

Political Resolution Adopted by the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) Cochin, December 23–29, 1968

India, now, is passing through a deepening economic crisis, and a political crisis, too, is enveloping it. The utter bankruptcy of the capitalist path of development the ruling classes have embarked upon, a path of industrialising the country by reliance on imperialist aid and in alliance with feudal and semi-feudal landlordism, has been completely exposed. The much boosted foreign policy of non-alignment, independence and anti-colonialism, which got seriously undermined with the anti-China policy of the ruling classes, is coming under heavy pressure and fire from imperialists abroad and reaction at home. In short, the internal and external policies of the bourgeois-landlord regime of the Congress party are gripped in a crisis, and the bankruptcy and fiasco of these anti-people policies are getting rapidly exposed.

The days when Congress leaders indulged in the deceitful talk of building a 'welfare state' and 'socialistic pattern of society' are gone, and an unconcealed offensive of the bourgeois-landlord classes against the common people is on.

Acute food shortage and hunger, growing unemployment and misery, ever increasing inflation and indebtedness, soaring prices and fleecing taxes, industrial lockouts, lay-offs, and retrenchment, the ruination of the small-scale and handloom industries, the growing pauperisation of the toiling peasantry, and the virtual scuttling of Congress planning are the distressing phenomena that have come to prevail in the country.

The dependence on foreign imperialists has grown in an alarming manner, the imperialist pressure on the country's economic and political independence is on the increase, and the threat of U.S. neo-colonial domination faces our people in all its seriousness. This menace has to be fought and defeated to safeguard our independence and freedom.

Our country's economy and social order, being capitalist-landlord in character, forms an integral part of the world capitalist system and its exploiting social order. The decaying and dying world capitalist order, and its grave crisis and convulsions, cannot but have their direct impact on our country's economic and social life. Besides, our country is dependent on imperialist loans and 'aid' which fleece our people and form one of the basic causes of the crisis of our economy. The present crisis of ours and its causes cannot be fully grasped unless it is realised that it is an integral part of the world capitalist crisis. Hence it is imperative that the present international political-economic situation is examined so as to understand the national situation in a correct light.

I. THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THE NEW FEATURES

The international communist movement, while making a fundamental class analysis and assessment of the post-second war years, observed that "our time, whose content is the transition from capitalism to socialism initiated by the Great October Socialist Revolution, is a time of struggle between the two opposing social systems, a time of socialist revolution and national liberation revolutions, a time of the breakdown of imperialism, of the abolition of the colonial system, a time of transition of more peoples to the socialist path of the triumph of socialism and communism on a world-wide scale.

"It is the principal characteristic of our time that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society."

Further, elaborating the victories of the national liberation movement and the disintegration of the imperialist system, it is stated that "the break-down of the system of colonial slavery under the impact of the national liberation movement is a development ranking second in historic importance only to the formation of the world socialist system".

Advance of National Liberation Movement

Our Party fully stands by this analysis and assessment of the international situation. Rejecting the right-reformist and revisionist distortion which underplays the role of the national liberation movement at this stage, it has been emphasizing that the contradiction between the forces fighting for national liberation and imperialism has come to the forefront, acting as the focus of all the fundamental contradictions of our epoch at the *present stage* of international developments.

The heroic and death-defying struggle of the valiant people of Vietnam against U.S. imperialism for their national liberation and independence not only symbolises the characteristic feature of the national liberation wars of the present era standing in the van, but it also occupies the central scene of world politics and the focal point, of all world contradictions.

The utter fiasco of the most atrocious and barbarous war of U.S. aggression against the people of Vietnam is the most outstanding development of the period that we are passing through, and it highlights the superiority of the forces of democracy, independence and socialism over imperialism and reaction on a world scale. Half a million of the American army, assisted by nearly another million puppet troops of satellite countries, are bogged down in Vietnam, courting defeat after defeat and awaiting final disaster. The vaunted might of American arms has been humbled and the myth of its military invincibility is being blown up.

Armed partisan resistance and guerrilla warfare are developing in a number of countries in the world. The examples of Columbia, Peru, Venezuela, etc., in Latin America, the

experiences of Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia and South Korea in Asia, Vietnam standing in the forefront, and the armed struggles in Portuguese-occupied Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique, in Zimbabwe and Leopoldville Congo, besides the big-scale resistance under way in the entire Arab world against imperialist-inspired aggression by Israel, go to fully corroborate this phenomenon.

Former colonial countries, which forced the hands of the imperialist powers to concede them political independence, are coming under the frenzied attacks of neo-colonialism led by U.S. imperialism—in the form of economic aggrandisement, political blackmailing and enmeshing them in military alliances—thus engendering and widening new conflicts, conflicts usually described as those between the underdeveloped countries and developed imperialist states. A cursory examination of the proceedings of the World Conference of Underdeveloped States held in Algeria in 1967 and the UNCTAD Conference held in Delhi during the first quarter of 1968 clearly reveal the contents of this conflict, despite the pathetic pleadings of several Governments of these countries with the imperialists.

In the ten-year period between 1955 and 1966, the external debts of the underdeveloped countries to the imperialist states have registered such a phenomenal growth, jumping from 7,500 crores in terms of Indian rupee to 30,000 crores; the annual repayment on these debts which stood at a total of 375 crores of rupees in 1955 has risen by eight times to 3,000 crores of rupees by 1966. Thus the so-called imperialist 'aid' to the underdeveloped countries has strikingly revealed the ferocious character of the imperialist drive for the export of capital and its plundering loot of the peoples of these countries.

The economic, political and military impact of the Vietnam liberation war and numerous other currents of the national liberation movement and working class struggles is so deep and far-reaching on an international plane that the other fundamental contradictions of the era, the contradiction

between the camps of socialism and imperialism, the contradiction amongst the imperialist states and the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie, are getting accentuated and sharpened—all, in the final count, undermining the world capitalist order and driving the U.S. imperialists and their allies to desperate military gambles.

Growing Rivalries Among Imperialist Powers

Notwithstanding the monstrous military blocs of NATO, SEATO, CENTO and ANZUS built by the imperialists under the leadership of the U.S., furious trade rivalries, tariff quarrels, competition for markets are raging amongst them, and U.S. supremacy is being severely challenged.

The bitter quarrel between the countries of the European Common Market and Britain, the growing conflicts between the Common Market states of Europe and the USA, the contradictions between France and the USA and of late between West Germany and the USA and the increasing friction noticed in the trade relations between the U.S. and Japan are nothing but the grave symptoms of a regular trade war between different imperialist states. The decline in the annual growth rates of several major capitalist states during the last two to three years, the growing unemployment, the deficit balance of payments position of the USA and Britain, the precipitous fall in U.S. gold reserves, the devaluation of the pound sterling and virtual devaluation of the U.S. dollar, and the utter dislocation evident in the monetary system of these states—these are causing serious conflicts and are corroding the capitalist system.

The aggressive military alliances have already lost their former unity and cohesion and the U.S. is facing increasing isolation from its junior partners. Several of these allies resist and refuse to be drawn into the Vietnam war, and France, one of the chief partners, has come out openly against the U.S. war in Vietnam and the U.S. inspired aggression by Israel on the West Asian Arab countries. Pakistan, Turkey and Iran who are members of SEATO have refused to send

their troops to Vietnam, despite the continued pressure of the USA and willy-nilly even advocate the speedy ending of the Vietnam war. Thus not only the myth of invincibility of imperialist armed might is blown up, but also the illusion of imperialist unity fostered by them stands shattered:

Working Class Resistance in Capitalist Countries

The contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries has been further sharpened. The mounting worldwide resistance to the loot of the colonial and dependent countries, the reckless military spending and the enormous profits earned by the monopolists, the ever-increasing burdens of taxation and the growing unemployment, and the consequent attacks of the capitalists on the living standards and liberties of the working people—these are all, in turn, inviting mounting resistance from the working class and other toiling masses.

The heavy burden which this military expenditure casts on the people can be judged from the fact that the USA is spending 60,000 crores of rupees on its global adventure, Vietnam alone consuming one-third of this total, which is roughly equal to the entire sum spent by India on her three five-year plans.

The heroic general strike of the ten million workers of France in May last which lasted for three weeks and was joined by government employees including the police, bringing the entire economic activity to a standstill, is a historic landmark in working class struggles in the capitalist countries during the post-war period. Notwithstanding the revisionist betrayal of this mighty mass struggle of the French working class and the reformist and constitutionalist channels into which it was sought to be diverted, it highlights the acute antagonism that is growing between the working class and the monopolists of the capitalist states. A series of economic and political struggles by the mass of students and youth witnessed in the recent period in capitalist Europe, Japan and the USA, the ever-increasing number of strike

struggles of the workers in these countries, the huge anti-draft and anti-war demonstrations in the USA, the upsurge of the Black people against racial discrimination and cruel exploitation by the U.S. monopolists—these are the new growing features of the recent past.

Sharpening of Conflict between Socialism and Imperialism

The central contradiction of the entire present epoch, the contradiction between the world camp of socialism and imperialism, is further deepening and sharpening.

The U.S. imperialism, for a decade and more in the immediate post-war period, concentrated its main fire against the Soviet Union, and built military blocs and bases with the slogan of containment of the Soviet Union, 'liberation' of East European socialist states, trade boycott, etc. The U.S. imperialists, while talking about 'detente' in Europe and 'agreements' with the Soviet Union are concentrating their fire against People's China, with the slogan of 'containment of China', depriving it of its rightful place in the U.N. and imposing on their allies ban on trade with China.

In Europe, the U.S. imperialists are feverishly arming the West German revanchists and fascists to use them as pawns for all the undermining activities in the east European socialist states, and are thus endangering security and peace in Europe and the world. The Bonn Government refuses to recognise the borders of states settled by post-war agreements, and poses a direct threat to the very existence of the socialist German Democratic Republic. The imperialists are thus feverishly attempting to undo the gains of socialism secured through the military defeat of the fascist powers in the second world war.

In socialist Czechoslovakia, their conspiracies for counter-revolution reached the point of near success though it was foiled by the direct military intervention of five Warsaw Pact socialist states led by the Soviet Union, at the eleventh hour. Things, as they stand today, do not warrant any 'com-

placency since the forces of counter-revolution are still' active. The Czech crisis reveals the new devious devices of imperialist aggression against the countries of the socialist camp. It also reveals how disastrous are the consequences of modern revisionism and how it undermines socialism.

Besides socialist North Vietnam being under direct attack by U.S. imperialism, the socialist Korean Democratic People's Republic is under constant threat of U.S. aggression. Concentrating a lakh of American armed personnel in South Korea, held under its puppet regime, the U.S. prevents by force the unification of the homeland of the Korean people and conspires with imperialist Japan to crush the Korean national liberation movement and to destroy the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Socialist Republic of Cuba, the lonely outpost of socialism in the far-off American continent, is under constant U.S. threat and several of the U.S. stooges in the Latin American states openly and unashamedly talk of military invasion of Cuba.

The People's Republic of China, surrounded by numerous U.S. military, naval and air bases, with part of its territory, Taiwan, kept under U.S. occupation, has become the special target of imperialist conspiracies.

To sum up the present international situation, the contradiction between the national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and imperialism, chiefly, U.S. imperialism, continues to be in the forefront of the world contradictions, while sharpening and intensifying all the other fundamental contradictions of our epoch, particularly the central contradiction between the camp of socialism and imperialism.

The imperialists, chiefly the U.S., who are caught in a deepening economic, political and military crisis, despite all their talk of global strategies and slogans of containing Soviet communism and Chinese communism and the reckless military preparations for the same, first and foremost find as their easy targets the colonial, backward and dependent

countries of the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America, for their expansionist aims and plundering objectives.

The drive for neo-colonialism on an intensified scale, the undermining activities extensively carried on in a whole number of newly liberated countries, the counter-revolutionary coups they are organising, and the wars of aggression they are carrying on and extending are inviting tremendous resistance.

These patently aggressive wars and activities of the imperialist camp, chiefly by the U.S. imperialists, are tremendously intensifying the contradictions between forces of reaction and counter-revolution on the one hand and the forces of anti-imperialism, democracy and socialism on the other, on an international plane.

Life and objective realities are exploding all revisionist myths such as the so-called 'detente' in Europe, peaceful collaboration between the Soviet Union and the USA, and the imperialists reckoning with realities and restraining themselves from aggression, counter-revolution, war provocations, etc., allowing the security and peace of the countries and continents of the world.

Socialist Countries Take Rapid Strides

Despite all these conspiracies and the boastful U.S. imperialist talk of global strategy to liquidate the world socialist camp and the heralding of an 'American era', the socialist countries have been taking great strides in industrial advance, and scoring miraculous victories in science and technology.

The steady progress of the material wealth and industry of the socialist camp stands in sharp contrast to the crisis-ridden world capitalist camp. The countries of the socialist camp, free from the nightmare of hunger, poverty, unemployment and recurring recessions and crises in their industrial and agrarian sectors, now account for about 40 per cent of the total world industrial output. The combined military strength of the socialist countries has become formidable, and its defence capacity has registered rapid strides. Further, these countries have once and for all broken the

monopoly of the imperialist states over the supply of industrial equipment, technique and credits to backward peoples and states, inflicting no small damage to the blood-thirsty monopoly capitalists and their worldwide plunder.

The Soviet Union has come closer to the U.S. level of production in the major branches of industry and even surpassed it in certain items. Its share of the world industrial output has grown from less than 10 per cent in 1937 to nearly 20 per cent at present. Starting with a big breakthrough in atomic and space research in 1957, by sending the first Sputnik into space, the Soviet Union has by now asserted its complete superiority in this sphere, the latest feat of bringing back the Zond-5 after its trip round the moon being a striking example of this triumph.

Equally breath-taking has been the progress of the People's Republic of China and it is all the more spectacular since this progress is being registered under unusually difficult and trying circumstances. Despite inheriting an economy even more backward than that of pre-independence India, with one-fourth of the world population to feed, clothe and house, with the imperialist trade boycott and the Soviet revisionist betrayal of promised fraternal assistance, People's China has forged ahead, built her socialist industry, her agriculture and science in an amazingly short period. Even its avowed enemies admit that its steel production has exceeded 20 million tons, coal output 500 million tons, oil 15 million tons and foodgrains 190 million tons. Its production in light industry, clothing, paper and sugar is three times that in 1957.

China's advance in science and industry has amazed all. A number of brilliant victories have been scored in different branches—medicine, surgery, biology, physics and chemistry. Its major breakthrough in nuclear science was registered in the last quarter of 1964, and it is now on the threshold of experimenting its IRBMs and this all-round progress is sending shivers down the spine of its enemies all over the world.

In the midst of war and destruction, the people of North

Vietnam have secured great achievements. From 1955 to 1965, industrial production increased by 22, per cent every year and agricultural production by 4.5 per cent; the share of industrial and handicraft production in the nation's economy rose from 17 to 53 per cent.

Socialist Cuba, too, facing constant threats from the U.S. imperialists and the worst embargo imposed by them has registered tremendous progress.

All the other socialist states have also registered outstanding victories in the economic and social spheres, notwithstanding differing degrees of tempo and speed depending on a number of circumstances and several other problems of their own which they have to tackle and solve.

Disunity in Socialist Camp

No doubt, there would have been still greater and more outstanding successes for the socialist camp in the economic, political and military spheres but for the serious disunity, disruption and split imposed on the socialist camp and world communist movement during the last eight years by the modern revisionist theories and activities of the leaders of the Soviet Union.

Unless modern revisionist theories are defeated and discarded, neither can the unity of the world socialist camp and communist movement be ensured, nor the danger of further disruption and splits in it averted.

Add to it, the Communist Party of China which heads another big socialist state, in the course of its struggle against modern revisionism has erroneously come to consider the Soviet Union as an ally of U.S. imperialism for world domination, puts it outside the pale of the world socialist camp, and rejects in principle united action with it against imperialism. Our Party is of the considered opinion that its erroneous stand neither helps the cause of principled struggle against revisionism and of restoration of unity in the world socialist camp nor is it effective in fighting and defeating imperialist machinations and aggression.

It will be nothing but suicidal complacency if the dangers created by modern revisionism, by the split in the world communist movement and the socialist camp, are underestimated. The disarray in the world communist movement and the socialist camp was demonstrated on the vital question of Czechoslovakia when the majority of the Communist Parties in Europe failed to see the danger of counter-revolution and attacked the Soviet initiative and when the CPC also denounced it as a social-imperialist action.

The disunity of the socialist camp is impairing its rate of economic advance, emboldening the imperialist enemies for different aggressive wars and activities, and preventing the forces struggling for national liberation, democracy and socialism from fully utilising the opportunities opened up by the New Epoch.

The disunity and division in the socialist camp and the world communist movement is also in a big way responsible for some of the serious reverses to the anti-imperialist forces in the recent period. Besides the audacity with which the U.S. imperialists are conducting the aerial bombardment and war on socialist North Vietnam over the last three years, they, together with their reactionary stooges, have succeeded in toppling Dr. Sukarno's Government in Indonesia and in carrying out mass-scale butchery of five lakh communists and their supporters; they organised a reactionary coup in Ghana and overthrew the Nkrumah Government; they egged on and backed Israel to launch a surprise military attack on the Arab states and are deliberately encouraging it to refuse to vacate the aggression.

The present disunity and division in the world socialist camp, if it is not overcome and a principled struggle to achieve it is not conducted by all the Communist Parties and socialist states, a great danger faces the forces of peace, democracy and socialism. It becomes imperative that all the socialist states, despite the existing serious ideological-political differences, devise ways and means of achieving unity in action against imperialist aggressors, which plays a vital

part in facilitating the process of ideological-political unity of the camp.

It is again in this background of world capitalist crisis and the desperate drive of the U.S. imperialists to shift the burdens of the crisis to the shoulders of other weaker countries and peoples, that the economic-political developments in India, and the dangers of neo-colonialism, the threat to the national independence of our country, etc., have to be examined.

II. THE INDIAN ECONOMIC CRISIS AND ITS CAUSES

The colossal backwardness and poverty of the Indian people are an evil legacy left behind by the plunderous exploitation of foreign capital and its feudal accomplices under the two hundred years' rule of the British imperialists. During the last two decades after the attainment of political independence, the Congress rulers are neither prepared to do away with the exploiting foreign capital, nor are they interested in liquidating the feudal and semi-feudal landlordism and its oppressive loot of the peasantry. On the contrary, they embarked upon a suicidal path, the path of continued collaboration with imperialist capital and active alliance with landlordism, after effecting some pitiful agrarian reforms. They, further, energetically assisted the growth of the Indian monopolists and their collaboration deals with foreign capitalists.

Thus, the country, under the 'benign' rule of the Congress party, is placed at the mercy of the Indian monopolists, foreign imperialists and feudal and semi-feudal landlords who pillage and plunder and amass wealth at the expense of the toiling people. The present economic crisis is nothing but the cumulative effect of this triple exploitation, and no lasting solution of this crisis can be had except through the determined dissolution and destruction of this trinity. Its manifestations may be many, but the basic causes remain the same trio.

This triple loot of the Indian people has, in the recent period, aggravated and sharpened the contradiction between the people and the Government, the Government of the bourgeoisie and landlords which is collaborating and compromising with imperialist capital.

Thanks to the reactionary policies of the Government, the external debts of the country have piled up to Rs. 6225 crores as the budget figures of 1968-69 reveal. The annual debt repayment alone amounted in 1967 to Rs. 242 crores. The volume of foreign loans had to be written up by 57.5 per cent, following the devaluation of the rupee.

Since a greater part of this foreign aid is coming in the form of tied loans, the imperialists are dictating their own high prices for the commodities supplied, imposing their own rates of shipping freight for carrying them to our country, thereby looting as big a slice of the debt amount as 40 to 50 per cent in the very process of debt transaction.

The constantly rising burdens of external debt repayments and heavy food imports are consuming nearly half of the hard-earned foreign exchange through exports, and all chances of buying vital imports for industry including machinery are drastically reduced. On top of it, the Government has to pay for these imports at uncompetitive monopolist prices, dictated by the terms of aid-giving imperialists.

The imperialist loot of the country does not stop with the loans and debts they are giving and the penal extortions made out of them. Foreign private capital which stood around Rs. 250 crores in the year 1948, has by now risen to one thousand crores of rupees. The foreign private capital not only increased but also penetrated into vital sectors such as engineering, petro-chemical, etc., and the share of the USA rapidly increased in foreign private capital. A statement made by the Government on August 20, 1968, before Parliament admits that as big an amount as Rs. 600 crores, in round figures, was remitted abroad during the years 1957-67. These remittances, it is stated, are on account of current profits, accumulated profits and dividends, and on account of

royalties, technicians, technical know-how and other professional services. This figure is obviously an understatement, as everybody is aware of the foreign exchange swindle in which several of the foreign-oriented companies are involved. The steep rise of foreign private capital by four times during 1948-68 is due not so much to real and fresh investments but mainly due to the ploughing back of a part of the profits earned in the country.

British capital continues its exploitation of the country, and simultaneously U.S. capital, both private and government, has made serious inroads into our economic and social life. The U.S. loans and credits, to both government and private agencies, have stupendously grown, and the Government's dependence on U.S. aid for food under PL-480, for maintenance imports, for capital requirements, and for defence needs has grown in an alarming manner. Not a month passes when one central Congress Minister or another does not lead a begging mission to the U.S. and other imperialist states on bended knees, and on their promises and performances our industrial planning and economic development has come to depend. It is to these pressures that the Government succumbs and cuts off trade relations with North Vietnam and Cuba, and starts exporting to the puppet regimes of South Vietnam and South Korea. It is under this imperialist pressure that the Government shows reluctance to fully utilise the opportunities afforded by the socialist world and the offers of aid and trade with the socialist countries. A striking example of this is the Government of India's persistent refusal to grant diplomatic recognition to the German Democratic Republic. The huge amounts of Soviet aid and increased trade with the USSR do not stem the deterioration of the economic situation. It is well-known that the ruling classes use this aid to bargain with the imperialists. As the world capitalist crisis is deepening, the imperialist offensive to shift the burdens of the crisis on to the weak and dependent countries is growing and under these attacks the Government of India is yielding position after position to the imperialists, chiefly the U.S.

The virtual scuttling of the fourth five-year plan and its declared aims, the devaluation of the rupee, the fertiliser deal and similar other steps are links in the chain of surrenders. The U.S. imperialists are taking full advantage of this situation with intensification of the activities of their agencies like CIA to buy over sections of the press and politicians and influence our economic, social and cultural life. All this poses a big threat to our future.

Feudal and Semi-Feudal Fetters on the Economy and their Role in the Crisis

The pitiful agrarian reforms, carried out by the Government under pressure of the mounting agrarian upsurge and guided by the pressing economic needs and political expediency of the big bourgeoisie, have neither altered the basic land relations nor loosened the feudal and semi-feudal fetters on the economy, let alone smashing them. The land concentration continues, feudal and semi-feudal exploitation is perpetuated though in slightly changed and modified forms, and the pauperisation of the lower rung of the peasantry grows apace, while simultaneously capitalism with its market laws is making heavy inroads into the agrarian economy and causing all the depredations, characteristic of the stunted, distorted and crisis-ridden capitalist development in India under the rule of the bourgeois-landlord classes in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital.

Forty per cent of the total cultivated land remains in the hands of landlords who constitute 5 to 6 per cent of the landholders while at the other end nearly forty per cent of the agrarian population remain as landless peasants and agricultural labourers whose livelihood in the main is derived by hiring out their labour to the landlords and the rich peasants.

The heavy and exacting tribute this five to six per cent of the rural households, the landlords, are imposing on the social economy runs into hundreds of crores of rupees annually. It is estimated that the different forms of land rent

extraction alone amounts to one thousand crores of rupees a year, let alone what they gather from the exploitation of cheap labour. Another three hundred crores of rupees a year, on the average, are garnered by them in the way of different forms of usury from the indebted peasantry. Thirdly, it is this stratum, with the greater part of the surpluses in foodgrains and other agrarian commodities in its hands, which benefits from the food scarcity and fluctuating high prices in the market. Finally, it is this section which is the principal beneficiary of the several government schemes, grants and loans—all under the cover of agricultural development of the country.

The feudal and semi-feudal exploitation accompanied by the monopolist manipulations of the price mechanism of agrarian commodities is hitting heavily the toiling peasants aggravating the chronic food crisis, retarding the formation of capital for the country's development, narrowing the home market for industrial goods, hindering industrial progress and perpetuating poverty, misery and unemployment in the country.

The reactionary agrarian policies are hitting hard, first and foremost, the agricultural labourers, poor peasants, and rural artisans. Rural unemployment, evictions of tenants from land, utter neglect of ensuring minimum wages and social rights to these doubly oppressed millions, recurring famines and starvation deaths, and the mounting oppression of the landlords are now a common phenomenon throughout the country. In the backward states and areas, in the tribal belts and agency tracts, and in places where the democratic movement and organised kisan activities are either absent or extremely weak, this oppression is assuming more barbarous and cruel forms and provoking spontaneous resistance and struggles.

Government's policies are adversely affecting sections of the middle peasantry who are also fleeced through high prices, unequal exchange and high taxation.

Even sections of rich peasants are affected by the pricing

policy of the Government from time to time, and by the heavy taxation of goods they require for production.

The price fluctuations of some agricultural commodities like jute, sugarcane, chillies, groundnut, raw-rubber, coconut and certain other items are such as to completely dislocate the economies of the small and medium producers and cause serious losses to them. The bulk of the peasantry which produces foodgrains is compelled to part with its surpluses at cheaper rates in the market, while the landlords, hoarders and grain speculators are exacting high prices, ranging anywhere between 25 and 50 per cent or even more than what the ordinary peasants are able to get. Added to it, monopolist prices for industrial goods are imposed on them. The artificially kept up high prices of cloth, kerosene, medicine and the ever-growing cost of education for the children of the peasantry are causing serious hardships to them. The direct and indirect taxes coupled with inflationary devices constitute such a burden that it undermines their economy and endangers their livelihood, though most of it remains imperceptible to the naked eye, while all the same it does its mischief.

Peasant indebtedness is growing, a very meagre percentage of their credit requirements are met by the Government, and they are thrown at the mercy of usurious landlords and moneylending merchants in the rural areas.

Growth of Indian Monopolies

One of the distinct features of Indian economic and social life in the post-independence period is the monstrous rise and growth of Indian monopolies.

Indian monopolists operating in a semi-feudal and industrially backward country like India prove doubly oppressive when compared with their counterparts in the developed capitalist countries. In their attempt to reap a high rate of profits in conditions of low industrial development, they hinder rapid industrial progress in order to ensure against competition and to draw monopoly profits. Price manipulations,

tax evasions, hoarding and blackmarketing are some of the malpractices they freely indulge in so that they might get rich quick. As a result of their exorbitant tribute on the country's economy, the purchasing power of the people falls rapidly. It drastically narrows down the home market and leads to a crisis.

Interested as they are in a cheap and abundant labour force, they are against all radical agrarian reforms and flourish on the pauperised and unemployed millions of people, readily available in the labour market. Their schemes of rationalisation, automation, their arbitrary imposition of industrial lock-outs, lay-off, closures of factories and mills, their banking operations, price manipulations, and tax evasions are all hitting the country's economy and inflicting miseries on the people. The prolonged crisis in the textile industry, throwing out lakhs of workers in the handlooms and textile mills, the months-long lock-outs and strikes in the engineering industry, and the mounting attacks on the employees' rights logically follow from the capitalist path with its growing domination of the monopolies over our economy.

The Indian big bourgeoisie in their ambition to have vast areas of the Indian Union as their monopolised market are extremely hostile to the democratic and autonomous rights of different nationalities and states, and their drive is towards a unitary and dictatorial centre, to serve as their tool in exploitation and plunder.

The monopolists, who have no greater value in life than that of profit-making, are the chief source of all anti-national deals in the country, and the increasing collaboration with foreign monopoly capital is already reaching menacing proportions.

The unrestricted growth of monopolists and their foreign collaboration deals is in a big way responsible for the present plight of our economy.

The unresolved conflicts of the Indian Government with neighbouring countries of Pakistan and People's China, the continuation of a state of undeclared war between these

countries and India, and the chauvinist positions taken by the ruling classes that crippled the initiative to end this deadlock, are imposing a heavy defence expenditure on the country, consuming a third of the annual budget. This is further intensifying and deepening the economic crisis in the country.

Thus the three-fold exploitation and oppression is manifesting in different forms and expressing in different ways the accentuating economic crisis. Contracting of huge foreign debts and mortgaging the country's economy, the big public borrowing and piling up of public debts, the resorting to inflation as one of the most important devices to fleece the public, the price manipulation, the tremendous increase of excise duties and indirect taxation, the pegging of the wages of the industrial working class and government employees, the deliberate encouragement of collaboration deals with foreign monopoly capital, the working of the factories and industrial establishments much below their capacity, artificial creation of scarcity of goods by hoarding and withholding full production, the monopoly control on the major banking and credit system to squeeze out the small and medium producers, the opposition to the setting up and expansion of basic industries while driving in the direction of quick-profit making consumer industries, the industrial lock-outs, automation, lay-offs, retrenchment and periodical closures of mills and the increasing use of the state police machinery to beat down people's resistance are the methods and forms by which the Government wants to resolve the economic crisis. In fact, these are the very bankrupt methods that are responsible for aggravating the crisis, inflicting miseries on the people, endangering economic advance and threatening the country's political independence.

In view of these basic causes of the crisis of the Indian economy, Indian planning had virtually collapsed before the onset of the recession. The third plan had ended in disgraceful failure. The fourth plan was virtually still-born. The capitalist path had imposed a stagnant growth on the Indian

economy. The annual growth rate has been slowing down and the per capita income had declined in 1965-66 and 1966-67. The compound rate of growth in foodgrains has been only 0.67 per cent.

In the industrial sector also the rate of growth declined between 1965 and 1967.

This slow growth of national and per capita income inhibits continued progress as it comes against the expansion of the home market, on which Indian capitalist development must more or less solely rely under the present conditions of capitalism and international competition.

The recent industrial setback has taken place under conditions of chronic stagnation.

Official figures showed last year a large accumulation of stocks. A large number of textile mills have been closed. Several engineering units had considerable unused capacity, even before the onset of the recession. The crisis has ruined the handloom industry and thrown thousands of handloom workers out of employment. Large stocks of handloom cloth have accumulated.

Among the industrial employers, smaller industrialists have to bear the brunt of the crisis. The smaller employer is unable to continue production with accumulated stocks which lock up his capital. Many small engineering and other concerns are irretrievably ruined and a large number is threatened with extinction.

The continued inflation and deficit financing play a role in deepening the crisis. Inflation which perpetuates increasing prices is a weapon to transfer value from the toilers to the capitalists and their brethren.

All the efforts of the bourgeoisie to overcome the crisis are meeting with failure. They are leading to more dependence on imperialism.

The various economic measures taken by the Government are only intended to ease directly or indirectly the burdens and difficulties of the capitalist class which passes on the burdens of the crisis to the toilers.

Under stress of the crisis, private sector capitalists are being given more and more freedom, delicensing is introduced, planning is being reduced to announcing of general targets and the role of the state sector is being reduced. Simultaneously greater and greater pressure is being exercised to give more facilities to private foreign capital, to relaxation of controls over collaboration agreements.

Under stress of the crisis there is strong pressure to yield to the demands of the imperialists and strike an anti-national deal. But the crisis at the same time sharpens the conflict of sections of the bourgeoisie with imperialism which threatens to take a large part of the loot from the exploitation of the people by intruding into the domestic market.

Thus in the background of basic causes, the immediate reasons for the present economic crisis can be seen in the following :

1. The Indian economy is tied to the world-capitalist market and is therefore subject to the crisis of that economy;
2. India as a weaker trading partner of the big capitalist countries continually loses through unequal trade terms;
3. The policy of the imperialists to shift the burdens of their crisis on to the under developed countries intensifies the crisis in India;
4. The extortionate price of foreign loans and investment have saddled the economy with an unbearable burden of repayments imposing starvation wages, limiting the home market and accentuating the crisis. These loans and the terms under which they are secured obstruct the Indian capitalists from capturing the home-market (import substitution) and force them to share it with the foreign capitalists;
5. The failure to liquidate feudal land relations which hampers agricultural production, produces scarcity and imposes high food costs, limiting the market for industrial goods; and the crisis of small production which shows its inefficiency and vulnerability with the least adverse change in the season;
6. The growing concentration of the means of production in the hands of a few who levy high prices on society;

7. Official policy of inflation which is a method of forcibly transferring value from the labouring masses to the capitalists;

8. The Government's price policy in favour of big capitalists and the tremendous waste due to inefficiency in running the public sector because of which the public sector contributes very little to capital formation from the huge investment.

This is sharpening the contradiction between the bourgeois-landlord regime and the Indian people and leads to the upsurge in fighting against the present policies of the Government.

The present economic crisis, its nature and character can be correctly appreciated only when it is realised that it is developing in the background of the third stage of the general crisis of world capitalism, that it is centred round the chronic agrarian crisis of our country, and that it is also a part of the world capitalist cyclic crisis that is on at the present stage. There is no wonder that such an economic crisis is somewhat prolonged. It has projected itself into a political crisis, following the fourth general elections which seriously shook the stability of the ruling bourgeois-landlord classes.

III. THE DEVELOPING POLITICAL CRISIS AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The economic crisis and the efforts of the Congress Government to shift the burdens of the crisis on to the shoulders of the people had generated deep discontent among different classes of the affected people. The country witnessed a wave of mass struggles on a series of issues affecting the life of the people. These widespread mass economic struggles, which swept the country over a period of a year and more, prior to the fourth general elections, had seriously undermined the political prestige of the Congress among the masses. The fourth general elections provided the people with an opportunity to give clear political expression to their growing

discontent, and they pronounced their verdict against Congress misrule.'

This political consciousness, though, was elementary and in the orbit of a purely constitutional form, but, all the same, it was clearly political in character and content. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) stood in the van in giving conscious expression to the growing mass discontent, and the political line it pursued with vigour to isolate the Congress party and build an anti-Congress democratic front of parties and groups played no small role in bringing about the necessary political climate for the defeat of the Congress party. Because of the weakness of our Party and the democratic movement and the elementary stage of the political consciousness of the people, reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh, Swatantra, etc., gained in certain states.

The devastating defeats suffered by the ruling Congress party in the general elections, its loss of control over seven to eight state Governments, covering half the country's population, and the drastic reduction of its former big majority in the Lok Sabha forced the political crisis into the forefront. A new stage was ushered in the Indian political scene, a stage of intensified class struggle between the bourgeois-landlord classes and its premier political party, the Indian National Congress, on the one hand, and the anti-Congress democratic forces in the country on the other.

The political crisis manifests, *firstly*, in the growing anti-Congress discontent of the masses, the fast-losing political hold of the Congress party over the people, the political and organisational disintegration and decay of this premier political party of the bourgeois-landlord classes.

Secondly, the problem of nationalities has become extremely aggravated. The loss of the Congress party's control over several state Governments has brought to the surface the Centre-State conflicts and contradictions, exposing the unitary character of the Constitution, tearing away the mask of federalism and the sham content of states' autonomy. In short, Centre-States relations have entered a phase of serious

crisis, and the problem of nationalities has been accentuated.

Thirdly, the politically weakened and economically crisis-ridden ruling classes, finding it extremely difficult to adhere to the rules of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, started attacking the democratic rights and liberties of the people provided under the present Constitution. The facade of democracy is being torn to pieces and the face of the ferocious class dictatorship of the capitalists and landlords is revealing itself more and more strikingly.

Fourthly, the mass of the people, unable to put up with the oppressive effects of the economic crisis on them and awakening politically to the dangers posed by the bourgeois-landlord rule, are increasingly drawn into political battles, and every serious mass struggle on economic demands is rapidly acquiring a political character.

Disintegration of the Congress and Crisis of the Ruling Class Parties

The process of Congress disintegration, despite all its hectic efforts to regain its lost positions and reconsolidate itself during the last eighteen months, continues. It has miserably failed in its endeavours to arrest it. The reasons for this disintegration and decay are deeper and more fundamental, and it is a clear reflection of the deep crisis of their class policies. Both the internal and external policies that the bourgeois-landlord classes embarked upon, have landed them in the present crisis, neither allowing them to pursue the same any longer nor providing any scope to alter them because of the narrow class limitations imposed on them.

The Congress Government dares not touch the imperialist capital, is not interested in curbing the Indian monopoly capital, and is mortally afraid of any radical agrarian reforms. On the other hand, serious pressures develop from the U.S. imperialists and concessions are made. It is natural that such a political party or parties have to survive drawing on their past and depending mainly upon the repressive state machinery

in their hands while coming into head-on clash with the broad masses of the people. This is exactly what is taking place, and it is beyond their capacity to reverse this process, and this process leads only to further disintegration and decay.

On the issue of foreign policy which, of course, is the projection of internal class policy, the ruling Congress party finds itself in the same dilemma. In face of the sharpening antagonism between the two world camps and in the conditions of intensifying class contradictions at home, the policy of non-alignment is under severe trial and test. With the increasing and heavy dependence on imperialist 'aid', and with continued hostility to the People's Republic of China, its non-alignment is seriously undermined, its manoeuvrability and bargaining capacity between the two camps is heavily curtailed. Instead of the 'happy' conditions in which the Indian big bourgeoisie could utilise all the world contradictions to its class advantage, bitter contradictions developed with socialist People's China and the imperialists have not been a whit late in utilising this contradiction to their advantage. With this big shift away from the policy of non-alignment it is coming under serious pressure by the imperialists abroad and anti-communist reaction at home, who are demanding further concessions in their favour. Dictated by its own class needs, and still left with room to manoeuvre, its play between the two camps continues, despite the fact that the foreign policy of non-alignment as it stands today is very much emasculated and is in a state of crisis.

Thus the Congress party, with its internal and external policies in crisis, with its ever-diminishing political hold over the masses, and with its increasing attacks on the lives and liberties of the people, is disintegrating both politically and organisationally. There is not a single state where one faction or another has not rebelled and set up its own sign-board. The existing party in every state and Union territory is a house factionally divided against itself, with two or more warring camps in each under the leadership of several opportunist office-hunting leaders. Corruption, nepotism and

political horse-trading have become rampant. Its decadence and disintegration have gone so far that nobody can redeem it anymore.

The hectic efforts it has made and the abuses of central authority that it has resorted to for regaining its lost image and consolidation, following the defeats in the fourth general elections, have not paid any dividends and the process of disintegration and decay continues.

While the Congress party, the premier bourgeois-landlord political party, is faced with this disruption, several other parties and groups with the same class origin and policies who pretend to be a little to the right or left of the Congress, are faring no better and the crisis in these parties, too, is not concealed.

Centre-State Conflicts

The Centre-State conflict and the consequent crisis that has been reflected in the functioning of the federal structure of the Indian Union following the loss of Congress control over several state Governments has been further intensified. The Programme of our Party had correctly stated that behind this conflict lay the deeper contradiction between the big bourgeoisie and the people including the bourgeoisie of the constituent states. This deeper contradiction gets constantly accentuated by the economic crisis and the unevenness of development of different regions.

These conflicts and contradictions between the Centre and States today no longer remain confined to and manifest themselves in the dispute over the official language issue and the questions of equitable distribution of central resources, regional imbalances in industrial and agricultural development and so on. Not only have these issues become additionally emphasised, but still more basic questions, questions of the very nature and character of states' autonomy and the democratic rights of different nationalities, have been thrust to the forefront.

The high-handed manner in which several non-Congress

Governments were dismissed and Governor's rule was imposed, the crude and blatant manner in which central grain supplies to deficit states like Kerala and West Bengal were utilised for the partisan political interests of the ruling Congress party, the gross interference of the Centre even in the smallest issues connected with the states, the judicial directives to the states' police that it need not be guided by the elected state Governments as to where, when and in what measure the repressive police machine should be deployed, the constitutional deadlock created in West Bengal and Punjab over the Speakers' rulings, the conflicting judgments by High Courts and the Supreme Court over the interpretation of Speakers' rights which have been written into the constitution, etc.—have demonstrated the utter hollowness of states' autonomy and the rights of elected representatives under the rule of the Congress party.

The most glaring and striking example of this is the deliberate discrimination against the Kerala non-Congress U.F. Government by cutting its rice supplies to half and withdrawing the food subsidy the state has been receiving over years. The latest central directive to the Kerala Government in the matter of dealing with the central government employees' one-day protest strike, when the state Government was told that it had no independent discretion, no right to interpret and implement the central orders except obeying the Home Ministry's diktats as to who should or should not be arrested and detained, and the deployment of the Central Reserve Police even without the knowledge of the duly elected and functioning state Government are typical of the high-handed manner in which central powers are being abused.

The Congress leaders and Government have developed a scornful and contemptuous attitude to the vital question of nationalities in the Indian Union. They are vainly trying to satisfy themselves by brushing this question aside as an evil, dubbing it as 'linguism', 'parochialism' and 'regionalism'. It is because of this attitude that no democratic solution is found to the problems posed by Kashmir, Nagaland and Mizoland;

several questions of border nationalities remain deadlocked creating an explosive situation; full rights are denied to the legislatures in Manipur, Tripura, Himachal and other Union territories. Quite oblivious of the Indian realities they persist in their fanatic attempt to impose Hindi as the sole official language of the country. The economic and political crisis that is deepening is bound to aggravate this problem and will compel the Congress overlords to realise that they are sitting on the top of a volcano. In short, they are playing with fire when they frontally challenge the democratic and autonomous rights of nationalities and states in the Indian Union. Unless the revolutionary proletariat and other democratic forces unite and rise to fight and defeat this policy, it would immensely damage the unity of the country and the united revolutionary movement of our people.

Drive Against Democracy and for a Police State

Caught in the clutches of the economic-political crisis, and unwilling to and incapable of finding democratic solutions, the Congress Government is resorting to repressive methods.

For full five years between 1962 and 1967, they imposed the draconic DIR on the country, besides the obnoxious Preventive Detention Act already written into the Constitution and they have perpetuated the age-old Criminal Procedure Code that the hated British rulers introduced in the country. Not content with these, a so-called 'Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act' has been enacted with diabolical powers to suppress and outlaw any organisation they want and exclude it from the purview of the country's judiciary. Subsequently Parliament has enacted several anti-working class legislations such as the 'Banking Companies Act', 'Central Industrial Security Forces Act', 'Indian Railways Act' and the 'Essential Services Act'. Unending stories of police repression from different parts of the country have become a regular phenomenon, and lathi-charges, tear-gas shelling, and rifle firings on the people are daily occurrences.

Unable to meet the urgent and just demands of the struggling workers and government employees, afraid of the growing political isolation from the masses, and caught in the desperate economic and political crisis, the Congress Government is frequently resorting to rule by ordinances. Losing faith in the democratic rights and liberties they themselves have proclaimed under the Constitution, they are making deep inroads into the very system of parliamentary democracy about which they have been boasting. Popularly elected legislatures are dissolved with the stroke of a pen; Governor's rule is declared so that the Congress may rule from behind; no corrupt practice is taboo for them for buying legislators and organising defections from opposition parties.

With the growing loss of their hold over the masses, the ruling classes use every weapon to disrupt the unity and solidarity of the people and undermine the democratic rights of minorities, terrorise them and sap the foundations of democracy. In the last two or three years India has seen the most gruesome communal riots in which the Muslim minority was hunted down while the police of the Congress Governments silently watched the massacre of the innocents. These anti-Muslim riots constitute a direct attack on the solidarity of the working class and the democratic movement and reveal the political bankruptcy of the ruling classes. The main agency of the riots, the RSS, is openly patronised by some Congress leaders. Simultaneously, they encourage a number of chauvinistic organisations like the Shiva Sena, Lachit Sena, etc., to drive a wedge between people belonging to different nationalities, to break their class solidarity and disrupt the common struggle.

Some of these reactionary forces are aided by a number of United States agencies and foundations—first and foremost, the Central Intelligence Agency of the USA.

Mortal fear of the growing mass discontent and the defiant manner in which people are demonstrating their dislike of the bourgeois-landlord rule is driving the Congress leaders to desperation.

Some reactionary bourgeois politicians are asking what guarantee there is that Congress would be returned to power in the mid-term poll in West Bengal, U.P., Bihar and Punjab, and why the 'hated' elections with adult franchise should not be dispensed with. Thus the Congress party with people losing confidence in it, is fast losing confidence in parliamentary democracy, elections and the parliamentary system. The danger to democracy and the fundamental rights and liberties of the people is real and on the increase, and the drive towards a police state is on.

The reactionary classes and forces seek to exploit the very same crisis to disrupt the growing mass movement by diversionist slogans, chauvinism and jingoism, to disrupt and divide the democratic unity of parties and forces, to do away with democracy and perpetuate their exploiting class rule by a police-military dictatorship. Unless this is countered by vigilant, militant and united mass resistance, the crisis will not automatically end the hated class rule of the exploiters. The biggest weakness in the situation is the subjective factor, the level of consciousness and organisation of the working class and its party, and the absence of unity among the democratic parties. The economic-political crisis does not automatically mean that the masses are breaking away from the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political-ideological influence and coming under the influence of the revolutionary working class. It is through painstaking and sustained work that this gap can be, and shall be filled, and the objective conditions today greatly facilitate that process. Otherwise, it will be naive to think that the ruling classes have no way of their own out of any crisis.

IV. THE STRUGGLE TO BUILD THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT AND CONGRESS CONSPIRACIES TO DISRUPT IT

The essence of the political history of our country during the last eighteen months since the fourth general elections is nothing but a nationwide class struggle between the reac-

tionary forces, headed by the Congress party and the democratic forces among whom the Communist Party of India (Marxist) stands in the forefront. The former has been striving its utmost to resolve the economic-political crisis in its favour and against the people, while the latter has been engaged in advancing the democratic revolutionary movement in the background of the crisis of the ruling classes.

It is a history of Congress conspiracies and attacks against the anti-Congress democratic forces and the united fronts that they have forged and the UF state Governments they have set up, on the one hand, and the counter-attacks of the democratic forces on the ruling Congress party in defence of the political victories gained during the fourth general elections and for carrying them forward.

The Congress party, utilising the state power at the Centre in its hands, relying upon its class-reserves among the other right reactionary opposition parties, and also cleverly drawing on the political vacillations and anti-Communist prejudices of some democratic parties, is directing its main fire against the CPI(M) because of its decisive role in the U.F.s and the state Governments of West Bengal and Kerala.

The CPI(M) basing itself on the united democratic fronts, forged during and after the general elections, taking into account the growing anti-Congress discontent, and firmly adhering to its political line of isolating the ruling Congress has been mobilising the people to beat back the Congress attacks and defending the U.F.s and united struggles of the masses.

A careful examination of the balance-sheet of this political struggle, and a concrete appraisal of the role played by different political parties in it alone can guide the people in evolving the future line of action, both for defending their immediate day-to-day interests as well as for their struggle for a democratic and progressive future for our people.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), quite aware of the extreme limitations of the powers that the state Governments possess under the present Constitution and clearly

conscious of the level of the political consciousness of the people and the degree of their unity and organisation at the present stage, decided to participate in the United Front Governments of West Bengal and Kerala. This decision was guided by the prime consideration that these two UFs comprised essentially democratic parties and groups, that the CPI(M) was the decisive force in the UFs, and that these state Governments had to be utilised as instruments in the service of the people and in their struggle against the oppressive policies of the central Government so as to assist in raising the political consciousness of the people and the united struggles.

The Congress party and its central Government is dead opposed to this prospect, and launched its counter-offensive, concentrating first and foremost, on the UF Governments of West Bengal and Kerala. Exploiting the political and organizational weaknesses of certain parties and groups in the UF state Government in West Bengal, the central Congress Government made systematic attempts to reduce it to a docile instrument to merely carry out its orders, written and unwritten—all under the pretext of maintaining “law and order”. But the Communist Party of India (Marxist), opposed to allowing the UF state Government becoming such a pawn in the hands of the central Congress Government, started mobilizing as many allied parties and groups against such vile attempts and together with them, also, mobilised the people in their millions to fight back the machinations of the central Government.

The working class, taking advantage of the presence of the UF Government, launched a series of struggles to get some of their long-standing grievances redressed and secure their demands. This movement assumed primarily the form of ‘gheraos’. The peasantry in several pockets and districts was able to resist the eviction offensive of the landlords and also took possession of two-and-a-half-lakh acres of ‘surplus’ and wastelands from the illegal occupation of big landlords. Hundreds of state Government employees, victimised

during the last several years of Congress rule, were reinstated. The state Government employees could secure their civil liberties and rights to organise their trade union activities, denied by the Congress Government for years, and also win partial relief through increase of their emoluments. This, in the short time of a few months and with the limited resources at the disposal of the West Bengal UF state Government, and the state unit of the CPI(M) mobilising the people, a new mass enthusiasm among workers, peasants, middle classes, students and youth was unleashed.

The central Congress Government, panicky at this process of mass awakening, resorted to every foul means at its disposal and dismissed the UF Government. By purchasing some of the traitorous elements from the Bangla Congress and inveigling its leader, Ajoy Mukherjee, in its machinations the Congress came very near to success in disrupting the United Front and installing its puppet regime. But the CPI(M) took the timely initiative to mobilise the people and other democratic parties to fight back the Congress machinations. Thanks to the vigilance and response of the people of Bengal, the Congress game of UF disruption was foiled and the United Front was defended. Not only could the UF be defended, but through a big and powerful mass resistance movement under its aegis, the puppet P. C. Ghosh Ministry was overthrown, and mid-term poll was forced on the unwilling leaders of the central Congress Government. The Congress party which took some comfort when it was faced with two parallel democratic anti-Congress fronts during the fourth general elections, is now confronted by a single united front of democratic opposition in West Bengal, enjoying the widest support and sympathy of the people.

The Kerala UF and its state Government are another important target of Congress attack. Here, the utter rout the Congress party as well as the dissident Kerala Congress suffered in the fourth general elections did not provide that manoeuvring room for the Congress for its toppling operation, and it is resorting to other methods. The chief method

the central Congress is pursuing there is to starve the state through reducing rice supplies to half of its commitment, and then try to discredit the UF Government, and in particular the CPI(M) which happens to be the single biggest force both among the people and in the state legislature, for the failure to provide minimum food rations to the people. The central Government takes neither the responsibility of grain supplies to the state, nor permits it to go for its purchase wherever supplies are available. Over and above this, it stopped the long-established system of central subsidy to that state which is deficit in food to the extent of fifty per cent of its minimum requirements. And then it put the local Congress party and other agencies in the field to constantly malign and attack the UF Government, with special concentration on the CPI(M) and the Chief Minister and the Food Minister who are its nominees in the UF Cabinet, for starving the people and raising the prices of rationed foodgrains—a thing which the Congress party itself has forced on the state Government and the people.

This offensive of the Congress against Kerala was for some time assisted and abetted by the opportunist policies of the Right Communists and also by the political vacillations and compromising policies of certain constituents of the UF. A stage had been reached when the talk of setting up a so-called non-Congress, non-CPI(M) Government was in the air, and the Congress party was becoming jubilant over this development. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) had awakened to this conspiracy, though a little late, and started independently mobilising the people against the central Government policies of discrimination against the Kerala Government and undermining its political image. It exposed the opportunist moves of the Right Communists and fought the vacillations of other parties, thus defeating the Congress game.

Besides a number of relief measures the UF Government of Kerala has provided despite the severe limitations imposed upon it, the Agrarian Reform bill, the Debt Relief bill on the

anvil, and above all, the bold and democratic stand it has taken on the issue of central Government employees' strike, have helped the good image of the UF and its Government to grow and the danger of disruption of the UF has been warded off. The unity of the Front has been saved and the Congress and its allies have been politically isolated.

Though this cannot be taken as the first or last game of the Congress party in Kerala, and things as they stand today do not permit any complacency on our part and one cannot take for granted the unity of the parties in the present UF, it will not be an exaggeration to state that it is not so easy for the Congress party to succeed in its conspiracies to undermine the UF and topple the UF Government, nor will it be smooth sailing for any political party or group in the UF to disregard the popular mood and to opportunistically play into the hands of the Congress party. Such are the alignment of class and political forces in the state of Kerala, and our Party will have to confidently base itself on them, in its struggle for further advance and progress.

Such is the balance-sheet of struggle between the Congress and the democratic forces as far as West Bengal and Kerala are concerned, and some of the striking lessons for the democratic parties and groups in the country. It is the people, their political awareness, their mobilisation and united action, that can successfully defeat the Congress conspiracies.

The Anti-Congress Fronts in Some Other States and Their Present Condition

The Congress conspiracies against the Fronts and their non-Congress state Governments in Bihar, U.P. and the Punjab, the manner in which these conspiracies were fought back by different fronts and parties, and the balance-sheet of these struggles, present a totally different picture.

The first thing that should be noted is that the non-Congress fronts in these states were blown to pieces under the attacks and undermining activities of the Congress party and when these front Governments were toppled one after

another, there was no mass protest as in West Bengal. The opportunist manner in which most of these parties and groups behaved while in office in spite of certain relief given to the people as in the case of Punjab, came very handy for the Congress party to discredit the concept of the alliances and fronts of political parties, and pose falsely before the people that its one-party Congress rule was more stable and competent than this 'hotch-potch' alliance. Thus the growing anti-Congress democratic sentiments and moods of the people, when sought to be led by parties and groups which are in no way fundamentally different, ideologically and politically, from the bourgeois-landlord Congress party, are getting distorted and the mass political enthusiasm for the removal of the hated Congress Government is getting dissipated. The alternative present before the people of these states is to choose one set of opportunist combination under the sign-board of the Congress party or another set of combination called the "non-Congress fronts", neither of them really democratic nor loyal to the common people and their democratic aspirations.

The second important point that emerges from the experience of these fronts and their state Governments is their signal failure to draw the masses into political activity, their failure to harness the growing anti-Congress mass discontent for the democratic movement, and the contempt and ridicule they evoked in the masses by unseemly and disgusting floor crossings in which several amongst these parties indulged with no other aim than to get into ministerial offices. The marked difference with West Bengal is easily seen where our Party together with other allied parties took the people into confidence, exposed before the people every treachery from whichever quarter it came, mobilised them in millions on a series of occasions against the Congress conspiracies, and foiled by mass struggle and action the game of the Congress to perpetuate the puppet regime of P.C. Ghosh. This is conspicuously absent with these fronts and Governments. The utter incapacity demonstrated in Punjab

by the main political parties of the front to fight back with mass mobilisation when the puppet Gill Ministry was installed and it functioned for more than six months, the manner in which the front Ministry in Bihar was allowed to be toppled, the Paswan Ministry was installed, and the opportunist rallying of parties again around it without bringing the masses into the field for effective mass intervention, speak eloquently for the fiasco of these parties and fronts in this crucial regard. The whole drama was enacted by parties and their leaders behind the scenes and not before the people and on the open political stage, with issues sharply posed before the people. The contemptuous bourgeois concept of these parties that people are to be called into action when their votes are to be cast, and after that, political parties and their leaders are free for their opportunist political games, unconcerned with the people, has played havoc with the democratic movement, its progress and consolidation in these states.

However, a cursory examination of the mass ferment and struggles in all these three states would reveal that the anti-Congress discontent of the people is steadily growing, and the Congress is unable to reverse this process, in spite of its disruption of the anti-Congress fronts and the toppling of these non-Congress state Governments. Its experiment of setting up puppet regimes has not succeeded nor is it able to escape the political ordeal of seeking the verdict of the electorate once again, within twelve to fourteen months after the general election.

To conclude, the two different types of united fronts and non-Congress Governments in states, demonstrate two totally different political results, during the last eighteen months, the fronts preponderantly democratic are able to withstand the Congress attacks and progress, while the fronts with reactionary parties dominating and democratic parties allying with them opportunistically, are disintegrating and playing a diversionary role.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), therefore, urges all the democratic parties of our country to seriously note

the alternative our people are faced with: either the democratic parties, groups and individuals forge a really united, powerful democratic front, or allow the essentially reactionary opposition parties to play their opportunist game with anti-Congress fronts and in the bargain disrupt the democratic anti-Congress upsurge and enable the bourgeois-landlord classes to continue their rule, condemning the masses to untold sufferings and poverty.

The DMK Government of Tamil Nadu

The DMK Government stands on a different footing from other non-Congress Governments in the country and the attitude that the central Congress Government adopts towards it also is different.

The DMK is a bourgeois-democratic party in the state of Tamil Nadu and the Government it has set up is a one-party Government, though electoral alliance and unity were forged by it during the elections and they continue even at present. The political conflicts and contradictions between the Congress and the DMK continue, and the state Congress efforts to attack and isolate the DMK from the people have not met with any success so far, as shown by the by-elections in which the Congress constantly is losing in some degree or the other. The central Congress Government is trying to coax the DMK into softening its opposition and the DMK leadership is trying tight-rope walking, responding to the wooing of the central Government on the one hand and frontal conflict with the state Congress party on the other. As the crisis is deepening and mass struggles of the workers, peasants and other middle classes are bursting out, the DMK Government is also tending to use the state's repressive machinery, though till now its main weapon to meet them remains the using of its political influence, either to pacify or disorganise them. The independent democratic movement of the workers and peasants is registering advance in the measure the obtaining situation is dexterously utilised. But the prospect of the Congress regaining its lost ground in

Tamil Nadu is not bright and there is big scope to advance the democratic and united struggles of the people.

V. POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR ROLE

The political parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra which too were out to capitalise on the growing anti-Congress mood of the people, lost no time in plumbing for all sorts of alliances and fronts to form non-Congress state Governments, following the defeat of the Congress in several states at the polls. They did not hesitate to form fronts and state Governments which included the Right Communist Party, and even invited the CPI(M) to join them.

A few months' functioning of these fronts and Governments exposed the sham character of the anti-Congressism of these parties, and brought into the forefront their downright reactionary and counter-revolutionary character. Since national chauvinism, jingoism, dominant Hindu communalism and anti-communism are the sheet anchor of these parties and their programmes, they miserably failed to keep up their anti-Congress, democratic pretences. With anti-Pakistan and anti-China policies as the bed-rock of their foreign policy, and with avowedly pro-feudal, pro-imperialist and pro-monopolist orientation in their internal policy, they found themselves in irreconcilable conflicts with the democratic urges and demands of the people, and also with the democratic parties and groups in those fronts and state Governments. By abusing the prestige of their presence in these Governments, the Jana Sangh fanned the flames of communalism and was responsible for organising a number of communal riots against the minorities.

The Swatantra, Jana Sangh and other akin-minded groups in these non-Congress state Governments are mainly responsible for the disruption of these anti-Congress fronts and in fact these parties played the role of reliable class reserves of the Congress party inside the anti-Congress opposition. Unless these parties are totally excluded from the anti-Congress democratic fronts, and the people are rescued from their

pernicious political influence, the danger of disruption of the democratic upsurge, and distortion and diversion of the economic political crisis for reactionary ends cannot be averted.

Some of the democratic opposition parties which, because of opportunist considerations and some erroneous political leanings, have been allying with these reactionary parties, should draw lessons from the experience of the last eighteen months and extricate themselves from these opportunist alliances and fronts.

The PSP takes a rabidly anti-Communist stand, refuses to participate in united actions with the CPI(M) on mass issues and rejects united fronts with our Party. In West Bengal, at first it came to electoral agreements with the United Front for adjustment of seats but later rejected the agreement. The SSP is prepared to have united fronts and electoral agreements with our Party and joins united actions with the CPI(M) on mass issues.

The democratic political parties like the PSP and SSP, notwithstanding some vital political and tactical differences between the two, are the principal political parties in the fronts and Governments with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party. It is disturbing to find these parties pursuing the same even after the bitter experience of the last eighteen months, and the harmful effects these alliances had on the democratic movement of the concerned states.

This policy of the PSP and SSP of alliances with the anti-Congress reactionary parties cannot be treated as fortuitous. The attitude of the PSP and SSP leaderships to India Government's disputes with the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and People's China, and their deep anti-Communist prejudices bring them very close to the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, in matters of foreign policy. It is therefore not surprising to find the PSP and SSP leaders busily engaging themselves in organising movements such as those over the Kutch settlement, the anti-Soviet demonstrations before the Soviet embassy over the issues of Soviet arms aid to Pakistan and the Czech crisis, and a countrywide campaign against the

CPI(M) and its state unit in the West Bengal UF Government—all at a stage when the central Congress Government was actively engaged in disrupting the UFs and toppling the non-Congress democratic state Governments, one by one.

The programmes of PSP and SSP with democratic socialist demands and aims on the economic front stand in total conflict with their political and ideological convictions. It is quite understandable that such self-conflicting and contradictory programmes and policies are pulling them in two diametrically opposite directions and breeding crisis in these parties. The proceedings of the meets of these two parties, one in Bombay and the other in Allahabad, reveal the nature of the crisis and convulsions to which they are subjected today. As the economic and political crisis deepens in the country, these policies of the PSP and SSP are bound to face still graver tests and trials.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) which is vitally interested in building the united front of different democratic parties and groups including the SSP, PSP and others, cannot but take this development into serious account. Prompted by the desire to consolidate the existing UF with them in states where it has materialised, and eager to extend it to other states and areas, it will have to offer its fraternal and constructive criticism of policies of these democratic parties and groups. It is incumbent on its part to sharply point out to other democratic parties and their following, the dangers posed to democratic unity and struggles of the people by the opportunist alliances with reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra, on the plea that they are anti-Congress. The experiences in UP, Bihar, Punjab, etc., clearly demonstrate how these alliances with reactionary parties and groups have not helped in building real democratic unity against the ruling Congress party, but, on the contrary, disrupt such unity and objectively facilitate the strengthening of the Congress and other reactionary forces.

The Right Communist Party with its class collaborationist and revisionist theories and actions, had contributed its worst

to disrupt and disorganise the anti-Congress unity of the democratic parties and groups in the country. It was after a bitter and prolonged struggle and a head-on clash with the Right Communists that their thesis of rallying behind the Congress party and Government and building a united front with the Congress party was defeated. They now profess to fight the Congress and advocate the building of a united front of political parties against the Congress. But, here again, typical of their opportunist character, they have fallen for any and every front and alliance with avowed reactionary parties such as the Jana Sangh and Swatantra; they had joined them in forming and functioning the non-Congress state Governments of Bihar, UP, and Punjab and, even today, after the sad experience of eighteen months and the disastrous role played by the Jana Sangh in organizing communal riots, the Right Communists shamelessly hobnob with them.

The attitude of the Right Communists to democratic parties like the PSP and SSP which fervently advocate and forge alliances with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra is also opportunistic. They have not a word of criticism of the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist positions of the PSP and SSP leaders, and they, in fact, compete with them in anti-Pakistan and anti-China tirades, which only add grist to the mill of reaction and counter-revolution in our country. They feel flattered and not ashamed, when PSP and SSP leaders pat them on their backs saying they are national Communists and they prefer their company to that of the CPI(M), though in reality it is their actual preference to the Jana Sangh and Swatantra that is strikingly demonstrated.

The Right Communists, of late, have been indulging in the glib talk of "Left unity", as distinct from democratic unity against the Congress, and it is anybody's guess as to what they actually want. While vociferous in raising the slogans of Left unity, united fronts, united action, in practice, they are resorting to the disruption of TUs, splitting of AIKS and undermining activities in the AITUC and to underhand deals with some parties and groups in the United

Fronts of Kerala and West Bengal. Thus, the revisionist party and its right opportunist policies constitute a constant menace to the building up of united mass activity and a democratic united front against the ruling Congress regime. Since these right revisionist policies and activities are being conducted under the signboard of a "Communist Party" and under the banner of "Marxism", the Communist Party of India (Marxist) will have to be constantly vigilant and carry on a principled fight exposing their ideological political bankruptcy and opportunist disruption of the unity of the revolutionary working class. The correct slogans of advocating unity of action and united front with the revisionist party against the bourgeois-landlord Congress party and its Government should not blind the CPI(M) to the reality that the revisionist party constitutes a major disruptive force undermining the communist movement in India.

Equally harmful are the political and ideological policies that have come to be advocated by the ultra-Left groups that have recently defected from the Communist Party of India (Marxist). These groups in different states, assuming an ultra-revolutionary and pseudo-Left posture, and claiming originality in applying Marxism to the present New Epoch, are actually out to revise Marxism from a Left and adventurist direction. They oppose unity of action with democratic parties and groups on the holy plea that these parties are either revisionist or reactionary; they are hostile to the concept of united fronts with all the anti-Congress democratic parties and groups since according to them, all these parties are essentially reactionary; they advocate the boycott of all elections as they are conducted under bourgeois hegemony; they glorify the role of the peasantry and peasant partisan war and denigrate the revolutionary role of the working class; and they advocate adventurist slogans of action and forms of struggle completely unmindful of the level of people's political consciousness and their state of organisation and thus disrupt and disorganise the incipient revolutionary movements of workers, peasants and militant youth and student

sections. Hence, these groups represent dangerous 'Left adventurist' policies and theories, which need to be ruthlessly combated and defeated.

Such a correct and concrete assessment of different political parties and their policies is necessary for the proper conduct and success of the struggle to build united fronts, united class and mass organisations, and to lead united actions.

VI. THE RISING WAVE OF MASS STRUGGLES AND THE TASKS BEFORE OUR PARTY

The deepening economic crisis and the increasing offensive of the bourgeois-landlord classes to shift the burdens of the crisis on to the shoulders of the common people, is inviting resistance and leading to countrywide mass struggles. This process which was set in motion long before the fourth general elections received an additional impetus following the results of the elections and the defeats inflicted on the ruling Congress party.

The formation of the two Left-oriented United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal provided additional opportunities to the people to carry on their struggle.

The two United Front Governments took a number of measures to give relief to the people. Under their example, and impelled by the growing mass discontent, non-Congress Governments in a number of states also took steps to meet some of the urgent demands of the people. The non-Congress Government of Punjab, for instance, had conceded the state Government employees' demands within a couple of months after it took office. Some others, too, had to partially concede their demands.

But the acute food shortages, rising prices, crisis in several branches of industries like cotton textiles, engineering, etc., resulting in lay-offs, retrenchment, unemployment, and attack on their wages, and the growing unemployment among the educated, let alone the chronic unemployment the country suffers from, made it inevitable that the mass struggles continue to grow much faster in the post-election period.

A series of workers' gheraos and strike-struggles in West Bengal and in several other states to redress their long-standing grievances, the unprecedented wave of demonstrations and strikes organised by middle class employees like teachers, employees in government and semi-government institutions, various forms of militant direct actions into which the students and urban youth were drawn on a number of issues, and the widespread struggles of the agricultural labourers and other toiling peasantry in several states—all these mark a distinguishing feature of the last one and a half years. Several month-long strikes involving thousands of workers in a number of engineering units and concerns of West Bengal, repeated strike struggles of the Coimbatore textile workers, a series of strikes and other actions of the working class of Kerala, a fortnight-long strike of the firemen on the Southern Railway and South Central Railway, the two-months-long strike of the newspaper employees, the September 19 token strike of the central Government employees, etc., are some of the big actions in the of these struggles. It is thus once again assuming the sweep and tempo which marked the pre-election period, and is also forcing most of the opposition parties, irrespective of their Right or Left political colours, either to take an openly sympathetic and supporting attitude or to remain neutral in spite of their basic anti-working class leanings.

The big agricultural labour and poor peasant struggles of Andhra Pradesh and Tanjore district, the landless peasant struggle for the occupation of forest outskirts lands in Champaran district, the widespread and prolonged struggle of the tribal peasantry of Tripura against evictions and usurpation of the land by Government-inspired 'refugees', the 'surplus land' occupation and cultivation movement led by the Bengal Kisan Sabha, the struggles to get permanent pattas on thousands of acres of land in various districts in Andhra Pradesh, the stopping of smuggling of rice and its distribution to the needy, resistance to armed landlords' goondas and their oppression in Andhra Pradesh, and several land struggles

of the tribal peoples in different states and regions constitute some of the outstanding events of the peasant front.

The continuous countrywide wave of student struggles on a number of issues and the ferment in the youth, particularly the educated unemployed, have to be organised and led so as to prevent reactionary and chauvinistic forces from exploiting them.

The marked feature of these working class and peasant struggles is the tenacity with which they are being fought, sometimes strikes lasting for months, and the growing unity among their different sections, owing political loyalty to different political parties. The second feature is that they are often spontaneous and purely economic in character, the participants unable to appreciate the political background in which these struggles are taking place. The third feature is that the Congress Government and the ruling classes, unlike in the past period, are unwilling to give any concessions and are out to disrupt and suppress them ruthlessly. Thus, the mass struggles are becoming widespread, embracing different classes and sections of people, but the degree of political consciousness and the state of the unity and mass organisations of the people are at a deplorably low level.

While this shows the strength of the mass movement, whose growth and development cannot be prevented by the ruling classes, it contains within itself the basic elements of its weakness. The economic protests are not developed into a conscious movement which will transform the electoral defeat inflicted on the Congress party in the fourth general elections into a political defeat for the ruling classes, as a whole. In the absence of conscious political leadership, provided by the vanguard of the working class basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, the spontaneous discontent felt by the mass of the people cannot be directed towards a well-organised assault on the socio-economic and political policies of the ruling classes; the vaguely felt aspirations of the people cannot be transformed into a positive programme of transformation of society.

It is against this background that the CPI(M) should examine its work of building the united people's movement, united front of democratic parties and groups, the building of the united class and mass organisations and the building of a strong party capable of successfully discharging these tasks. Experience shows that unless and until the CPI(M) works hard, mobilizes and organises the people independently, acquires an independent mass base, all its slogans of building unity and united fronts and its aspirations of leading the united assault on the bourgeois-landlord regime of the Congress party are in danger of remaining pious wishes and pompous declarations. Of course it goes without saying that the independent growth of the CPI(M) and its mass political influence is again dependent on how it works out its mass line of working for the unity of the working class and its alliance with the peasantry, for the united actions of the democratic classes and masses, and for the front of political parties and groups that represent the democratic classes and strata of our people.

It is, therefore, obvious that if the wave of mass struggles is to be consciously led and directed towards a political struggle against the regime, the CPI(M) will have to undertake the work of extensive and systematic ideological-political education of the entire people. Every issue around which any section of the people are fighting for any partial demand, every incident in the course of the struggle, every success or failure or compromise resulting from these struggles—all this is to be related to the character of the regime, to the policies pursued by the ruling classes and its various sections and strata and so on. The class character of the regime, the bankruptcy of the capitalist path pursued by the ruling classes, the hollowness of the "parliamentary democratic" claims and pretensions made by the ruling classes, the fiasco of everyone of the policies pursued by the ruling party and the basic alternatives placed before the people by the Party in its programme of People's Democracy—all this has to be prominently brought before the people in relation

to current policies around which partial struggles are fought and differences on tactics arise within the ruling circles. Such a concrete education of the entire people on the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism as applied to the concrete conditions of the economy and politics of our country is the only way in which the wave of mass struggles can be raised to the level of a conscious political movement of the working people led by the working class.

Here again, West Bengal provides a good example as to how when there is a strong Party with independent mass base, it can succeed in channelising the ferment caused by economic distress into a political battle. The electoral victories scored against the Congress and the work in the UF Government had in their turn unleashed several spontaneous mass economic struggles. But when the Congress Government dismissed the UF Government and set up its puppet Ghosh Ministry, a good part of this economic discontent of the masses could be directed into the direct political struggle to dismiss the Ghosh Ministry and force a mid-term poll on the resisting and unwilling ruling Congress party.

To sum up, the ruling classes are mounting attacks on the lives and liberties of the people with a view to passing on the burdens of the crisis to them, and the people's resistance and struggle are becoming widespread and intense.

The dependence on imperialism is growing, the U.S. imperialist pressure on Government's internal and external policies is on the increase, and the danger of neo-colonial domination and threat to national independence cannot be underestimated.

The long-established ruling political party, the National Congress, is fast disintegrating politically and organisationally, the ruling classes are found in utter disarray and disorganisation, while big opportunities for the rapid advance of the working class and the democratic forces are opened up.

The democratic parties are disunited, the level of political consciousness of the people is still in an elementary stage, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has yet to develop

enough strength to reach its revolutionary objectives. On the growth and development of the Party and on its success of building democratic unity and united front depends the further advance of the revolutionary movement in India, and also the lasting solution of the economic-political crisis.

The developments of the last four years of struggle, since the Seventh Congress of the Party, make it abundantly clear that the Party's political line worked out on the basis of the Party Programme, is a sound and correct class line, that the ideological-political struggle conducted against revisionism and subsequently 'Left' adventurism in defence of Marxism-Leninism has scored victory and that drawing on these lessons and the confidence they inspire, the Party is called upon to take effective steps to fully translate its correct political line into action with tenacity, energy and zeal.

The struggle for building the democratic front against Congress misrule bears fruit only when it is conducted on a principled basis, discarding all opportunist alliances; the successes scored both in West Bengal and Kerala go to corroborate it. In contrast, the opportunist alliances that the revisionists and some other democratic parties have entered into in several states, and the manner in which they have been collapsing in face of the Congress offensive also prove the same.

There are serious weaknesses on the trade union and kisan fronts, and serious shortcomings in the Party organisational front. It is evident that a major turn in the situation is inconceivable until the weaknesses on these fronts are overcome.

At the present stage of development of the democratic movement and the alignment of class forces in the country, utmost stress is to be laid on independently and boldly giving leadership to the growing mass struggles while making every effort to preserve, strengthen and expand the democratic fronts in which the Party holds a responsible position.

However, both in the matter of independently leading the mass struggles and striving to build the united democratic front, the correct slogan of unity in action and its concrete

implementation will have to be sharply emphasized, since that alone paves the way for a really effective united mass action as well as the realisation of the united democratic front.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) calls for intense agitation and campaigns for united actions and struggles of the broadest sections of the Indian people in the coming period.

The main tasks and slogans around which such united actions and struggles should be conducted are the following :

1. A national food policy as enunciated by our Party providing for monopoly procurement of the surpluses of big landholders, state monopoly of wholesale trade in foodgrains, dehoarding and equitable distribution of foodgrains through people's committees. Such a policy alone will end the humiliating dependence on PL-480 food imports;

2. Stopping all evictions of peasants; breaking of land concentration; distribution free of cost to landless labourers and poor peasants of all cultivable wastelands and wasteland in government and private forests and of all surplus land of landlords and land in illegal possession of landlords by benami and mala fide transfers; adequate wages to agricultural labourers and debt relief to them and poor peasants; facilities to peasants to increase food production;

3. Full employment, no retrenchment, no automation, need-based wage and full neutralisation of the cost of living for the working class and employees; central assistance to states to take over and run industrial units in crisis and give relief to unemployed workers; for full freedom of organisation of the trade union movement, right to strike, trade union recognition, withdrawal of all anti-strike legislation;

4. The demands of the central and state government employees, and repeal of the Essential Services Act and other anti-strike laws and of the law penalising the railway workers for strikes ;

5. End of police terror against the fighting people, expan-

sion of democratic rights and civil liberties and repeal of all repressive and anti-democratic laws;

6. Full guarantee of the democratic rights of the national and religious minorities, harijans and tribal people;

7. Demands of the students, democratic management of the universities with voice for the students, legal prohibition against the entry of police into educational institutions, complete overhauling of the education system, economic help to poor students, guarantee of employment; fair deal to teachers;

8. Firm measures against the ever-rising prices by taking steps to end deficit financing, and for ceiling on income and corporate profits;

9. Drastic reduction in the defence expenditure and in the heavy tax burdens of the people;

10. Widest autonomy for the states of the Indian Union. To begin with (a) 75 per cent share of all the centrally collected taxes to go to the states, (b) most of the subjects in the concurrent list of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution to be transferred to the states, and (c) all officials belonging to the all-India service like IAS, IPS, etc., to be completely under the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Governments of the states in which they serve;

11. A just and democratic solution of the problem of the border nationalities and the tribal people;

12. Nationalization of foreign monopoly capital; nationalization of banks and foreign trade and monopolist industries;

13. Moratorium on all foreign debts and service charges and on repatriation of foreign capital;

14. Fight against the growing U.S. penetration into our economy and social and cultural life; fight and defeat the U.S. neo-colonialist threat to our country;

15. To resist growing U.S. pressure on our country's foreign policy; demand that the Government give up its anti-China policy and take immediate steps for settlement with China; for strengthening friendly relations with all socialist countries; and for full support to Vietnam and all national liberation struggles;

16. For friendly relations and peaceful settlement of disputes with Pakistan;

17. For abolition of princely privy purses and privileges immediately.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), true to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, considers itself an integral part of the international communist movement, and firmly believes that the balance of class forces in the world has shifted in favour of the forces of national liberation, democracy and socialism, and against imperialism.

This opens great opportunities to the anti-imperialist, democratic and socialist forces for rapid advance, despite the difficulties and temporary setbacks in the unity of the world communist movement.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) calls on its members to unleash a powerful movement against imperialism, chiefly U.S. imperialism, the main enemy of all peoples, by mobilising all the anti-imperialist, democratic and socialist forces, in the country. Prime importance in this is to be given to the building of a powerful solidarity campaign in support of the heroic Vietnam liberation forces and in defence of socialist North Vietnam. Movements of solidarity have also to be organised with people fighting against imperialist aggression in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) pledges itself to the struggle for the principled unity and defence of the world socialist camp, for the principled unity of the world communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. The Party will seize every opportunity to encourage, support and realise unity of action against imperialism by all the socialist states, Communist Parties and other anti-imperialist, democratic and peace-loving forces.

To be capable of fulfilling all these urgent tasks successfully the Party will devote the greatest attention to strengthening itself, its political, ideological and organizational unity, defeating all attacks from both the right revisionists and Left adventurists.