

# LONG LIVE FREDERICK ENGELS



*"As... the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state; so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist."*

*—Frederick Engels*

*Proletarian  
Era*

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

## Open Letter of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee General Secretary, SUCI, to the Prime Minister

To  
P. V. Narashimha Rao,  
Prime Minister,  
Government of India,  
South Block,  
New Delhi.

Dear Prime Minister,

We like to draw your immediate attention to the following urgent matters :

The minority Congress (I) Government under your stewardship immediately after coming to power has taken some unprecedented measures even before proving its majority in flagrant violation of all norms of parliamentary democracy.

First, the decision to devalue Rupee in three stages in quick succession reducing its value around 20% in relation to most of the leading currencies is sure to tell seriously on the economy of our country. That such a drastic devaluation is bound to lead to high inflation and further price-rise of all essential commodities cannot be denied, whatever may be the claim to the contrary. It will increase the import cost, particularly of the crude oil and petroleum product, besides causing rise in the rupee cost for servicing external debt which has been already eating up about 30% of the export earnings. To remain faithful to reality no one can deny that the overall effect of all this will add fuel to the already raging fire of inflation and cause galloping price rise of all essential commodities bringing in its wake immense hardship to the multitude of common people of our country.

Second, the decision to send 25 tons of Gold to the Bank of England by your Government—apart from mortgag-

ing confiscated Gold by the Chandra Shekhar Government just the other day—will deplete heavily the Gold reserve of the country with far-reaching and disastrous consequences. This measure, be it taken to get over foreign exchange crisis or to regain the confidence of the IMF, will surely push the country to an abysmal depth of economic bankruptcy. Curiously enough, your Government did not feel the obligation to reveal to the people either the nature and magnitude of the crisis or the terms and conditions that the IMF has imposed.

Besides the above-mentioned measures already taken by your Government we note with grave concern that your Government has contemplated measures like liberalisation of economic and industrial policies, privatisation of profit-making public undertakings and nationalised banks, fully or partly, rationalisation of industries, open door policy in respect of foreign investors in every sector allowing them the right to hold majority equity shares, reducing the subsidy on foodgrains meant for public distribution system, among others, which will aggravate untold miseries, poverty and ruination of the common people.

Needless to say, all these measures will help the domestic and foreign capitalists to loot and plunder the cheap raw material and labour power of our country to amass maximum profit particularly by the corporate sectors on the one hand, and will lead to closing down of factories aggravating the already mounting unemployment helping double digit inflation and price hike to continue for long and last but not the least, will lower the purchasing power of the wage earners and the real

income of the people, on the other.

The truth of this apprehension of ours has been admitted even by your Government, although indirectly, from your repeated warning to the people to get ready for 'more sacrifice' and 'tightening up their belt' further, indicating the grim future awaiting our countrymen.

Lastly, it will be an unparalleled act on the part of your Government to hide the fact that most of these measures have been dictated by the IMF, serving, in the main, the interest of the U.S. imperialists which your Government is quite overzealous to fulfil to get billions of dollars as loan sanctioned over and above the existing one.

Your Government is putting the entire burden of the crisis-ridden capitalist economy on to the shoulder of the toiling millions by inviting the U. S. imperialists to launch further neocolonial attack on our economy through their financial agencies and the multinationals and by opening the floodgate of foreign capital—all in the name of 'national interest'. Surely, these measures run contrary to the anti-imperialist tradition and aspirations of the freedom-loving people of our country. To try to wish away this fact as 'ideological hangovers' which the Finance Minister is saying every now and then is to reflect and echo the voice of the U. S. imperialists.

We would urge your government to refrain from taking such drastic anti-people measures, if you have least concern for the people, and instead adopt such measures and policies that can ensure the following :

- i) to check price rise and inflationary trend by reducing the expenditure

on the top-heavy administration and the military, mopping up effectively black money which has virtually formed a parallel economy and bring parity, as far as possible, between production and flow of money in the country, among others;

- ii) to bring down the prices of all essential commodities within the reach of the common people by introducing all-out State Trading, both wholesale and retail, in foodgrains freeing it from the maladies of corruption, wastage, bureaucratism, black-marketing etc;
- iii) to increase the employment opportunity by stressing labour intensive as against capital intensive industries;
- iv) to withdraw the hike in the Railway fares and freight as proposed in the Railway budget.

Sincerely yours  
Sd/- Nihar Mukherjee  
General Secretary,  
SUCI

Date : 22. 7. 91

## REMEMBERING FREDERICK ENGELS

# The Brightest Luminary After Karl Marx Who Envisioned The Path Of Working Class Emancipation

On the occasion of the 96th anniversary of the passing away of Frederick Engels, we recall his immense contribution in founding, giving shape to and developing the integrated world view, the science of dialectical and historical materialism, Marxism, as a guide to action embodying the theory and practice of anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Indeed, during the long decades of association between Marx and Engels and their joint struggles, the life, work and struggle of Engels became inseparably linked up with those of Marx to form one indivisible whole. That is why, without understanding the struggles and contributions of Engels, we cannot understand properly Marxism and Marx even.

### EARLY LIFE

Frederick Engels was born into a prosperous family of merchants and manufacturers at Barmen in the Rhine province of the then state of Prussia on November 28, 1820. Barmen was in the Wupper valley near the town Elberfeld. It was a time of steady growth of capitalism in the face of feudal opposition. The valley was a centre of quick capitalistic development and abounded with factories, mainly weaving and spinning mills and dye shops. Side by side with the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the feudal lords and along with development of capitalism, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had also historically begun to arise in society. Production by machines caused widespread ruin to the domestic industry and handicrafts and rendered thousands of weavers, spinners, knitters etc. jobless in the two towns, Barmen and Elberfeld. Frederick Engels grew up in such surroundings. His mother came from a family of philologists. The Engels family was highly educated with well-developed taste for literature, drama and music. Engels' father was deeply religious, and was determined to provide strictly religious upbringing to his children including Frederick, the eldest.

In 1834, Frederick was sent to the gymnasium (high school) at Elberfeld to be educated. He was a very attentive student with exceptional proficiency in languages. He studied Greek, Latin and French language and literature, German literature, poetry and history. This broadened his horizon and imbued him with humanist thought which was totally at variance with the religious fanaticism prevalent in his family. There was clash of opinion between the son and the father. Moreover, while Frederick longed for university education, his father was bent upon a business career for him. So, even before he completed the course at the gymnasium, Frederick, at the age of seventeen, was made to work in his father's firm for about one year and then sent to Bremen to serve in a wholesale merchant office where he worked for three years.

At Bremen, besides his office work, Engels continued his studies. Bremen was a big town, and here he had access to writings and thoughts that were unknown in Elberfeld and Barmen. He studied the latest German publications and began learning Dutch, English and Spanish. He tried his hand at poetry writing, drew sketches of life around him and

participated in political debates and discussions. He got acquainted with the then liberal and progressive thinking and fell under the influence of Heine and Boerne. Freed from family restrictions, the struggle began in Engels' mind between religious feeling and scientific, liberal, progressive thought, the latter gaining ascendancy gradually. In an anonymous article, he opposed the irrationality of religious dogmatism and attacked the factory owners for the distress and miserable plight of workers in the Wupper valley. In the philosophical field, after acquainting himself with the thoughts of Socrates, Plato and Spinoza, Engels explored the ideas expounded by Kant and Fichte and began deep study of Hegel's philosophy. As a young Hegelian, he started writing articles in 1839 under the pen name Friedrich Oswald. In these, he strongly criticized the existing order of things which plunged the bulk of the people in misery and attacked the oppressors of the people whom he held responsible for this plight.

### IN BERLIN

In late 1841, Engels went to Berlin to serve for one year in the Artillery Guards as he had been conscripted for military service. The idea of serving the army of the oppressor state was repugnant to Engels but he resolved that someday he would use his acquired military knowledge for the people's struggle against injustice and oppression, which he actually did subsequently. In Berlin, he joined the group known as Young Hegelians and took active part in the ideological struggles going on while Marx was yet studying in a university. In a number of articles and pamphlets, anonymous or under the pseudonym Friedrich Oswald, Engels conducted polemics against the philosopher Schelling who had been trying to undermine Hegel's dialectics and uphold Christian religion, and defended Hegel. This created quite a stir. Engels now studied deeply philosophy, especially Hegel's philosophy and also the materialism of 18th century. Gradually he came under the influence of Feuerbach who had started as a left Hegelian but had broken off with Hegel's idealism and moved towards materialism. He started abandoning Hegelianism and was becoming a materialist. He shunned the "purely theoretical" position of Young Hegelians which held that "one does not positively know what ought to be done" as put by the Young Hegelian Bruno Bauer and that "the only thing one knows is that everything needs to be negated", declared by Arnold Ruge, and felt the need of unity of philosophy and action, of science and life and came to regard practical criticism as an indispensable tool for bringing about social progress.

Meanwhile, Marx had become associated with the *Rheinische Zeitung*. From April, 1842 Engels became a contributor to this paper. In the articles, Engels exhorted the liberal forces to strike all-out against feudal reaction and held that one should be guided by science and learn from experiences of neighbouring countries like France. He concluded one of the articles with an appeal "to arouse much displeasure and dissatisfaction at all the outdated and illiberal survivals in our public institutions".

In October, 1842 Engels completed his military service and returned to Barmen. In end November, en route to Manchester, England, where he was to work in his father's mill, he went via Cologne where he met Marx. Before he left, Engels had joined *Rheinische Zeitung* as its foreign correspondent in England.

### IN MANCHESTER AND IN THE MIDST OF BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT

The impressions and experiences gathered by Engels in England were deep and had a lasting effect on him. Earlier, he had seen newly developing capitalism at work in the Wupper valley. In England he was in the midst of reigning and fully developed capitalism. Industrial Revolution had triggered tremendous development of productive forces through invention of steam engine and introduction of machine tools and had led to economic and political consolidation of capitalism. Industry was concentrated in huge factory towns, Manchester being a classic example and one of the biggest. Industry there used steam power and machinery extensively and division of labour was highly developed. With capitalistic development had sharpened capitalistic exploitation and oppression resulting in misery and these had generated conflict between the bourgeoisie and proletariat and organised resistance by the working class. There were workers' movements and strikes reflecting the class struggle. These struggles were led by the Chartists. Their name came from the People's Charter proclaimed in 1838 embodying 6-point demand for democratic reforms. The movement fought for economic as well as political reforms, the motto being "Political power our means, social happiness our end". Manchester, the metropolis of British cotton industry, had strong labour organisations and was the centre of Chartist movement.

While working in the firm Ermen & Engels, Frederick Engels absorbed ideas and experience from the surroundings with the whole of his being. He found himself confronted with many a new question. He soon realised that in capitalist society people's thoughts and actions centred round economic interests. The crux of the matter was: was economic factor the decisive one in shaping the course of history or did abstract ideas and principles decide issues—as had been hitherto assumed? Engels sought to solve the problem through studies, and a first hand study of life and participation in the struggles, seizing the opportunity to pursue his idea of combining philosophy with life.

Engels started a thorough study of the development of industry and condition of the working class in England. He studied life, shunned usual recreations of his class like parties and dinners, visited workers' houses, attended public meetings and debates in the evenings. He developed close links with utopian socialists and the Chartists as well as with their theoretical and organisational journals. He established contacts with the League of the Just, a secret society of emigrant Germans founded in Paris in 1836 and guided by Weitling's utopian socialist ideas. But he did not join either the Chartists or the League as his own experience and studies

were gradually leading him on to a fundamentally different course. Engels' intimacy and love with Mary Burns, an Irish working class girl working as a spinner, also helped in turning his attention to the proletariat and a scientific investigation of its condition. He struck a friendship with George Weerth, a young emigrant German writer. Sometimes the two friends would roam about in Manchester with Engels pointing out to his friend the poverty and misery of the working class. It was under Engels' influence that Weerth was to take up the cause of the working class and become the first significant poet of the German working class.

Studies Engels undertook were plenty. He made extensive study of the natural sciences like physics, chemistry, biology, geology and palaeontology as well as mathematics. He reanalysed Hegel and Feuerbach. He studied works of English and French utopian socialists like Owen, Fourier and Saint-Simon to whom proletariat was a mute, suffering mass and not a force with any decisive role in shaping history. That is why they abhorred revolutionary political action and hoped for attaining socialism through sanction and benevolence of the bourgeoisie. Engels re-examined their thoughts. Engels also critically reviewed the erstwhile great bourgeois philosophers like Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Diderot, Holbach and Helvetius. He also made a deep study of the bourgeois economic theories of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, in particular their labour theory of value with which they had explained economic class antagonism. They had sought to justify capitalist private property and held both class antagonism and capitalist society natural and perpetual. Many a question racked Engels' brain. Was capitalist private property everlasting? Did capitalism provide genuine freedom and equality? What bearing class antagonism and class struggle had on the course of historical development?

#### EMERGENCE OF THE NEW WORLD OUTLOOK

In response to all these, the world view of dialectical and historical materialism started crystallising in Engels' mind. Already, towards the end of 1842, Engels started probing for answers in the articles he penned for *Rheinische Zeitung*. To quote him: "Only a violent revolution of the obtaining unnatural relations, a radical overthrow both of the titled and the industrial aristocracy" could "improve the proletarians' material circumstances". He also mentioned that the size of the working class had made it "the mightiest in England and woe betide the English rich when it becomes aware of this fact." Engels was now of the view that "no sort of political change" in the bourgeois system could basically alter the social condition of the working class, "the cause of its political dissatisfaction" and that only socialism could guarantee to the working class "genuine liberty and real equality".

These first ideas needed to be proved, these hypotheses required substantiation. After about another year's investigation of the economic and political structure of bourgeois society, Engels penned in late 1843 the articles *Critical Essays in Political Economy* and *Die Lage Englands* which were published in early 1844 in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbuecher* jointly edited by Marx and Arnold Ruge in Paris, in its first double number which was in fact the last. In these Engels attempted to answer the basic question as to the role economic condition and interests play in historical development of society. Many years later, Engels wrote in reminiscence in the article *On the History of the Communist League*: "While I was in Manchester, it was tangibly brought home to me that the economic facts, which have so far played no role or only a contemptible one in the writing of history, are, at least in the modern world, a decisive historical force; that they form the basis of the origination of

the present-day class antagonisms; that these class antagonisms, in the countries where they have become fully developed, thanks to large-scale industry, hence especially in England, are in their turn the basis of the formation of political parties and of party struggles, and thus of all political history. Marx had not only arrived at the same view, but had already, in the German-French *Annals* (1844), *Deutsch - Franzoesische Jahrbuecher*, generalized it to the effect that, speaking generally, it is not the state which conditions and regulates civil society, but civil society which conditions and regulates the state, and, consequently, that policy and its history are to be explained from the economic relations and their development, and not *vice versa*. When I visited Marx in Paris in the summer of 1844, our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became evident and our joint work dates from that time. When, in the spring of 1845, we met again in Brussels, Marx had already fully developed his materialist theory of history in its main features from the above-mentioned basis and we now applied ourselves to the detailed elaboration of the newly-won mode of outlook in the most varied directions."

The process of systematic scientific investigation to shed all idealistic and utopian concepts and to provide scientifically verified basis of socialism continued for several years and was completed in 1846 with the joint elaboration by Marx and Engels in *German Ideology*.

#### ASSOCIATION WITH MARX BEGINS

Engels left England in August, 1844. For several months now, he had been in regular correspondence with Marx and it had transpired that working independently, both had arrived at basically the same conclusions. On the route home, Engels met Marx in Paris and they found that they had total identity of views. From this historic meeting dates the beginning of the long association between Marx and Engels which was to exercise profound influence on the course of development of the theory and practice of revolutionary ideology of the working class. Since in an earlier article on Karl Marx (19th March, 1991 issue) we have traced chronologically the joint struggles of Marx and Engels, we shall not repeat the same here but, shall try to provide a glimpse of the specific contributions made by Engels in the theoretical and organisational spheres. About the decades of creative association till death separated them, Lenin wrote later: "Old legends contain many moving instances of friendship. The European proletariat may say that its science was created by two scholars and fighters, whose relationship to each other surpasses the most moving stories of the ancients about human friendship."

When Engels arrived in Paris, Marx had already been working on a polemical treatise, which was to be later titled *The Holy Family*. Though Engels did not contribute much to it, on Marx's instance it was to be published under joint authorship in early 1845. This was the first product of the working partnership between the two.

#### BACK TO HOMELAND

Back in Rhineland, Engels found that with the development of capitalism, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had grown rapidly. Silesian weavers' uprising in June 1844 had triggered other strikes in different parts of the country. Opposition against the Prussian Government was growing. Engels plunged into the turmoil, for, had he not himself coined in *The Holy Family* the principle that communists needed not only to think but above all to act? He established contacts with the socialists in Rhineland whose centre was at Cologne. Engels went there and stayed for sometime, attending a number of socialist meetings. He held

that the object now was for the socialists to use every opportunity for democratic agitation and to thwart the bourgeois plan for misleading workers. In late 1844, Engels and other socialists launched a strong democratic agitation in Elberfeld. Numerous public meetings were organised with Engels addressing some. Engels took this opportunity of explaining the basic principles of communism to audience. The speeches had a remarkable effect and evoked response among the local proletariat. The Prussian Government was alarmed and declared such meetings illegal. Engels now concentrated on strengthening contacts between underground socialist groups and travelled extensively for the purpose. Circumventing censorship, he managed to maintain correspondence with Marx to clarify joint understanding about the tasks in anti-feudal struggle and further elaboration of the new world outlook. He also maintained contacts with the Paris and London committees of the League of the Just, the British socialists and Chartists and contributed articles to be published in England.

#### THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASS IN ENGLAND

Meanwhile, Engels had been working on his *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Based on the data collected in England and arranging, analysing and generalising his information, observations, experiences and deep studies and researches, the book in German was completed and published in Leipzig in May, 1844. This was the first concrete, comprehensive materialist-dialectical analysis of capitalism, in the context of the actual conditions of the proletariat in bourgeois society. In the preface, Engels stated, "A knowledge of proletarian conditions is absolutely necessary to be able to provide solid ground for socialist theories.... But proletarian conditions exist in their *classical form*, in their perfection, only in the British Empire, particularly in England proper. Besides, only in England has the necessary material been so completely collected and put on record by official enquiries as is essential for any in the least exhaustive presentation of the subject. Twentyone months I had the opportunity to become acquainted with the English proletariat... and at the same time to supplement my observations by recourse to requisite authentic sources.... I challenge the English bourgeoisie to prove that even in a single instance of any consequence... I have been guilty of any inaccuracy, and to prove it by data as authentic as mine." Early in the book, Engels traces in detail emergence of the exploited proletariat as a distinct, separate entity. We shall quote only a small salient part of this: "... but now, when the master artificers were crowded out by manufacturers, when large capital had become necessary for carrying on work independently, the working-class became, for the first time, an integral, permanent part of the population, whereas it had formerly often been merely a transition leading to the bourgeoisie. Now, he who was born to toil had no other prospect than that of remaining a toiler all his life. Now, for the first time, therefore, the proletariat was in a position to undertake an independent movement." After painstakingly detailing the plight of the proletariat in regard to food, clothing, housing, sanitation, health and employment, Engels summed up the condition of the English working class thus: "... these workers have no property whatsoever of their own, and live wholly upon wages, which usually go from hand to mouth. ... Every working-man, even the best, is therefore constantly exposed to loss of work and food, that is to death by starvation, and many perish in this way. The dwellings of the workers are everywhere badly planned, badly built, and kept in the worst condition, badly ventilated, damp, and unwholesome. The inhabitants are confined to the smallest possible space, and at least one family usually sleeps in each room. ...The clothing

of the workers, too, is generally scanty and that of the great multitudes is in rags. ...The proletariat is helpless; left to himself, he cannot live a single day. The bourgeoisie has gained a monopoly of all means of existence in the broadest sense of the word. What the proletariat needs, he can obtain only from this bourgeoisie, which is protected in its monopoly by the power of the State. The proletariat is, therefore, in law and in fact, the slave of the bourgeoisie, which can decree his life or death....In other words, the worker is, ... so effectually a slave that he is sold like a piece of goods, rises and falls in value like a commodity. ... The only difference as compared with the old, outspoken slavery is this, that the worker of today seems to be free because he is not sold once for all, but piecemeal by the day, the week, the year, and because no one owner sells him to another, but he is forced to sell himself in this way instead, being the slave of no particular person, but of the whole property-holding class. ... From this it is clear that English manufacturers must have, at all times save the brief periods of highest prosperity, an unemployed reserve army of workers, in order to be able to produce the masses of goods required by the market in the liveliest months. ... This reserve army, ... is the 'surplus population' of England, which keeps body and soul together by begging, stealing, ... or performing occasional small jobs." Tracing the rise of agricultural proletariat, Engels asserted that redistribution of land within the capitalist framework could not be the solution to the plight of agricultural labourers and small tenants: "Instead of being landowners or leaseholders, as they had been hitherto, they were now obliged to hire themselves as labourers to the large farmers or the landlords. ...The farm hands have become day-labourers almost everywhere, are employed only when needed by the farmers, and, therefore, often have no work for weeks together, especially in winter. ...What sort of life these people lead may be imagined; their food scanty and bad, their clothing ragged, their dwellings cramped and desolate, ... with no comforts whatsoever; ...Moreover, they cannot combine to raise wages, because they are scattered.... Make the small tenant a landowner himself and what follows? The majority could not live upon their holdings even if they had no rent to pay, and any slight improvement which might take place would be lost again in a few years in consequence of the rapid increase of population."

Engels' strong indictment of the oppressive bourgeois order rings true even today in the context of the present objective condition: "When one individual... assailant knew in advance that the injury would be fatal, we call his deed murder. But when society... deprives thousands of the necessities of life, places them under conditions in which they cannot live—forces them, through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence—knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual." But Engels was convinced that capitalist exploitation and oppression would not be the last words in history as he saw before his own eyes unfolding of the concrete historical process whereby the proletariat would organise themselves, intensify class struggles and eventually move towards emancipation through socialist revolution, as the following excerpts will show: "If the centralisation of population stimulates and develops the property-holding class, it forces the development of the workers yet more rapidly. The workers begin to feel as a class, as a whole; they begin to perceive that, though feeble as individuals, they form a power united; their separation from the bourgeoisie, the development of views peculiar to the workers and corresponding to their position in life, is fostered, the consciousness of oppression awakens, and the

workers attain social and political importance. ... The workers must therefore strive to escape from this brutalising condition, to secure for themselves a better, more human position; and this they cannot do without attacking the interest of the bourgeoisie which consists in exploiting them. **But the bourgeoisie defends its interests with all the power placed at its disposal by wealth and the might of the estate...the law is sacred to the bourgeois, for it is his own composition, enacted with his consent, and for his benefit and protection...** and more than all, the sanctity of the law, the sacredness of orders established by the active will of one part of the society, and the passive acceptance of the other, is the strongest support of his social position. ...But for the working-man quite otherwise! **The working-man knows too well, as learned from too oft-repeated experience, that the law is a rod which the bourgeois has prepared for him; ...Since, however, the bourgeoisie cannot dispense with government, but must have it to hold the equally indispensable proletariat in check, it turns the power of government against the proletariat and keeps out of its way as far as possible.** ...The commercial crises would continue, and grow more violent, more terrible, with the extension of industry and the multiplication of the proletariat. ...The war of the poor against the rich will be the bloodiest ever waged. Even the union of a part of the bourgeoisie with the proletariat, even a general reform of the bourgeoisie, would not help matters. ...the war of the poor against the rich now carried on in detail and indirectly will become direct and universal. **It is too late for a peaceful solution. The classes are divided more and more sharply, the spirit of resistance penetrates the workers, the bitterness intensifies, the guerilla skirmishes become concentrated in more important battles, and soon a slight impulse will suffice to set the avalanche in motion."** (emphasis added)

It is difficult to understand today the stir and commotion the work *The Condition of the Working class in England* generated in the then thinking. Marx always thought highly of this book. Many decades later, Lenin put on record his assessment of this book as a work of the first magnitude thus: "Even before Engels, many people had described the sufferings of the proletariat and had pointed to the necessity of helping it. Engels was the first to say that the proletariat is *not* only a suffering class; that it is, in fact, the disgraceful economic condition of the proletariat that drives it irresistibly forward and compels it to fight for its ultimate emancipation. And the fighting proletariat will help itself. The political movement of the working class will inevitably lead the workers to realise that their only salvation lies in socialism. On the other hand, socialism will become a force only when it becomes the aim of the political struggle of the working class." (emphasis added) Such are the main ideas of Engels' book...ideas which have now been adopted by all thinking and fighting proletarians, but which at that time were entirely new."

#### IN BRUSSELS, LONDON AND PARIS

Marx had been expelled from France and was living in Brussels. Engels placed at Marx's disposal the first royalties received for his newly published book and then moved to Brussels to be with him. He took rooms next door to the Marx family. Mary Burns left England and came to live with Engels. In middle of 1845, Marx and Engels travelled to London and Manchester. There Engels acquainted Marx with the working of British industry and introduced him to trade unions and political organisations. Together, they studied economic, social and political questions. They met leaders of the League of the Just and the Chartist leaders and had deliberations with them. From this time, Engels again became a

regular contributor to the Chartist paper *Northern Star*.

Back in Brussels, Marx and Engels collaborated to prepare the manuscript of *German Ideology*. In this work, they laid the foundation for scientific socialism, fighting all extant trends of utopianism and idealist philosophy. Having laid the foundation, the task of organising proletarian movement towards the goal of socialism became the paramount one. From 1846 onward, Marx and Engels devoted themselves more and more to this. In 1846, Marx, Engels and Gigot founded the Communist Correspondence Committee in Brussels. The Committee soon established contacts with socialist groups in different parts of Europe. In August, 1846 the Committee sent Engels to Paris to help the German communists in their ideological struggle. Here, Engels set himself to the task of winning over the socialist groups and the Paris centre of the League to scientific socialism through meetings, discussions, deliberations and all-round ideological struggles. Through strenuous struggle, Marx and Engels succeeded in convincing many prominent League members about the correctness of their scientific socialism.

#### THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

In January, 1847 a representative of the League came over from London and invited Marx and Engels to join the League and help reorganize it. Throughout 1847, Marx and Engels strenuously worked for converting the League from a conspiratorial body into a party capable of leading the working class along the course already charted out by them. The first Congress of the League was held in London in June, 1847. Engels attended as the delegate of the Paris communists. Marx could not attend. The draft new rules were debated by the delegates and the League was renamed the Communist League. At the deliberations on the programme, Engels made a detailed exposition of his and Marx's view and was able to obtain the delegates' approval on a number of important questions. Many a sectarian view on the principles of organisation were overcome. The Congress passed a draft Communist 'Confession of Faith' in the form of twenty-two questions and answers. Engels helped to draw it up and wrote it down on paper. His handwritten draft was lithographed and circulated to the League bodies in different countries. Subsequently, this draft would provide the basis for the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

Engels returned to Paris after the London Congress. From there, he went to Brussels and stayed there for about three months during which he conducted a vigorous propaganda campaign for spreading the ideas of scientific socialism among German workers. He and Marx jointly worked on further elaboration of the policy, draft programme and rules of the League and founded the German Workers' Society.

Back in Paris, Engels strove to win allies amongst the French petty bourgeois socialists and republicans. To this end, he had discussions with Louis Blanc and Ferdinand Flocon. Through articles, debates and discussions he pursued theoretical, propagandist and organisational work in the Communist League in Paris. After intense ideological struggle, he could prevail upon the Paris League members to agree to the principles of scientific socialism, and drafted a document titled *Principles of Communism* which was based on the earlier *Confession of Faith*.

The Second Congress of the League was held in London in November, 1847. Engels was elected a delegate from Paris while Marx was a delegate elected by the Belgian communists. Engels, as Secretary of the Congress, jointly signed the documents adopted along with Schapper who had been

lected President. The rules of the Communist League, as adopted, reflected the influence of Marx and Engels. In detailed discussions, they succeeded in winning over the majority to their viewpoint. The programme proposals put forward by them were adopted. Marx and Engels were instructed to draw up the programme. The outcome was the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The clarion call to the world proletariat had now been sounded: "The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"

#### EUROPE IN GRIP OF REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

In January, 1848 the French government expelled Engels from France. He went over to Brussels where Karl Marx was, and plunged afresh in revolutionary movement. In the meantime, bourgeois democratic revolutionary movement began sweeping across the continent. It began in Italy and spread to France. The Paris workers toppled the monarchy in February and the Second French Republic was proclaimed. This in turn accelerated revolutionary outbreak in Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, southern Germany and Prussia. Engels took up the pen and wrote articles in furtherance of the revolutionary movement, especially that in Germany. In these, he championed and provided correct counsel to the revolutionary movements on the one hand, while on the other he cautioned the working class that the bourgeoisie would not carry the revolutions to logical conclusion and so the proletariat should prepare to carry forward the banner of revolution from the half-finished stage.

The Central Committee of the League was now constituted in Brussels with Marx and Engels leading it. Vigorous political activity was started, but ere long, Marx was arrested and later deported. They went over to Paris where a new League C.C. was formed. Now, revolutionary outbreak succeeded in loosening the clutch of feudal absolutism in Prussia. Marx and Engels, on behalf of the CC, drew up the *Demands of the Communist Party in Germany* to provide guidelines to German proletariat at this momentous hour.

Marx, Engels and other German leaders of the League returned to Germany to organise revolutionary movement there.

#### BACK IN GERMANY

Back in Germany, Marx and Engels started the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the first independent daily of the German proletariat, Engels helping Marx by collecting funds for the venture. In all, 301 issues, besides the special numbers, were to appear till May, 1849. Marx was the editor-in-chief and the brilliant staff included Engels as Marx's deputy, Wolff, Weerth and Dronke. Engels as a specialist on foreign policy matters and military affairs, wrote more editorials than others and took turns with Marx in writing the most important articles. Often, the two discussed with each other the articles they were penning. Engels was an outstanding journalist. Marx later wrote that Engels was a "veritable encyclopedia" and "able to work at every hour of the day and at night, drunk or sober, brisk at writing and quick of grasp, like the Devil." Marx was wont to polish and even to rewrite his articles at length whereas Engels wrote at one go with perfect ease.

The *Zeitung* was an "organ of democracy" which emphasized its specific proletarian stand at every turn. It worked for the struggle to maintain and extend the democratic rights won by the German insurrection and for creation of a single, indivisible

Germany. It took a proletarian internationalist stand in reviewing revolutionary movements and battles all over the continent and staunchly opposed Prussian oppression of other nationalities. Engels penned four long articles on the June 1848 insurrection by the Paris proletariat. From the very beginning it directed its main attacks against the Prussian government, against the bourgeois betrayal of German revolution and against the counterrevolutionary forces that were gaining momentum.

Besides running the paper, Marx, Engels and the others organised propaganda, discussions and rallies in the Rhineland. The police interfered with, harassed and attacked these as well as the *Zeitung*. An arrest warrant was issued on Engels. Engels and Dronke crossed into Belgium but they were immediately arrested there and deported to Paris. But they found that the revolutionary fervour had cooled down there. Engels hiked across France and crossed into Switzerland. He was penniless. On his SOS, Marx sent him some money from Cologne. Though he continued political activity in Switzerland as best as he could, he was eager to be back in Germany, the centre of his recent work. He wrote to Marx: "it is better even in detention in Cologne than in free Switzerland". He returned to Cologne in January, 1849. Soon, Marx was hauled up before the court but eventually the defendants were acquitted by the jury. Marx and Engels now worked strenuously to unite into one organisation the local working men's clubs and the regional worker associations.

#### IN ACTIVE COMBAT

In March, 1849 the Frankfurt National Assembly adopted a somewhat progressive Constitution. The bourgeoisie had hoped that with the sop of this Constitution, the revolutionaries would be pacified and its class interests preserved. But counterrevolution was not ready to accept even this gesture of liberalism and the King of Prussia refused to accept this Constitution. Thus confronted, the bourgeoisie itself backpedalled on the Constitution but to the common masses it became the symbol of revolution. The people rose in open revolt in different parts of Germany in early May. The League assessed that the insurrection in favour of the Constitution, if carried on resolutely, could well turn into a struggle for a democratic republic. Hence the League members and leaders stood in front ranks in all the fights. Armed battle first started in Dresden and then there was uprising in industrial parts of Rhineland. Barricade fighting started in Elberfeld, Iserlohn and Solingen. Engels proposed three measures. First, isolated attempts at revolt in the fortress cities like Cologne, Coblenz etc. and garrison towns like Aachen, Duesseldorf and Trier should not be undertaken since these were militarily doomed. Second, a diversionary attack should be mounted in the factory towns and villages to keep the Rheinisch garrisons hands full. Third, all available force should be concentrated in the rebellious areas to spread the revolt and, with the help of the mutinous units of troops, to organise the core of a revolutionary army. Engels himself went to Elberfeld to organise this last measure, taking two boxes of cartridges with him. There he organised a company of sappers, got erected additional barricades and changed the barricade design so that enemy bullets were more likely to ricochet off them. Engels also took part in reconnaissance operation. On return to Cologne, he led an armed detachment to a government arsenal, took away arms, clothings etc. and distributed the same among insurgents. By now, warrant for his arrest had been issued. Marx was away on a journey. On return, he found a deportation order awaiting him. So, both of them had no option but to flee from Prussia. Counterrevolution gained ascendancy in Prussia.

In the meantime, workers, peasants and the petty bourgeoisie in other parts of Germany like Baden

and Palatinate had risen unitedly in revolt against their governments. Some troops had rebelled and joined hands with them. Marx and Engels hastened to Baden in the hope of thwarting the counter-revolution yet. Engels tried there to impress upon the petty bourgeois revolutionaries the importance of not allowing counterrvolution any respite, carrying the insurrection beyond the borders of Baden and Palatinate and concentrating 8 to 10 thousand of the troops who had gone over to the people in the main thrust against Frankfurt so as to bring the National Assembly under revolutionary control which would have turned the uprising into a national issue. The complementary political measure was to draw the wider masses into the folds of revolution by abolishing feudal taxes.

But the petty bourgeois leadership was short-sighted and irresolute and the initiative slipped out of their hands.

Marx and Engels then moved on to Palatinate. Things were not much better there but members of the Communist League were in leading political and military positions. Willich, a League member and an ex-lieutenant of Prussian army, was in command of a workers' volunteer corps of a few hundred men who harassed the 4000 strong government garrisons in nearby towns. Marx and Engels were taken prisoners by the troops on the wayside, brought to Frankfurt and released there for lack of evidence against them. Then the two parted. Marx went to Paris to make contacts with French revolutionaries. Engels returned to join Willich's volunteer force which had now swelled to over 6000 men—proletarian revolutionaries, workers and journeymen. Engels was placed in a detachment of 800 men. They encountered enemy at Rintal in a gun battle lasting hours. Engels was in the thick of the fire most of the time. A few days later, the volunteers launched a surprise attack on a Prussian battalion at Karlsdorf. Willich's men launched fierce counter attacks on the approaching Prussian armies but with heavy losses. At June end, the revolutionary army engaged in battle with enemy four times its strength at the Rastatt Fortress. In intense fighting lasting long, many of Willich's men perished, among them Joseph Moll, a leader of the League who died fighting by Engels' side. The men of the revolutionary army now fought rearguard action and retreated into Black Forest and thence into Switzerland. Staying in Lausanne, Engels penned the pamphlet *Die Deutsche Reichsverfassungskampagne* as per Marx's advice through letter which, apart from giving a vivid account of the campaign contained political and military analyses and enunciated guiding principles of proletarians' revolutionary battle.

Marx now planned to settle down in London and requested Engels to come over. Engels reached London in November, 1849 via Italy.

#### IN ENGLAND

Marx and Engels, along with like-minded comrades, set about the task of reorganising the League. This involved re-establishing the CC's contact with the continent, publishing a new party organ, providing relief assistance to the numerous refugees who had come over from Germany, fighting erroneous political ideas, establishing contacts with revolutionary British, French and other European workers' and democratic organisations and carrying out incessant political propaganda and organizational work.

A number of theoretical problems and questions had cropped up in the context of the revolutionary developments on the continent. These had to be clarified and the concepts of historical materialism required to be further crystallised and elaborated.

This task was tackled through publication of Marx's *The Class Struggles in France* and *Eighteenth Brumaire*, Engels' pamphlet on revolutionary war mentioned earlier, *The Peasant War in Ger-*

many and *Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany and the First and the Second Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* jointly authored by Marx and Engels on behalf of the CC. In the *Peasant War*, Engels showed the decisive role of worker-peasant alliance in the revolutionary battles. In *Revolution and Counter Revolution* Engels analysed to show that revolutions are part of law-governed historical process and not the handiwork of subversive agents or foreign agitators.

In the wake of the Cologne Trial, the League was dissolved in 1852.

From November, 1850 Engels had shifted to Manchester and had been working in the firm Ermen and Engels. This meant he could devote only the evenings to political and scientific work. To him, this life away from his work and spent in bourgeois commercial activity was like captivity but he willingly made the sacrifice as there was no other means of saving his and Marx's family from starvation. This Engels did in order to free Marx for his magnificent political and scientific work and this support he continued to provide to Marx and his family for more than three decades, till Marx's death.

From 1851 to 1861, Engels helped Marx with writing over 120 articles for publication in *New York Daily Tribune*, often working till late night to meet deadlines—selfless work for which he got no official credit.

Marx was now embarking upon the most important theoretical works of his life. The all-important thing was to further pursue the systematic economic studies he had already begun to critically examine and demolish all hitherto bourgeois theories on the economics of capitalism so as to lay bare the laws of origin, development and ultimate fall of capitalist mode of production. Only when this was done, could scientific socialism, dialectical and historical materialism, be solidly substantiated and the historic role of the proletariat as the gravedigger of capitalism established.

Engels was aware that Marx, and only Marx was capable of accomplishing this historic task. During the long years when Marx was busy in grappling with this gigantic work, Engels, besides providing financial support to Marx's family as best as he could, continually urged Marx on, encouraging him even when he temporarily felt down and out. Moreover, throughout Marx's momentous studies, Engels was a living information encyclopedia for Marx, a consultant and a critic. From Manchester, Engels poured out a continual stream of data and information about the economic workings of capitalist economy including information of stock exchange and international trade, his considered opinion about theoretical postulates and hypotheses being hammered out by Marx and excerpts from subject literature not easily available and requested for by Marx.

All along, there would be flow of letters between the two. Hardly ever a week would pass without a letter from the one to the other and at times there would be one or even two letters each way daily. And what letters! In these letters were discussed and debated by the two most advanced intellects of the era all sorts of questions related to philosophy, natural sciences, military theory, philology, mathematics, technology, literature and of course political economy, history, international policy, theory, strategy and tactics of revolutionary movement, stating, debating and thrashing out every problem and question. In the words of Lenin, "If one were to attempt to define in a single word the focus, so to say, of the whole correspondence, the central point at which the whole body of ideas expressed and discussed converges—that word would be *dialectics*."

Engels was a linguist. He could write in twelve languages and read twenty. This enabled him to have a quick grasp of international politics, sciences and literature all his life. He was very interested in comparative philology and linguistics. He set out his findings about origin and function of languages

in many letters and some writings. Later, these were to form the basis of Marxist philology.

In the late Fifties, Engels made deep study of the natural sciences—physics, chemistry, physiology, biology and others. He always used to keep abreast of the latest scientific developments and discoveries and enthusiastically studied and hailed the epoch-making work and discoveries by scientists like Joule and Darwin which corroborated the dialectics at work in nature and the world

#### THE INTERNATIONAL, IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLES, PARIS COMMUNE

The International was founded in September, 1864 in London. For over a decade, this body was to wield immense influence on the world proletarian movement by acting as its rallying centre, guiding and supporting the revolutionary movements and carrying on relentless ideological and organisational struggle against all erroneous ideologies and thinking, all deviations. Though he joined the International, Engels could not come out publicly for the International and fight side by side with Marx much for quite sometime as he was away in Manchester and was hindered by the fact of having become a partner in the firm Ermen and Engels. He could not become a General Council member. But he provided all help and support to Marx indirectly in the role as his adviser and a publicist. Marx would write to Engels briefing him about all important developments in the International and used to send him many important documents of the organisation for his opinions and recommendations.

In order to fight the influence of Lassalleism among members of the General Association of German Workers, Engels became a correspondent staff of *Sozial Demokrat*, the Association's paper. He penned a pamphlet, *The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party*. This was one of the writings that accelerated programmatic and ideological preparation for emergence of a true working class party in Germany. In it, Engels expounded the correct revolutionary democratic strategy and tactics to achieve creation of a bourgeois-national-state in Germany, combating the confusions created by Lassalle's thoughts.

In a series of publications and in many letters to the German socialists including Liebknecht and Bebel, Engels outlined as to how the advanced sections of the German working class should fight to build up a revolutionary proletarian army and extend and purge the German labour movement. He wrote articles combating Lassalle's dogmas and helped in formation of trade unions at the national level. He also wrote an article on Marx's life and works—the first biography of Marx to come out in Germany. As an outcome of years of struggle, the first correct revolutionary party of the proletariat in Germany was formed at the Eisenach Congress in August, 1869. Marx and Engels provided guidance, advice and help during its formation and after.

After 18 years of drudgery, Engels was at last able to free himself in 1869 from the burden of commercial business. He renounced his rights in the firm Ermen and Engels through a financial settlement which provided him funds sufficient to take care of the bare necessities of Marx's family for a few years. In 1870, Engels moved to London.

During the Franco-Prussian war which began in July, 1870 Marx and Engels called upon German working class to support the war so long as it was a just war against Napoleon III but to oppose it the moment Bismarck pursued it further and against the French people. To this end, the General Council of the International issued two Addresses on the Franco-Prussian war. Marx and Engels encouraged and supported wholeheartedly the thousands of workers in France and Germany who had risen against the nationalism and chauvinism whipped up by the ruling classes. Engels, in a series of articles in *Pall*

*Mall Gazette* as its war-analyst, analysed the war to uphold proletarian internationalism, articles which enriched the military theory of proletarian revolutionary movement.

In London, Engels took charge of a substantial portion of the work of the General Council of the International. In close succession, he worked as the secretary in charge of the work of the International in Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Denmark.

During the days of Paris Commune, the General Council functioned as a fighting staff in support of the Communards. Engels worked with Marx in establishing contacts with Communards, giving them counsel and cautioning them against mistakes. The International carried out intensive propaganda work in support of the Commune and refuted the slander campaign launched by the reactionary Press against the Communards.

In the long struggle against the anarchist trend represented by Bakunin, Engels always worked in close support of Marx. On behalf of the International, Engels sent numerous letters and documents to its sections in countries where Bakuninism was a force, pain-stakingly exposing the opportunist and anti-revolutionary character of anarchism. In the forum of the International, Engels, side by side with Marx, conducted ideological battle against Bakunin. Marx and Engels jointly penned the document *Fictitious Splits in the International* exposing the nefarious role played by Bakuninism. At the crucial Hague Congress of the International, it was Engels who presented the *Report on the Alliance of Socialist Democracy* on the basis of which Bakunin and his associates were expelled from the International.

#### THE CAPITAL, ANTI-DUEHRING, NATURAL SCIENCE STUDIES

*The Capital*, Marx's magnum opus, was the outcome of many years of fruitful but extremely strenuous work by Marx amidst difficulties and hardships. Marx worked on it from the early fifties till it was completed in 1867. Engels made no mean contribution to this gigantic effort. We have very briefly pointed out how Engels sustained Marx financially as well as spiritually during these difficult years and also participated intellectually in this great undertaking. As Marx once acknowledged in a letter to Engels: "Amid all the terrible miseries I have lived through in these days the thought of you and your friendship always kept me going, and the hope that we will still have something worth doing together in the world."

Marx highly valued Engels' collaboration on this work. A 1862 letter from Marx reads: "Couldn't you come here for a few days? I have set aside so many old things in my critique that there are several points on which I'd like to consult with you before I go on." Marx desired to publish the whole of *The Capital* as "an artistic whole". However, when the complete draft was ready, it was Engels who persuaded him to get the first volume published before the others could be made ready for printing. That is how *Capital Vol. I* came to be published in Marx's lifetime. At the time of publishing, the publisher from Hamburg used to send the proof sheets to Marx. Marx sent the proofs to Engels who read all of them. Marx wrote to him: "Your satisfaction upto now is more important to me than anything the rest of the world may say of it."

Anticipating that the bourgeois Press would try to ignore and hush up *Capital Vol. I* by a conspiracy of silence, Engels wrote numerous reviews of it in many a journal under various names, sometimes praising Marx, but often criticising Marx by cleverly putting forth Marx's views in such a way that readers would be convinced that it was Marx who was right, and not the "critic". No one could explain the epoch-making discoveries of *Capital* as precisely, lucidly and in a form as easy to understand as Engels could. And no one strove as Engels to im-

print the message of *Capital* in the mind and thinking of the vanguard of the working class.

Throughout their lives, Marx and Engels had to conduct intense ideological struggle against various erroneous and opportunist pseudo-socialists who obstructed dissemination of the concepts of scientific socialism and objectively diluted and weakened the main battle against the bourgeoisie. This fact was nicely put by Engels himself thus: "The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles...and when, like Marx and myself, one has fought harder all one's life long against the alleged socialists than against anyone else (for we only regarded the bourgeoisie as a class and hardly involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot greatly grieve that the inevitable struggle broke out..."

The German Social Democratic Workers' Party had struck an unprincipled unity with the Lassalleans at the Gotha Congress and made concessions to them which could not but weaken the revolutionary workers movement in Germany. In trenchant criticism, Marx penned the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, but could not prevent adoption of the opportunistic, compromising programme at the Gotha Congress. Engels' prophecy that the compromising programme would give a fillip to opportunistic views within the German Party was confirmed within a year. The situation was further complicated when Eugen Dühring, a lecturer of Berlin University, paying lip service to socialism, presented his eclectic-mechanistic views in a scientific garb as a "thought-system" and sought to supplant scientific socialism with it, endangering the ideological basis of revolutionary workers' movement. It was then that Engels suspended the deep study of development and philosophy of natural sciences he was engrossed in and took up the pen to demolish Dühring's hotch-potch petty bourgeois socialism and publicly reduce it to absurdity. The result was *Anti-Dühring*, a polemical treatise of historic significance. Here, Engels did not confine himself to just a criticism of Dühring's "system" or to a defence of scientific socialism propounded by Marx and himself. In his own words, "The 'system' of Herr Dühring which is criticised in this book ranges over a very wide theoretical domain; and I was compelled to follow him wherever he went and to oppose my conceptions to his. As a result, my negative criticism became positive; the polemic was transformed into a more or less connected exposition of the dialectical method and of the communist world outlook fought for by Marx and myself—an exposition covering a fairly comprehensive range of subjects." In earlier works, Marx and Engels had developed step by step the concepts of scientific socialism. In *Anti-Dühring* we get the theory of scientific socialism in its totality. Engels drew up this treatise in collaboration with Marx, a chapter on political economy being written by Marx himself. Space does not permit us to quote from this work, so vast and all-encompassing its scope is. Suffice it to say that in this book Engels exhaustively dealt with the natural sciences and natural philosophy and the three components of Marxism—dialectical and historical materialism, political economy and scientific socialism, to lend to this work an encyclopedic character. Lenin was to say later on that: "This is a wonderfully rich and instructive book" and called it a "handbook for every class-conscious worker."

Some portions of *Anti-Dühring* were later taken to compose the book *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* to provide a concise guideline to the international working class movement.

Engels had been making deep study of the natural sciences and mathematics for long. His idea was to write a large work on the dialectics manifested in nature. By 1875-76 he was drawing up the preliminary outlines for his work *Dialectics of Nature*. But then the work on *Anti-Dühring* intervened. Subsequently, Engels returned to *Dialectics of Nature* and

wrote some more or less completed chapters and a large mass of preliminary notes. Marx's death in March, 1883 compelled him to suspend this work and take up the task of guiding international working class movement. As a result Engels could not finish this book in his lifetime. Many years after his death, *Dialectics of Nature* was composed from Engels' manuscripts and published in 1925 in the Soviet Union. In this work, Engels dealt with, among other things, development of philosophy and science, a general account of development of materialist philosophy, the rational kernel of Hegel's dialectics, basic forms of motion, Work, rotation of earth and lunar attraction, Heat, Electricity, Mathematics, Mechanics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Biology, the transition from ape to man, classification of sciences and the dialectics in nature as corroborated by findings of the natural sciences. About the object of his scientific studies, Engels himself said, "...my recapitulation of mathematics and the natural sciences was undertaken in order to convince myself also in detail—of what in general I was not in doubt—that in nature, amid the welter of innumerable changes, the same dialectical laws of motion force their way through as those which in history govern the apparent fortuitousness of events; the same laws as those which similarly form the thread running through the history of the development of human thought and gradually rise to consciousness in the mind of man; the laws which Hegel first developed in all-embracing but mystic form, and which we made it one of our aims to strip of this mystic form and to bring clearly before the mind in their complete simplicity and universality. ... natural philosophy, particularly in the Hegelian form, erred because it did not concede to nature any development in time, any 'succession', but only 'co-existence'. This was on the one hand grounded in the Hegelian system itself, which ascribed historical evolution only to the 'spirit', but on the other hand was also due to the whole state of the natural sciences in that period. ...the revolution which is being forced on theoretical natural sciences by the mere need to set in order to purely empirical discoveries, great masses of which have been piled up, is of such a kind that it must bring the dialectical character of natural processes more and more to the consciousness even of those empiricists who are most opposed to it. ...In any case natural science has now advanced so far that it can no longer escape dialectical generalisation."

That all natural processes unfold dialectically in the inorganic as well as the organic world was substantiated by Engels through analyses of the then latest data and findings of natural sciences in this work. Just one example would suffice to illustrate the profound knowledge and insight in science and the philosophy of science shown by Engels in this work. At that time, atoms were considered to be the smallest particle of matter. Contrary to the then scientific view, Engels opined that there was no reason to think that to be final and that further smaller sub-atomic particles could not and did not exist. This has been corroborated by development of science in the 20th century through breaking up of atom and discovery of ever smaller and smaller subatomic particles.

The chapter titled "The part played by labour in the transition from ape to man" is of fundamental importance as it contains the first materialist exposition of evolution of man from ape through the dialectical process: acquirement of an erect gait, development of the hand as a product of labour into a distinctive organ of labour, inception of articulate speech and the long development of the sense organs and the human brain through the interdialectics between them and the nature in the context of human labour through which arose thinking, contemplation, diverse activities and eventually society and civilization—so that man became fundamentally different from animals. Engels wrote about this in

the preface to the *Dialectics of Nature* thus: "...But step by step with the development of the hand went that of the brain; first of all came consciousness of the conditions for separate practically useful actions, and later, among the more favoured peoples and arising from that consciousness, insight into the natural laws governing them. And with the rapidly growing knowledge of the laws of nature the means for reacting on nature also grew; the hand alone would never have achieved the steam-engine if, along with and parallel to the hand, and partly owing to it, the brain of man had not correspondingly developed."

#### AFTER MARX'S DEMISE

Karl Marx, the great leader of the world proletariat and the originator-propounder of scientific socialism, breathed his last on March 14, 1883. In a letter to Sorge on the next day, Engels said: "When we entered the room, he was lying there asleep, but never to wake again. His pulse and breathing had stopped. ...Mankind is shorter by a head, and that the greatest head of our time. The movement of the proletariat goes on, but gone is the central point to which Frenchmen, Russians, Americans, Germans spontaneously turned at decisive moments to receive always that clear indisputable counsel which only genius and consummate knowledge of the situation could give. ...The final victory remains certain, but the detours, the temporary and local deviations—unavoidable as is—will now grow more than ever. Well, we must see it through; what else are we here for? And we are far from losing courage because of it."

After the demise of Marx, the mantle of leadership of the proletarian movement naturally devolved upon Engels. There was no question but that Engels would devote the remainder of his life in pursuit of the scientific and political work of Marx as his continuator. He took up permanent residence in London and plunged wholeheartedly in activity.

By now, the message of Marxism was spreading from country to country. In the Eighties, new editions of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* came out in German, French, Danish, Russian, Spanish and English. Side by side, bourgeois ideological offensive against Marxism had also intensified. The proletariat could now move forward ideologically and organisationally only through combating bourgeois ideology of various shades at every step. It was not as if Engels formally headed an international proletarian organisation. Yet, the representatives of different workers' parties turned to him naturally for counsel and help. To caution them against making mistakes in theoretical and organisational principles, to pass on valuable experience gained by one party to the others, to analyse their practical struggles, to propagate the Marxist theoretical principles and conclusions, to study, analyse and generalise the newer and newer experiences gained by the world proletarian movement in order to further enrich the treasure house of Marxist theories—such were the tasks Engels addressed himself to. The whole bulk of international correspondence needed for co-ordination, exchange of opinion and in his advisory role had now to be handled by him. As the Marxist working class movement now grew rapidly, the responsibility and workload on Engels increased from year to year. And Engels carried on undaunted till his last breath.

#### Capital-Volume II & III

In the midst of all other activities, Engels started work on the remaining portion of Marx's *Capital*. He collected and arranged the manuscripts left by Marx, deciphering Marx's handwriting which was most illegible and brilliantly filling in the many gaps Marx left in the manuscripts in a manner in



which Marx himself would have completed the work, Engels decided to publish the manuscripts in two volumes. Besides, with the huge quantity of material Marx had collected on the history of political economy, Engels contemplated publishing yet another volume afterwards.

*Capital Vol. II* was completed in 1885. In the first volume, Marx had laid bare how the capitalist exploits the wage worker by misappropriating the surplus value created by the worker's labour. The second volume contains comprehensive analysis of the process of circulation of capital. It also shows that attempts to resolve inner contradictions of capitalism through state control in the matter of circulation eventually intensifies the contradictions because their root cause is not the circulation but the capitalistic base itself.

The third volume of *Capital* was published almost a decade later because work regarding the working class movement took more and more of Engels' time and also because, in his words, "...there was nothing to go by outside a first extremely incomplete draft. ...the farther one went, the more sketchy and incomplete was the manuscript, the more excursions it contained into side-issues whose proper place in the argument was left for later decision, and the longer and more complex the sentences..." So Engels had to spend much time to make one whole out of the disjointed materials and the third volume contained many more of Engels' interpolations, notes and supplementary remarks than the second.

*Capital, Volume III* was meant by Marx, "to locate and describe the concrete forms which grow out of the movements of capital as a whole." It proves mathematically *inter alia*, that the workers are not only exploited by the concern they work in, but the capitalist class exploits the working class as a whole and divides the booty among its own members.

Acknowledging Engels' significant contributions to *Capital, Vols. II and III*, Lenin said many years later: "Indeed these two volumes of *Capital* are the work of two men: Marx and Engels;"

### IN THE THICK OF INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN MOVEMENT

In the Eighties, Engels maintained contacts with and provided counsel, guidance and fraternal criticism to the working class movement of many a country including Germany, France, England, Russia, Poland, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden and even the USA but paid particularly close attention to the movements in Germany and France because in the then situation, the German and French movements had a great influence on the international proletarian revolutionary movement.

In Germany, the Socialist Workers' Party was outlawed and struggling for its very existence. Engels strengthened the struggle of the underground party through personal contacts with and influence over its leaders like Bebel, Liebknecht, Bernstein and others, as a theorist and publicist and by close links as an adviser to the party organ *Sozial Demokrat*. He also contributed a number of articles to this paper including *Marx and the Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and *On the history of the Communist League*. Karl Kautsky, on behalf of the party leadership, edited the monthly journal *Neue Zeit* at Stuttgart. Engels helped him with suggestions, ideas and critical reviews. From 1885, he contributed articles also to the *Neue Zeit*, the most notable one being *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of Classical German Philosophy*.

Through his own articles and also through republishing some of Marx's earlier works in these two journals with the prefaces often written by him, Engels immensely helped in defending proletarian world outlook against attacks from the bourgeoisie

and the opportunists and in raising the level of consciousness of the German workers. Earlier, the German edition of his *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, composed of some chapters from his *Anti-Duehring*, published from Zurich, had been distributed secretly. It ran into several editions and exercised a strong influence in giving a proletarian class angularity to the German workers. While thousands of copies of it were still being avidly read, Engels had already taken up another major theoretical work. Among the papers of Marx he had found extensive extracts from the book *Ancient Society* by the American ethnologist Morgan. Having studied the same, Engels had perceived that Morgan had independently discovered the Marxist materialist conception of history, *albeit* from the sociological angle. Engels had then written a book analysing and generalising Morgan's researches from the point of view of—utilising for the purpose the critical notes on Morgan's work left by Marx—latest research results of social scientists of various countries and his own significant research in this respect. Engels' book, titled *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, had been published in late 1884 from Zurich and distributed in Germany, partly legally and partly illegally.

In the late Eighties, the ruling classes of Germany were engaged in an armament buildup and trying to provoke France into a war. At the same time, the French bourgeoisie was also fanning up national jingoism so that war between the two countries became a strong possibility. This was an imminent danger to the socialist movement as the war, if triggered, would make workers of different countries fight one another, destroy international solidarity of the working class and hinder the growth of socialist movement. Engels penned many letters, articles and appeals advocating peace and for cementing the bond of proletarian internationalism. He counselled the German and French workers that the disputes between the two countries were quarrels between their ruling classes and had nothing to do with them, while their common interest lay in preserving peace and international solidarity of the working class. Happily, leaders of French and German Marxist workers' parties concurred with these views. Engels denounced Prussian militarism as the greatest enemy of peace in Europe besides Czarism.

### TWO OUTSTANDING THEORETICAL WORKS

*Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* and *Ludwig Feuerbach* are among the most important works of Engels, and indeed, of the whole of Marxist literature.

In the former, Engels, basing himself on the extensive researches made by Morgan about ancient society and particularly about the American-Indian Iroquois tribes, critically reviewing the researches done by a host of other social scientists till then and by using his own researches on ancient Greece and Rome and about the Celts and the Germans—drew up a short account of development of society and through providing economic arguments showed that in course of social development gradually arose domestication of animals, cattle breeding, use of metals, weaving and cultivation which created wealth in society that was inheritable; this revolutionised the society in two ways; firstly, with the increase in wealth, man gained a more important status than woman in the family, the earlier matriarchal society was gradually changed into patriarchal one, the male domination over woman came about and finally the earlier form of marriage and family was gradually replaced with monogamous family based on supremacy of man, the aim being to beget children of undisputed paternity so that they might inherit their father's wealth; secondly, since noticeable surplus could now be generated through human labour power, control over labour power could now

mean access to surplus wealth; slavery was now introduced so that in place of the old primitive communist society now the society was divided into slaves and slave masters; with the class division arose class antagonism and the history of class struggle in society began; the state now appeared as an instrument of coercion in the hands of the dominant class in order to keep social class conflict under control; in the present-day society, the state is an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie to keep the workers, its wage-slaves, subjugated.

The whole book abounds with invaluable teachings for all strata of working people. Just to illustrate, on marriage and family: "The modern individual family is based on the open or disguised domestic enslavement of the woman; ... Monogamy arose out of the concentration of considerable wealth in the hands of one person—and that a man—and out of the desire to bequeath this wealth .... The impending social revolution, however, by transforming at least the far greater part of permanent inheritable wealth—the means of production—into social property, will reduce all this anxiety about inheritance to a minimum. ... Thus, full freedom in marriage can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations created by it, has removed all those secondary economic considerations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner. Then, no other motive remains than mutual affection." On state and revolution: "The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without; just as little is it 'the reality of the ethical idea', 'the image and reality of reason', as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle a power seemingly standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict, of keeping it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and increasingly alienating itself from it, is the state. ... As the state arose from the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it arose, at the same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class... the modern representative state is an instrument of exploitation of wage labour by capital. ... As long as the oppressed class, in our case, therefore, the proletariat, is not yet ripe to emancipate itself, it will in its majority regard the existing order of society as the only one possible and, politically, will form the tail of the capitalist class..."

In *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Engels provided an account of how Marx and he evolved dialectical and historical materialism as the philosophical basis of scientific socialism by stripping Hegel's dialectics of its idealistic shell, assimilating Feuerbach's philosophy in so far as it was materialist and finally overcoming Feuerbach's idealistic shortcomings to arrive at and formulate the consistent materialistic world view as the class philosophy of the proletariat. A gist of this process follows, quoting from the book.

Hegel's dialectics brought about a veritable revolution in philosophy, because in its logical extension "it once for all dealt the death blow to the finality of all products of human thought and action. Truth, the cognition of which is the business of philosophy, was in the hands of Hegel no longer an aggregate of finished dogmatic statements, which, once discovered, had merely to be learned by heart. Truth now lay in the process of cognition itself, in the long historical development of science, which

mounts from lower to ever higher levels of knowledge, without ever reaching, by discovering so-called absolute truth, a point at which it can proceed no further... And what holds good for the realm of philosophical knowledge holds good also for that of every other kind of knowledge and also for practical action. Just as knowledge is unable to reach a complete conclusion, ... so is history unable to do so; ... all successive historical systems are only transitory stages in the endless course of development of human society from the lower to the higher. Each stage is necessary; and therefore justified for the time and conditions to which it owes its origin. But in the face of new, higher conditions which gradually develop in its own womb; it loses its validity and justification. It must give way to a higher stage which will also in its turn decay and perish."

Such were the logical conclusions of Hegel's dialectics as perceived by Marx and Engels but Hegel himself could not arrive at such conclusions because despite his dialectical method, his system had an idealistic framework which viewed all developments and changes to be manifestations of the absolute idea. "In this way, however, the whole dogmatic content of the Hegelian system is declared to be absolute truth, in contradiction to his dialectical method, which dissolves all dogmatism. Thus the revolutionary side is smothered beneath the overgrowth of the conservative side."

Feuerbach, a young Hegelian, struck at Hegel's idealism with his *Essence of Christianity*. "With one blow it pulverized the contradiction, in that without circumlocutions it placed materialism on the throne again. Nature exists independently of all philosophy. It is the foundation upon which we human beings, ourselves products of nature, have grown up. Nothing exists outside nature and man, and the higher beings our religious fantasies have created are only the fantastic reflections of our own essence. ... With irresistible force Feuerbach is finally driven to the realization that the Hegelian pre-mundane existence of the 'absolute idea', the 'pre-existence of the logical categories' before the world existed, is nothing more than the fantastic survival of the belief in the existence of an extramundane creator; that the material, sensuously perceptible world to which we ourselves belong is the only reality; and that our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter. This is, of course, pure materialism. But, having got so far, Feuerbach stops short." He cannot totally extricate himself from idealism. "The real idealism of Feuerbach becomes evident as soon as we come to his philosophy of religion and ethics. He by no means wishes to abolish religion; he wants to perfect it.... In form he is realistic since he takes his start from man; but there is absolutely no mention of the world in which this man lives; hence, this man remains always the same, abstract man who occupied the field in the philosophy of religion. ....He therefore does not live in a real world historically come into being and historically determined. ....the Feuerbachian theory of morals ... is designed to suit all periods, all peoples and all conditions, and precisely for that reason it is never and nowhere applicable."

It was for Marx and Engels to accomplish this historic task of overcoming Feuerbach's serious shortcomings and developing the consistent materialist philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism. "But the step which Feuerbach did not take nevertheless had to be taken. The cult of abstract man, which formed the kernel of Feuerbach's new religion, had to be replaced by the science of real men and of their historical development. This further development of Feuerbach's standpoint beyond Feuerbach was inaugurated by Marx in 1845 in *The Holy Family*. ....Hegel was not simply put aside. On the contrary, one started out with his revolutionary

side, ... from the dialectical method. But in its Hegelian form this method was unusable. ...We comprehended the concepts in our heads once more materialistically—as images of real things instead of regarding the real things as images of this or that stage of the absolute concept. ....Thereby the dialectic concepts of itself became merely the conscious reflex of the dialectical motion of the real world and thus the dialectic of Hegel was placed upon its head—or rather, turned off its head, on which it was standing, and placed upon its feet. ....In this way, however, the revolutionary side of Hegelian philosophy was again taken up and at the same time freed from the idealist trimmings with which Hegel had prevented its consistent execution. The great basic thought that the world is not to be comprehended as a complex of ready-made things, but as a complex of processes, in which ... in spite of all seeming accidentality and of all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end ... is now scarcely ever contradicted. But to acknowledge this fundamental thought in words and to apply it in reality in detail to each domain of investigation are two different things. ... Thanks to these three great discoveries (discovery of cell, transformation of energy and Darwin's theory of evolution—Ed. P. Era) and the other immense advances in natural science, we have now arrived at the point where we can demonstrate the interconnection between the processes in nature not only in particular spheres but also the interconnection of these particular spheres on the whole, and so can present in an approximately systematic form a comprehensive view of the interconnection in nature by means of the facts provided by empirical natural science itself. ...But what is true of nature, which is hereby recognised also as a historical process of development, is likewise true of the history of society in all its branches and of the totality of all sciences which occupy themselves with things human (and divine). ...In nature—in so far as we ignore man's reaction upon nature—there are only blind, unconscious agencies acting upon one another, out of whose interplay the general law comes into operation. ... In the history of society, on the contrary, the actors are all endowed with consciousness, are men acting with deliberation or passion, working towards definite goals; nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim. But this distinction, important as it is... cannot alter the fact that the course of history is governed by inner general laws."

#### INCEPTION OF SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND MAY DAY

Like Marx, Engels too was no abstract theoretician theorising in seclusion divorced from practice. To him, theoretical work was not an end in itself but a means to guiding practice and vice-versa through interaction and integration of theory and practice. Even when he would be busy working on a theoretical treatise, he would attend to the needs of the international working-class movement. Barred by Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Law, Engels could not visit Germany for quite some time. He utilised the relative leisure thus obtained by visiting USA and Canada and later on had a trip to Norway. He visited Sorge in the USA and studied the land and the people of the New World. He returned much freshened up and plunged anew in the vortex of international working-class movement.

For sometime now, there had been clamours to have a new international organisation of the proletariat. Engels had been cautious in his approach, preferring to have an international body only when it could be made capable of guiding action effectively rather than a loose propaganda organisation, which implied a stronger status of revolutionary movement. But at the end of the Eighties, there was an upsurge of working-class movement all over

Europe. There were many a strike and even mass action. New trade unions were being formed and so also Marxist groups and even proletarian organisations in newer and newer countries. Conditions were thus ripening for formation of a new international organisation. But what precipitated matters was that the French reformist party, the Possibilists, along with other opportunist forces, announced the programme of an international congress of workers in Paris for July, 1889. This posed the danger of opportunists taking over the international movement. To forestall this, Engels along with Bernstein engaged in hectic preparations for such an international congress of revolutionary proletariat beside which the proposed congress of the opportunists would pale into insignificance. Since, in the then situation, the main responsibility for organising a revolutionary conference had to be borne by the French Party led by Guesday and Lafargue and the German Socialist Workers' Party, Engels got in close touch with Paul and Laura Lafargue, Liebknecht, Bebel, etc. through numerous letters providing tactical advice and urging speedy, decisive action. At that time, the two major dangers to international working-class revolutionary movement were from the opportunists like the Possibilists and the trade unionists. The latter desired to keep worker's movements confined to trade union activities within bourgeois system and opposed formation of proletarian parties for political liberation struggle of the working class. Along with strenuous preparatory work for the conference, Engels conducted ideological struggle against both the dangerous trends and took all pains to ensure that their Congress be based on Marxist principles. He wrote to Sorge that "again the old split in the International ... that comes to light here. ... The adversaries are the same, only with the difference that the banner of the anarchists has been replaced by the banner of the Possibilists: the selling of principles to the bourgeoisie for small-scale concessions, especially in return for well-paid jobs for the leaders."

The Congress of the Marxists starting in Paris on July 14, 1889 was a thumping success with 407 delegates from 22 countries attending. As against this, the representatives from only nine countries came to the Congress of the opportunists. The Marxist Congress adopted a programme of demands and measures like legislation for protection of labour and demonstrations on May 1 on demands of a eight-hour working day in commemoration of the historic battle by the Chicago workers at Haymarket in 1886 and issued an appeal for international solidarity of the working class.

Although the Paris Congress did not formally form a new international organisation, further congresses on its line were to be held afterwards and eventually a permanent international bureau would be set up, a new International to become known in history as the Second International. Thus, through the Paris Congress, Engels had led the move for inception of the Second International.

As decided at the Paris Congress; 1st May, 1890 was observed internationally on demand of eight-hour working day, for laws in favour of the working class and to raise voice against war-machinations of the exploiting classes. Engels actively participated in the demonstration of London workers for the first May Day demonstration. The rallies organised in Germany on May 4, a Sunday, were huge successes. May Day demonstrations in France, Austria and other countries too were successful. Engels opined that the event was "epoch-making ... in its universal character, which made it an international action of the militant working class." He ended the preface to a German edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* on May 1, 1890, thus: "If only Marx were still by my side to see this with his own eyes."

May day, a red letter day in the history of the working-class movement, symbolizing proletarian internationalism, was born.

## IN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT TILL LAST BREATH

The underground German party had been gaining mass influence through struggles. Numerous strikes had been there, culminating in the mass strike of German coal miners in May, 1889. In February, 1890 the party won a huge success in elections to the Reichstag securing the greatest number of votes. Under pressure of mass movement, the Anti-Socialist Law had to go, and the "Iron Chancellor" Bismarck too. Nobody had contributed more to this victory of the people than Engels had through providing guidance and support to Bebel, Liebknecht and other German leaders and the German workers throughout.

The German Workers' Party now had to be reoriented to suit legal working. Engels helped it to work out the tactics to suit the new condition. He helped the party to fight Left adventurists who still wanted to cling to conspiratorial methods in anarchic fashion without utilising the parliamentary forms of struggle as well as the rightist opportunists within the party who advocated reforms.

In November, 1890, Engels turned seventy.

Having failed to crush the German workers' movements through mere suppression, the ruling class there changed tactics. They now laid stress also on reforms and social concessions granted to the working class. Some were taken in by this "liberal" face of the bourgeoisie. Opportunism grew in the party and possibility of peaceful attainment of socialism began to be put forward as a proposition. Engels perceived that this new danger had to be fought out immediately. For this, the tens of thousands of workers who had joined the party, the trade unions and the co-operatives had to be given a thorough Marxist orientation to make them fit for the coming class struggles. To give a direction to this socialist education, a new revolutionary party programme was needed. The Gotha Programme that had been adopted despite criticisms by Marx and Engels, had already revealed its opportunist character as had been forewarned by Engels. Liebknecht and Bebel now worked out a new draft party programme and circulated it to Engels, Kautsky and others. Engels, after detailed analysis, came up with many suggestions for improvement, with a view to completely doing away with Lassallean approach and influence. His analyses were later to be entitled *A Critique of the Draft Social Democratic Programme of 1891*. It contains many significant observations which are useful even now, including those on the transition then taking place in capitalism from free competition to monopoly.

Most of Engels' suggestions were incorporated. He worked closely with Liebknecht, Bebel, Bernstein and Kautsky etc. in finalising the draft. This programme was adopted after debates at the Erfurt Congress of the party, upholding the correct revolutionary line. In order to strengthen the support to the revolutionary line in ideological struggle, Engels had published Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and republished Marx's *Civil War in France*. These had proved to be invaluable tools in the ideological struggle.

In the meantime, danger of an European war had grown. As had been prophesied by Marx and Engels, annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by Prussia had created a war-like situation. A Franco-Russian military alliance was now directed against the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Italy. Engels worked out in conjunction with Bebel, Liebknecht and others a socialist programme of foreign policy as an alternative to Great Power Policy, against the danger of war and the armaments race so that the movement could advance taking advantage of the peace, and for a militant peace movement against war and for furtherance of revolutionary movement. Engels wrote many articles in support of this policy in the context of relations between Russia, Germany and France which were published in German, Rus-

sian, English, French and other language journals. In the eventuality of a Franco-German war breaking out, Engels advocated unity and joint struggle by the working classes of the two countries against the war machinations of their ruling classes and achieved agreement of the French and German socialist leaders to this principle. In a number of articles, he advocated disarmament and even suggested a step by step plan for the same.

Engels' concepts on war and peace found support in the socialist parties of different countries. The Congresses of the Second International in 1891 in Brussels and in 1893 in Zurich exposed the class character of bourgeois war and organised international proletariat in struggle against the armaments drive and the danger of war.

In the event, the danger of war could be averted for the time being, but war with all its terrible destruction would visit humanity in 1914.

The founding of the Second International accelerated growth of world proletarian movement. Many a new trade union sprung up. New working class parties were established—in Hungary, Australia, Bulgaria, Italy, England and Rumania. Marxist circles and groups were set up in a number of countries including Russia.

In the preparatory stage to the Zurich Congress, Engels felt concerned at the danger to the movement from anarchism which had not died out as a trend and from different opportunistic ideas. In an attempt to free the proletariat from their pernicious influence, Engels undertook a trip in August, 1893, which took him to Cologne and other parts of the Rhineland, Strasbourg etc. ... Engels arrived at Zurich. There, the Congress of the International was in progress. The thorough preparatory work done by Engels bore fruit. All the resolutions proposed by the anarchists were defeated at the Zurich Congress. At Bebel's request, Engels took part in the concluding session and delivered the closing speech. He was greeted with stormy applause. In his speech, Engels mentioned that the ovations were not meant for him as a person but "as a co-worker of the great man whose photo hangs there (Marx)." He gave a thorough exposure to the harmful trend of anarchism and appealed to the international working class to maintain solidarity in the anti-capitalist struggle.

From Zurich, Engels went to Vienna where he addressed socialist workers' meetings and thence to Berlin and addressed gatherings there. From Berlin he went to Hanover for discussion with Kugelmann and returned to London by end September.

A question that took up much of Engels' attention in his closing years was the relationship of workers' parties with the peasantry in the context of socialist revolution. He realized that as most European countries still had a very considerable, even the major portion of population engaged in agriculture, it was not possible to organise socialist revolution keeping the peasants under the sway of bourgeoisie as a reactionary mass. To be successful, the socialist movement had to draw into its fold the mass of the peasantry—not the exploiting landlords and rich peasants but the agricultural labourers, the landless and poor peasants. In late 1894 came out his treatise *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* wherein he expounded the strategy and tactics of proletarian party in regard to the peasantry and formulated the concept of class alliance between the proletariat and the revolutionary sections of the peasantry as the basis on which successful socialist revolution depended.

Decades of strenuous work had taken their toll and time was running out for Engels. In March, 1895 he again suffered from a "spring" sickness which had attacked him for the last few years in that season and incapacitated him for weeks at a stretch. In June, he travelled to Eastbourne by the sea for a change of air. But on return to London on 24th July, his condition deteriorated. After lying prostrate and unconscious for two days, Engels breathed his last in the night of 5th August, 1895. Thus passed away

a great leader and teacher of the world proletariat and a co-founder of Scientific Socialism, that is Marxism. Till the very end, he had kept himself busy with theoretical and practical work to further the cause of proletarian revolution.

## A GREAT LEADER OF EXEMPLARY COMMUNIST CHARACTER

Viewed from every aspect, Engels was a communist leader of gigantic stature. As Wilhelm Liebknecht, himself a communist leader of international standing and a close comrade-in-arms of Engels for long, said at his funeral: "Engels always showed us the way. ... He was leader and fighter; with him theory and practice have blended into one."

Years later, Lenin in his tribute said: "... Even before the appearance of *The Holy Family*, Engels had published in *Deutsch Franzoesische Jahrbuecher* his 'Critical Essays on Political Economy' in which he examined the principal phenomena of the contemporary economic order from a socialist standpoint, regarding them as necessary consequences of the rule of private property. Contact with Engels was undoubtedly a factor in Marx's decision to study political economy, the science in which his works have produced a veritable revolution... Marx worked on the analysis of the complex phenomena of capitalist economy. Engels, in simply written works, often of a polemical character, dealt with the more general scientific problems and with diverse phenomena of the past and present in the spirit of the materialist conception of history and Marx's economic theory. ... After the death of Marx, Engels continued alone as the counsellor and leader of the European socialists. His advice and directions were sought for equally by the German socialists, whose strength, despite government persecution, grew rapidly and steadily, and by representatives of backward countries, such as the Spaniards, Rumanians, and Russians who were obliged to ponder and weigh their first steps. They all drew on the rich store of knowledge and experience of Engels in his old age..." In the same tribute, Lenin also said: "After his friend Karl Marx ... Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat in the whole civilized world..." Elsewhere, Lenin has said: "It is impossible to understand Marxism and to propound it fully without taking into account all the works of Engels."

Great leader that Engels was, his human qualities and exemplary communist character were no less striking than his erudition, leadership quality and wisdom. Born in an affluent bourgeois family, he forsook his career, personal well-being and assured future for the cause of the working class and personally dedicated himself selflessly to Marx, Marx's cause. Through actively participating in, organising and leading working class movements following Marxist methodology, he became declassed and identified himself with the cause of revolution and the proletariat. Like Marx, his was an unsettled life of a fugitive wanderer. Like Marx again, he had no country when he died—he was a truly international proletarian. What a revolutionary character yet at the same time possessing what revolutionary humility without a trace of jealousy. When, after Marx's demise, he was the leader of the international proletariat, some started adulating him comparing him to Marx. Although a giant communist leader in his own right, his reply was characteristically unassuming. "...When one has the good fortune to work for forty years with a man like Marx, one does not usually get the recognition one thinks one deserves during his lifetime. Then, if the greater man dies, the lesser easily gets overrated and this seems to me to be just my case at present; history will set all this right in the end ..." and "... what I contributed - at any rate with the exception of my work in a few special fields - Marx could very well have done without me. What Marx accomplished I would not have achieved. Marx stood higher, saw further, and took a wider and quicker view than all

the rest of us. Marx was a genius ; we others were at best talented. Without him the theory would not be by far what it is today. It therefore rightly bears his name."

Engels the man will always be remembered along with Engels the giant revolutionary leader of international proletariat.

### ENGELS' TEACHINGS RELEVANT IN PRESENT STRUGGLE

The writings of Engels contain many a teaching that are guiding the proletarian movement at this critical hour even now after passage of over one hundred years and also in the context of the present struggle against modern revisionism which is the task of the hour, and will continue to do so. We shall mention only a few here.

About 150 years ago, Engels in his *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* showed that making a small tenant a landowner was not a solution to the agrarian problem as the majority of them could not live upon their newly acquired holdings and would again become pauperised in a few years. Much later, only a year before his death, Engels again stressed in his *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* that : "Neither now nor at any time in future can we promise the small-holding peasants to preserve their individual property and individual enterprise against the overwhelming power of capitalist production." In the context of the Indian situation in recent times, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder, leader and teacher of our Party, the SUCI and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of this era, has concretised the concept and shown by detailed Marxian analysis in his *Agrarian Problem in India and the Peasant Movement* that any attempt to solve the agrarian problem in the country through land redistribution is doomed and that the only solution lies in the uninterrupted process of industrialisation which in the present condition is possible only under socialism. Yet, a host of parties in the country serving the ruling bourgeoisie, not only the branded bourgeois parties but even such revisionist social democratic parties as CPI and CPI(M), are hoodwinking the peasant masses by holding out the rosy picture of solving their problems through "fundamental and thoroughgoing" land reform—an exercise which is tantamount to a conspiracy of keeping the half-fed and half-clad peasantry locked up in small pieces of land in utter distress.

When in the Seventies of the last century, there was a move within the German Workers' Party for effecting a compromise with the Lassallean opportunists by offering them concessions, for the sake of "unity" and for making the Party "stronger", Marx and Engels opposed it bitterly. At that time, Engels said in a letter to Bebel : "... One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for 'unity'. Those who have this word most often on their lips are those who sow the most dissension... These unity fanatics are either people of limited intelligence who want to stir everything into one nondescript brew, which, the moment it is left to settle, throws up the differences again but in much sharper contrast ... or else they are people who unconsciously ... or consciously want to adulterate the movement. ... there are circumstances in which one must have the courage to sacrifice momentary success for more important things."

Our party led by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has always held aloft this principle, both in the Leftist movement in the country and in the sphere of international communist movement, analysing to show that unity is for strengthening the struggle and so if unity is anyhow effected by hushing up the ideological struggle then eventually there would be neither unity nor ideology left. During the long period of struggle between the revolutionary line and the modern revisionist line in international communist movement beginning from the early Sixties of this century, our party cautioned the international communist leadership against glossing over the ideological differences for the sake of arriving at a compromise formula or document to

maintain a patchwork unity without carrying through the ideological struggle. Disregarding this principle was one of the causes which made for eventual revisionist ascendancy and the sad outcome is there for all to see.

Reformism and preaching of class harmony have done incalculable damage to the communist movement. Over a hundred years back Engels, in his *The Housing Question*, cautioned against these dangerous trends : "Whoever declares that the capitalist mode of production, the 'iron laws' of present-day bourgeois society, are inviolable, and yet at the same time would like to abolish their unpleasant but necessary consequences, has no other recourse but to deliver moral sermons to the capitalists, moral sermons whose emotional effects immediately evaporate under the influence of private interest ..." and "The gospel of harmony between capital and labour has been preached for almost fifty years now, and bourgeois philanthropy has expended large sums of money to prove this harmony by building model institutions; yet, ... we are today where we were fifty years ago."

Class harmony was preached by Gandhiji in this country. Ever since independence, successive governments in New Delhi under the garb of a "socialistic pattern of society", have practised class harmony by placing the country at the disposal of the ruling capitalist class plunging the people into utter misery and squalor. And social democratic parties like the CPI and the CPI (M), with red flags in hand, have actually become bootlickers of the monopoly capitalists.

In the international plane, the application of the principle of harmony between the socialist states and the imperialist-capitalist ones by the revisionist cliques in power in erstwhile socialist states has resulted in their total bankruptcy.

The question that today haunts the world people in general and some within the communist movement is : how is it that even after the socialist revolutions and long years of construction and consolidation of socialist economy there has been this present reversion from socialism to capitalism in so many countries? Is not the transition from capitalism to socialism a historically determined process then?

It is amazing how Engels, in the last century, during his closing years, was dialectically investigating what has a direct bearing on this present-day crisis in communist movement. He discussed about this in letters to Bloch, Mehring and Starckenburg. Some excerpts are : "... According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence, if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure : political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit : constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas, also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form ... We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds, also play a part, although not the decisive one." and "... Hanging together with this is the fatuous notion of the ideologies that because we deny an independent historical development to the various ideological spheres which play a part in history we also deny them any effect upon history. The basis of this is the

common undialectical conception of cause and effect as rigidly opposite poles, the total disregarding of interaction. These gentlemen often almost deliberately forget that once a historic element has been brought into the world by other, ultimately economic, causes, it reacts, can react on its environment and even on the causes that have given rise to it." And... "So it is not, as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, that the economic condition produces an automatic effect."

In the context of the present onslaughts of modern revisionism, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh concretised and elaborated this Marxist concept to show that the rise of revisionism in Soviet Union was not a fortuitous occurrence, nor did it mean that socialism is historically untenable but that there were specific causes why revisionism came in. To quote from his speech on *Soviet Military Intervention in Czechoslovakia and Revisionism* delivered in August, 1968 : "Now, if anybody thinks from this that revisionism came about in the Soviet Union all of a sudden just because the tiny seeds of capitalism were there, then that would be a one-sided analysis, that would be subscribing to economic determinism. ... It is true that the economic base reflects the reality of the situation in priority. But we should always keep in view the contradiction between and the mutual disposition of the economic base and the superstructure, that is, the realm of ideas of society. ... We consider the material condition prior and so consider the economic system as the base. But it is not that economic base alone and automatically determines everything. The Marxist conception is not like this. As the socialist productive system and production relation keep on changing qualitatively and advance, ... it does not happen that all this automatically moulds the spiritual world, that is, the realm of idea and culture. Had it been so, then at this advanced stage of socialism, the level of consciousness of the Soviet leadership and the party rank and file, that is, of the whole party, would have risen automatically. ... the intellectual faculty has a role to play in moulding the objective situation, because the intellectual faculty influences the material condition as well. That is why, as the material condition changes, the struggle to advance the intellectual faculty in conformity with the changing condition is to be conducted. Otherwise, a total reversal may take place, as we witness in the Soviet Union. ... It is not that ideas are changing automatically along with changes in the economic base. ... If ideas remain at a low standard, then that low standard of thought must react dialectically with its base. As a result, it influences the environment and degenerates the system and this is what is happening in the Soviet Union. ... In order to prevent this, it was necessary to maintain a high and adequate ideological and cultural standard of consciousness by conducting cultural revolution and ideological struggle ceaselessly within the party on the one hand, while on the other, it was necessary to develop and enrich Marxism continually, not only in the economic and political spheres but also for confronting the newer and newer problems arising in the changed condition in human life."

With correct Marxian dialectical understanding, the present setback in world communist movement, though it has caused grievous damage, is not the end of the road and should not cause despondency. Rather, it should be viewed as a "temporary retrogression" of the historical process. Let us study and re-study the teachings of great Marxist leaders like Engels and fearlessly apply the same in the concrete practice of fighting the menace of modern revisionism and imperialism-capitalism, rally round the revolutionary banner and strive to accelerate the historical process till it picks up and the "progressive development asserts itself...."

Long Live The Thoughts of Marx and Engels!  
Long Live Marxism-Leninism!  
Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!  
Long Live Revolution!

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