound teaching that one cannot put an end to capitalism without putting an end to social democracy first.

Comrade Ghosh further analysed to show that in the present time, there is every possibility of such social democratic forces to turn fascist. In his words, “In our time, those communist parties within the international communist movement who have already degenerated into

revisionist parties and reduced themselves to the position of national communist parties, or in other words, who are communists in name only, but social democratic parties in practice, do have every possibility of turning themselves into fascist parties, if these parties, while waving the red banner and moving under cover of Marxism, combine blindness and fanaticism with their so-called militant character.” In the early Seventies, Comrade Ghosh cautioned again and again that the CPI (M) was more and more showing its growing fascist character through its intolerance of others’ viewpoints, blindness, blind fanaticism and militancy inculcated among its members and supporters, use of organized cadres to beat up political opponents, etc.” In 1975, Comrade Ghosh sounded this historic caution: “In 1948 I said that once fascism had come out of the wombs of social democracy but now that social democracy was the last prop of fascism. That is now about to become a reality in India.”

History has fully vindicated these analyses. Being at the helm of governments in a number of states as the chosen alternative of the ruling bourgeoisie with its blessings, and especially in West Bengal uninterruptedly for the last 15 years, the CPI (M) has unravelled its anti-people, pro-capitalist and growing fascist character through its utterly anti-people and anti-democratic attitude, approach and activities in every sphere, merciless crushing of all legitimate democratic movements, anti-people fiscal policy, all-round politics of deception and falsehood, anti-people language-education policy, stifling of democratic norms and autonomy in all institutions and local bodies, rampant corrupt practices, partisan role of police and administration, bribing and corrupting the youth and the other people, all-out rigging of elections and large-scale use of mafia-police-armed cadre combination against political opponents.

Naturally, the CPI(M) has become a very trusted political force of the Indian ruling bourgeoisie. No wonder therefore that it has been moving very close with the Congress(I), the most trusted political representative of the ruling class, ever since the time of Indira Gandhi, behind the smokescreen of fiery slogans against the Congress(I) central government. But now that cloak of anti-Congressism has been cast off and its collusion and complicity with the Congress(I) central government in the aggregate interest of the ruling bourgeoisie stand exposed for all to see, to wit, the support accorded by the CPI(M) to Congress(I) Presidential candidate Dr. S.D. Sharma the other day, disregarding the correct proposal mooted by the SUCI to field a distinguished candidate of honesty and integrity having a pro-people attitude as the candidate of the Left.

FOR REVOLUTION AND AGAINST FASCISM

So, we have to strive to draw all democratic, honest-thinking people into the fold of a countrywide mass movement directed against the anti-people economic and fiscal policies of the Rao government, against the fascist conspiracy of the ruling class, against capitalism in the last analysis, always remembering that

unless the social democratic forces can be unmasked and isolated from the masses, no headway can be made in the true sense. In all these, we, have to bear in mind Comrade Ghosh's invaluable teaching : "Although apparently and outwardly there are many a side in politics and although the newspapers project many contending political camps or alignments, I think that in the perspective of the main movement there are only two sides in politics—one for revolution and the other against revolution, by whatever name the latter may go. One is the politics of opposing revolution whether on behalf of the Congress through its politics, or through various juggleries of 'leftism', or by raising slogan of democratic socialism or through various slogans and catchy political ploys of rightist reaction, while the other is the politics conducive to revolution. ... We have to understand thoroughly what fascism is. ... There are some people who mean by fascism the naked tyrannical form of administration, any dictatorship. It is to be remembered that dictatorship can be a military dictatorship or can come through a coup even. Besides, there is oppression under all anti-people administrations, or by the imperialists in the colonial countries. But fascism is much more dangerous than these. Mere oppression cannot do so much harm to a country. But fascism is an all-out counterrevolutionary uprising. On the one hand, it stifles thinking and contemplation and makes a man self-centred, makes his knowledge, learning and thinking technology-oriented, that is, creates a band of educated mechanics, technocrats in the country who are totally devoid of human aims, have no sense of responsibility to the society, ...and can do anything for money—and directs the culture of science and learning to this end; on the other hand, it fosters spiritualism, all sorts of old superstitions, irrational mentality and blindness. Fascism is a peculiar blending of technological science with religious fads, obscurantist thinking and concepts and irrationality. When such a thing happens rational mind dies out in the country. So I cautioned about the Leftist movement too that the leftists (meaning principally, the CPI(M)— Ed. *P. Era*) who take to the policy of applying brute force by closing the door of discussions and debates because they are the stronger with more people in their fold and this pays them dividend for the time being, do not allow others to have their say, do not listen to any reasoning, whose workers lose the mentality of reasoning themselves and destroy this mentality in others too—do they know the dangerous consequence of this. ... Because, when rational mind becomes extinct on the soil, it paves the path for reactionary ideology entering into social life. Making the people fanatics with the poison of jingoistic nationalism on the one hand, while on the other resorting to revivalism and nebulous slogans about socialism, revolution and progress, the basis of fascism is created in a country if these three things are combined together. It should be remembered that the ruling bourgeois class can combine these three easily by confusing the intellectuals of the country when the mentality of dialogues and discussions

on the basis of logic and reasoning really becomes extinct in the social life."

ON TO THE CHERISHED GOAL OF SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

It is only through building up mass movements on the burning problems in people's life, through conducting countrywide anti-fascist struggles comprising broadest spectrum of right-thinking, freedom-loving, democratic people and by elevating these movements to higher and higher stages through many a twist and turn and by ideologically and organisationally defeating the social democratic forces in the process that the three essential preconditions of revolution specified by Lenin be fulfilled, people's own political power generated culminating in anti-capitalist socialist revolution. In Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's words, "...three conditions are to be fulfilled for revolution : 1. Correct revolutionary base political line, outlook and ideology; 2. Correct revolutionary party, that is, a party that really can lead the revolution; and 3. Consolidated, united fighting front of mass movements. When these three conditions are fulfilled all together, it is to be understood that the time is ripe for revolution."

He further said : "... The three main organs of state power are the army, the judiciary and the bureaucratic administration including the police.... Unless the people's committees that will grow up from the grassroots level up to the highest level through the mass movements can be made politically conscious and developed on the edifice of adequate ethics and culture so as to be able to perform the function of these three main organs with the help of which the capitalist social system is being preserved, (people's own) alternative state power cannot be generated. And unless this can be accomplished, revolution will never come by just changing the government through election.... To live like a man fight you must. And your fight must be on a correct revolutionary line ... Only if you can organise the workers under the leadership of a correct

revolutionary party and educate them with adequate political consciousness on the basis of a clear conception about the correct strategy of revolution and class character of the state, will you be able to give rise to people's own political power and establish their political hegemony. And then will come the cherished moment when tens of millions of the downtrodden Indian people will behold the Revolution. Till then, only agitation and defeat, only outburst and despair. The road to emancipation from this, emancipation of the society, liberation of mankind lies in Revolution and Revolution alone. This is the way, the only way, there being none other."

Long Live Revolution !

[The above excerpts mostly are free translation from the original Bengali speech of Comrade Ghosh. Any error, inadequacy, inexactitude which may have crept in the English version is the responsibility of the Editorial Board. Ed. *Proletarian Era*]

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