

Sources of Incorrect Ideas in Revolutionary Politics

By Parimal Dasgupta

[In a May 1969 issue of *Deshabrati*¹ Sushital Roychoudhury (SRC) and Charu Majumdar (CM) respectively wrote 'Regarding Parimal Dasgupta' and 'Parimalbabu's² politics'. Parimal Dasgupta's article "Czechoslovakia after Hungary" was also printed in the same issue of *Deshabrati* but was signed as 'Satyaneshi' (seeker of truth). It was this article which was the focus of attack by SRC and CM. In reply to these two articles by SRC and CM, Mr. Dasgupta published an article in 1970 in 'Communist', a fortnightly magazine and was titled 'Regarding the politics of Sushitalbabu and Charubabu'. This article was reprinted in the July 1970 issue of the same magazine and with a new title given above.]

[1]

Deshabrati – 2nd year, 1st issue, 1 May, the much awaited "ghatanaprabaha", ("Current Events" – ed.) section was primarily focused on me. Two persons were the main writers – CM and SRC. They expressed their political opinion on my article on the situation in Czechoslovakia and some other issues. SRC's article is a mix of many, sometimes stray incidents with facts falsified. The politics of groupism has pulled SRC down to the level of peddling lies. It is sad but inevitable. Good thing about it is that now a large section of people can judge their politics. That is sufficient for me. Politics cannot move forward if your intention is to create a halo by hiding the truth; reality will strip it naked one day.

SRC has felt the need to unleash a campaign against me by quoting from earlier published articles of mine (including the ones I published under different pen names) as also from hitherto unpublished organisation related writings. We used to call Pramod Dasgupta "prosecution's witness" for having used the same tactics against us. SRC is now becoming a party to such tactics. SRC did not have the honesty to publish my articles and then comment on them; his politics would have become clearer if he had done so. SRC supposedly became gradually more cautious about my articles and essays. What were those articles? Why did he not share it with the Co-ordination Committee? My written views on the interim election which I had given to him for discussing with members of the co-ordination committee were not shared with them despite his promise that he would do so. Why?

Now I find him referring to that article. Why did he not express his views to me then and there? Who are the members of the co-ordination committee who think they have the right to classify others' writings and articles as 'secret'? Who gave them that right? This is the SRC group's groupism and divisive activities. In terms of analyzing articles/ essays, what I got to understand is that for SRC and his group, unless the word "naxalbari" is mentioned and unless you have reference to Mao Tse Tung, no writing is revolutionary. On such a yardstick one can only measure the amount of madness of the writer, but cannot judge an article.

In matters of campaign SRC's group believes in one dictum. First spread the lie; people would believe at least a part of it. If not anything, it would help create confusion. This is very clear from SRC's writing. He has presented his writing in a distorted manner based on lies. I was taken aback reading the last part of his article. It does not appear to me as an article; rather it is like a report presented by him at one of the co-ordination committee meetings, where as if I was present and he has put forth his views and suggestions about me referring to some of my articles etc. In this way he has created a dramatic moment. This is a set up and a complete lie. In the co-ordination committee meeting where I was present did he ever present any such view? In the last two meetings on the 8th and 25th of December, he spoke very little. Now I see the birth of a startling report. This is a political blackmail. Such activities are carried out by intelligence agencies who manufacture false evidences against political activists to entangle them in false cases. International secret service agencies also operate in this fashion. Where is SRC's group heading to? SRC's group is happy that even though not present, CM approved their views. This is even more startling. Comrades can now start analyzing CM. Another issue is that SRC has written that I, without informing anybody, omitted the word "Naxalbari" from the draft proposal on Trade Unions presented at the All India Co-ordination Committee meeting. I am saddened to think how he could utter such a lie without batting an eyelid. Groupism in politics can lead to anything. In the All India Co-ordination Committee meeting in May 1968 I had placed a draft proposal on trade union movement. The proposal was adopted with amendments. I read out the accepted proposal quite a number of times in the meeting. CM was present throughout the meeting and participated in the discussions. Next day in the State Co-ordination Committee meeting where CM was the main speaker, the amended draft proposal was again read out. Then I was given the responsibility to cyclostyle (produce multiple copies - ed.) the document. However, after a few days, a member of the state co-ordination, who was also its convener, took my handwritten proposal (amended) taking on the responsibility of cyclostyling it. After doing so he handed them over to SRC and also sent me a few copies. I also cyclo-styled some copies and sent them to SRC. But afterwards we found out that SRC's group was circulating

through the state co-ordination committee a document called "Turn your face against economism" – something written purely from the point of view of economism – as a document on Trade Unions. This was done with the intention to suppress the accepted proposal on Trade Union at the All India Co-ordination Committee meeting. Some members of the state co-ordination and myself strongly objected to the circulation of this document. SRC's group kept quiet but did not stop circulating the document. They used the organisation for this work. Long after, in the 25th December meeting, somebody close to SRC, with the objective of attacking me, suddenly announced that I had omitted the word "Naxalbari" from the All India Co-ordination Committees' proposal on trade union. Initially I was very surprised. But then I realized that for that particular person who was accusing me, such acts were very much a possibility. I challenged him with telling lies and reminded him of the drafting of the proposal, its amendment and then its cyclo-styling. SRC kept quiet; the convener of the state co-ordination did not utter a word. They did not place the proposal which I had written. After that there has been no discussion on this matter. Now I see that lie coming out through SRC's pen. Pen is an unconscious object; through its use the character of its conscious driver comes out in the open.

Why is SRC's group doing all this with the Trade Union proposal of the All India Co-ordination Committee? What is the real reason? Actually, SRC's group is hell bent on suppressing that proposal. Because that proposal accepted the role of Trade Union movement in the current political situation of the country and refuted the analysis that cities are the centres of white terror. SRC's group does not want to accept this analysis. They believe that cities are centres of white terror and do not believe in the role of working class movement. SRC's group is now circulating another document on the trade union movement. This document is also structured in a way which moves away from the accepted proposal of the All India Co-ordination Committee.

SRC has also written that they have differences with me on the role of party organisation in the working class movement. But have they really discussed my position or their position? I would have been very happy if they had expressed their position. In 1969 SRC had given me and a couple of others what he claimed to be a document written by him on the question of trade unions. That document was entirely based on Trotskyist thought. When we told him so, he took the document back and never again talked about it. Anyway I do not have any of his written position on this with me and so I will not discuss this any further. From CM's writings one gets to know his political understanding about working class movement. I presume SRC is not opposed to CM's views. I will discuss CM's thoughts later in this article. Actually a wrong understanding of the working class movement is creating

all the confusion and distortion in their minds. Thus they are coming out with inconsistent positions and trying to create an element of surprise.

SRC has further written that I did not inform them or contact or update them about the strike in the Electricity Board. You have to forget many things in order to present lies. So to remind SRC I quote excerpts from a letter I had written to him on 20 June 1968: "The strike in the Electricity Board is very important for us. I am heavily involved in this.... The government sources have been trying to get in touch with us to negotiate. Many officers want to talk to me. Further I cannot always be absent from Trade Union work – conventions, meetings etc... I need to consult you on this matter. It is not possible in this meeting because of my absence. Thus I propose to meet two or three of you to discuss and arrive at certain decisions. Please keep such an arrangement... everybody must be informed about extensive propaganda about the strike. This matter must be thought over with all seriousness...."

Further I hope SRC will also remember that I also talked to him and another member of the state co-ordination committee. I had discussed about my presence as the General Secretary of the Union along with other members of the Union in the discussion with the Governor (of West Bengal) on the strike. SRC had come back the next day to inform me about their approval for this meeting. Now it appears he has conveniently forgotten all this. Forgetting all this is but natural for him because he and his group did not do anything to make the strike successful. In fact they exhibited an attitude of not doing anything for the strike. SRC was the convener of the state co-ordination committee. Did he give any instruction to comrades of the co-ordination committee to work for the success of the strike? Why were posters supporting the strike not even put up? Did Calcutta co-ordination do anything to make this strike a success? The strike did not happen in secrecy. During the strike the union office was regularly open. Many responsible comrades worked openly. If comrades from Howrah co-ordination could work whole heartedly for the success of the strike (even though many of them had arrest warrants against them) what was the difficulty for SRC's group and Calcutta co-ordination or other co-ordination committees to work for the strike? How could three other members of the state co-ordination be left alone to work for the success of the strike? Were they not entitled to the support of the state co-ordination? Is it only SRC and two three others, who sat quietly, who constitute the state co-ordination committee?

My further question would be – is playing a role in mass movement to be equated with waiting for reports in a bureaucratic manner? Was our stand on a strike by government employees dependent on receiving reports? The Electricity Board strike went on for twenty five days. Where were SRC and

his people from Deshabrati during this time? Had they decided to shut their eyes till they received reports? Did they not understand anything from reports they received or news they got? Those who have commitment towards mass movements cannot silently sit out like this. The fact of the matter is SRC and his group, due to their negative stand on working class movement, were against supporting the electricity board strike – something they could not express openly. That is why they remained inactive and kept other comrades inactive. Their attitude started becoming clear from the time of the first proposed strike of the union i.e. from July of last year. At that time the strike had to be deferred due to many reasons. I had, at that time, written an article to make the working class aware of the dangers of making a trade union a slave to the diktats of a party and sent it to SRC for his consideration to be published in Deshabrati. They did not tell me anything upfront but gave lot of bogus excuses and ultimately did not publish it. That is why on 24 July 1968 I wrote to them: "The day after I had sent you the article or may be a day or two after that, if you had given me an opportunity to discuss the matter with you, things would have been easier. I had also written that you could make necessary changes. I wrote this article after I had discussions on this strike with electricity board union activists and with our comrades. I also talked with some senior and experience ed comrades associated with trade union movement. This article is not just about the strike of the electricity board. This is clearly about an ideological position. It is not correct that Deshabrati would use this strike to only criticize the United Front government. Deshabrati has to help play a role in raising the level of consciousness, awareness and understanding about the theory and practice of Trade Union. If that is not done then our proposal on Trade Union is meaningless. The problem is that differences have cropped up over our views and approach towards trade union movement. We have to learn from new experiences...." After this letter from me, SRC and his group kept quiet but also kept themselves aloof from the strike. This is the background to their not having "received" the report.

SRC has written that I have "in this way, during times of crisis and struggle, kept the workers of the electricity board, especially the communist revolutionary elements within them, disconnected from the co-ordination committee." During times of struggle and crisis, keeping himself dissociated from the electricity board workers and even after keeping himself inactive from their struggle, I now see SRC putting up a great act. The communist revolutionaries within the electricity board employees have through their experience understood SRC and his group. SRC's group did try to spread their anti-strike position amongst the electricity board workers; it's a different matter that it did not have much impact on the latter.

SRC has alleged that I have put together a counter co-ordination committee and have brought out counter documents and have begun groupism. The leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) used to accuse us (SRC included) this way. Now SRC has taken up that role. According to SRC they can take any decision on other comrades based on groupist tactics and such comrades will have no right to express their political beliefs. There is no need to discuss this wonderful theory of SRC.

SRC has said that I had tried to "establish control over Deshabrati to fulfil my political conspiracy." Pramod Dasgupta had made similar allegations against SRC regarding Deshitaishi [the CPI(M) state organ]. Now SRC is bringing such allegations against me. SRC has got wonderful training from the neo-revisionists. SRC has said that I wanted to control Deshabrati. I feel they consider Deshabrati to be their personal property. Deshabrati was to serve as the political organ of the co-ordination; thus if Deshabrati did not reflect our politics correctly, discussing it and calling for necessary corrective steps is the right of all co-ordination members.

SRC has even said that I had threatened to leave the co-ordination if my views are not accepted or my articles are not published in Deshabrati. From where did SRC gather this utter lie? Where in my letter have I mentioned such a thing? SRC has further written that he had called me for a meeting immediately after receiving my letter but I did not turn up. This is also a complete lie.

SRC has compared me with Liu Shao Chi who was anti-Mao Tse Tung. SRC's group might claim themselves to be the best disciples of Mao Tse Tung but they actually should have no reason to believe so. Trotskyites likewise also considered themselves to be the best disciples of Lenin. But that did not make them the best upholders of Leninism. Same applies to SRC and his group. Based on the Naxalbari peasant struggle a new political dimension was added to the Indian communist movement relating to Mao Tse Tung Thought – but this development also saw some people starting to believe that they or their group were the sole experts on Mao Tse Tung thought. This is amply clear from SRC's writing. According to him whatever he or his intimate group understood about China is the final word. And when CM praised their statements as very important service, nothing doing after that! Thus my commenting on their statements or writings was a reflection of my "arrogance and high self-esteem". I could not care less if I am criticized as anti-Mao for not accepting their arrogance and high self-esteem in claiming themselves to be the only specialists in understanding Mao Tse Tung Thought. Thoughtless distorted roars are not reflections of strong understanding. On reading SRC's article I felt that we had made him the convener of the co-ordination committee, but he probably felt that we had

made him the dictator. That is why he has repeatedly questioned as to who I was to call for a meeting, who am I to challenge what he says, on what basis did I write instead of coming to meet him or someone close to him, who am I to criticize Deshabrati etc. It would be pointless to discuss the nuances of Bolshevik organisation with one who has such thoughts. One who has such dictatorial and feudal mindset is very difficult to work within a Bolshevik organisation. My question to SRC's group – based on which tenet of Mao Tse Tung Thought or which article of his did they come up with their political point of view of supporting participation in elections? (And as far as I know, initially, CM had also asked comrades in North Bengal to participate in elections) How was my stand on election boycott opposed to Mao Tse Tung Thought?

SRC has written that as I could not attend two meetings they had assumed that I had distanced myself from the Co-ordination. But many who do not come to meetings of the co-ordination continue to be pillars of the co-ordination. It is a lie that I did not go to meetings. In 1968 January I could not attend one meeting as I was tied up with work related to the strike of the electricity board, but I had sent a letter to the co-ordination with my views on different matters and issues. Then a meeting was called in October 1968 which I could not attend due to some difficulties prevailing then but I had sent an address to SRC where I wanted the information regarding the meeting to be sent. But they did not inform me of the location of the meeting. A number of other comrades were also not informed about the location of the meeting. That is why we could not attend the meeting. Then a meeting was called in December 68. I got information and attended the meeting. This is about my attending and not attending meetings. To support the lie, CM wrote that because I was caught up in the strike of the Electricity Board I did not attend the State Co-ordination meetings for a long time. Even CM supported a lie with a lie.

SRC has talked about another incident. That is about my meeting with minister Shambhu Ghosh where a photograph of the two of us was published with a report that I held a discussion with him on the political situation in the state. And because I did not protest against this, SRC's group have issued a statement against me through Deshabrati. And based on investigations by an "outsider group" of the Co-ordination, they have supposedly published a report regarding my interactions within the Co-ordination. What protest am I supposed to make regarding the photograph published or the news? Only people who have no relation with mass organisations or mass movements can think like this. I am the General Secretary of the Electricity Board Workers Union and Mr. Shambhu Ghosh is the President of our Bandel Committee. Why should I protest against some picture which some journalist has taken while I was having a discussion with him about matters relating to

the Union? And if somebody has reported that there was a discussion regarding the political situation in the state how is one to protest against it? And political situation could mean so many things. What political astuteness would have been reflected if had poked the journalist about the publication of the photograph and the news? Only "revolutionaries" disconnected from the people would be disturbed by such things. These are reflections of revolutionary thoughts which circle within the four walls of a room.

SRC has written that my essay has opened their eyes. When closed eyes are opened after a long time they get dazzled – that is what has happened to them. And after opening their eyes what they have taken out of their basket and are peddling around is not Mao Tse Tung Thought but a statue of Che Guevara. Now I will discuss about the politics of CM and SRC.

[2]

They expect CM and SRC's political position as the political position of the Marxist Leninist Party. That is why they want their position to be given special attention. In their article about me the political position articulated by them primarily revolves around the following:

a) CM and SRC's political view on the developments in Czechoslovakia and the internal contradictions of revisionism as well as the contradiction of people with social imperialism and in this context their understanding of the strategy of the proletariat.

b) Their position on the 1951 document of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the 1964 document of the CPI (M).

c) CM's views on the strategy and revolutionary practice/ programme for organizing India's land struggle based on Mao Tse Tung thought.

Their, i.e. CM and SRC's entire political thinking can be found in their positions on these three key issues.

First let me mention that in an open letter to SRC published in the Communist – 1 May 1969 issue, I had written about the significance of "revolutionary struggle", "revolutionary insurrection" and also presented new facts about the situation in Czechoslovakia. SRC did not reply to this 'open letter'. The answers to most of the points raised by CM and SRC are to be found in this article.

CM and SRC have been complaining that I have not mentioned this or that, have not used this word or that. What is not there in my article is their

concern; what is there is not what they have bothered to comment on or express their views. Whatever words they want to be there needs to be there; it cannot be expressed in any other way. Expressing in a different way, according to them would be equivalent to revolutionary deviation. I doubt even if Mohammad bin Tughlaq³ thought like this. This is a way of thinking whereby what you have not mentioned is what you have done. Not a healthy way of thinking I must say. They complain that I have talked about Soviet "military invasion" not "military aggression" in Czechoslovakia. It would have been better if SRC had elaborated as to what would constitute an "aggressive military invasion". When I write that the Soviet Union, in order to expand and protect their market and power, is carrying out military invasion does it mean that the military intervention is to aid a liberation struggle? They also complain that I have not called the Soviet imperialists. I do not know what is their definition or understanding of imperialism. To create a market for its products and using military power to protect that market – is this not the core of imperialism? If I explain this role of the Soviet revisionists then what else do I need to explain? They specially complain that I still refer to Soviet Russia and the post war states in the Balkans as socialist. What I wrote was: "From the flow of events it may be said that in the states within the Warsaw Treaty such kind of opposition will surface in many forms and anti-Soviet feelings will be consolidated. The current conflict between Soviet Russia and Czechoslovakia is the present reflection of that trend. This has happened because of the laws of their economy. This is the contradiction of a socialist state run by revisionists and this is quite akin to the contradictions of a capitalist state." Is this not a correct analysis? Did CM realize the significance of what I meant by "quite akin to the contradictions of a capitalist state"? Instead of going into a detailed analysis of a socialist state, I will mention what the Albanian Communist Party has to say on the development in Czechoslovakia: "the revisionist aggression against the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, which was committed in the name of Warsaw treaty...."

Thus by referring to Czechoslovakia as a socialist republic the Albanian Communist Party has committed a grave deviation. It seems that names and external forms trouble CM and his group very much; fundamental and core issues seem unimportant to them. Their other allegation is that I have not talked about Soviet-US understanding but have only focused on their contradiction. In my article is there any mention or analysis that Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia has happened or is justified because of US-Soviet contradiction? What I have said in my article is that after the 20th Party Congress the Soviet leadership "has adopted a policy of creating an environment of co-operation with the US and use the other socialist countries as markets for their goods"; here co-operation with the US does not mean that the Soviet will not have any contradictions with the US or that

US will not devise any moves against the Soviets. It is but natural that such contradictions and moves against each other is part of their relation. Expressing support for the Soviet policy on Czechoslovakia is a well thought out diplomatic move of the US. CM and his group do not see the two aspects – co-operation and contradiction in the US-Soviet relationship; they only see the co-operation. But the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) has in its analysis of the current contradiction as they prevail in the world political situation accepted the contradiction between the imperialist and social-imperialist countries as one of the contradictions. Thus CM and his group's view on this is actually in opposition to the view of the CPC.

Since I mentioned about counter revolution in Czechoslovakia, CM and SRC have said that my views are close to what the CPI (M) thinks or actually supports their views. In this matter CM has discovered an innovative approach. He writes that where capitalism has been re-established under revisionist leadership, to locate counter-revolution there, is tantamount to supporting imperialist aggression. Has the re-establishment of capitalist relations of production or capitalism per se in Czechoslovakia under the revisionist leadership happened in August of 1968 or has been happening from some time earlier? This has happened over the last 7-8 years. In June 1968 the leadership of the Albanian Communist Party especially, Enver Hoxha wrote about strong counter-revolutionary activities in Czechoslovakia, so, as per CM's logic, he has in effect supported the imperialist aggression. Following CM's logic we have to arrive at such a conclusion. CM's political understanding is that those who are against Soviet aggression in Czechoslovakia are supporters of revolution and those who point out Czechoslovakia's reaction are supporters of imperialist aggression (and thus against revolution). The faction of Dange's party or those from the international revisionist parties who have opposed Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia can thus be part of CM and his group's setting up of a revolutionary united front – such an objective basis exists and the situation seems ripe. The Soviet revisionists and the CPI (M) leadership want to depict the reaction in Czechoslovakia as independent of the reactions of the current leadership of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party. This in effect supports the logic of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. What I had written was: "The situation related to the two thousand word appeal is actually the creation of the current leadership of the Czechoslovakian Communist party... But where lies the root of the situation and events in Czechoslovakia? It lies in the ideological shift in the Soviet party and the emergence of revisionist politics and in the actions and reactions around this process." Thus to defeat this reactionary force and bring about a new situation, revisionist leadership of both Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia have to be crushed. This was the basic call in my essay. But CM's call and strategy and tactics are different. I will come to that later.

The naming of my essay as "After Hungary, Czechoslovakia" has become the main focus of CM and SRC's attack. Their main political analysis is that by equating the objective conditions of Soviet intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, I have put forward a logic which in effect supports Soviet aggression. SRC has quoted the leaders of CPC extensively to prove his point. I am reminded of an article by Com Kamal Ghosh in "Communist" – 16 June 1969 issue "On Bourgeois Nationalism and CM", where he has correctly analysed that CM and his group do not actually look at the whole picture but arrive at conclusions by viewing few incidents – "they do not see the forest but base their views on seeing a few trees" he had written. The central focus of my article was that under the leadership of Khrushchev, revisionism, initially in the name of launching a war against Stalin, fomented counter revolution in Hungary and the trajectory of revisionist economic policies and its internal contradictions and Soviet revisionism's policy of securing its market – the actions and reactions of it – led to the situation in Czechoslovakia. That is why I wrote in my essay: "Czechoslovakia after Hungary is the historical resultant of some definite policies. This is the creation of revisionism amidst communism. This is the result of discarding the revolutionary essence of communism, denying the need and importance of a cultural revolution in socialist states, which allowed revisionism to make a strong re-entry in the post-Stalin era...." This is the significance of the title of my essay and an analysis of the results of revisionism. The overall trend of revisionism has to be seen in this political perspective and not on isolated incidents. This does not translate into support of the logic of Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. The current Soviet leadership is the creator of revisionism and its primary carrier. CM and his group cannot see revisionism in its overall perspective and have no understanding about the primary characteristics of revisionism. That is why CM and SRC, even when they were in the CPI (M)'s regional committees, could not oppose the then party leadership's joining the anti-Stalin chorus and thus effectively supported the anti-Stalin stand. In fact presently also CM believes that under Khrushchev's leadership the revisionists played a revolutionary role at least in Hungary. He has written "The Khrushchev leadership played its role in defending socialism in Hungary." Given the world political situation then, Soviet intervention in Hungary was justified. But this cannot be seen as a progressive role played by revisionists. The later history of Hungary proves this. CM and group had been and continue to be in the dark about the nature and characteristics of the Khrushchev led revisionism. That is why they have not been able to accept my analysis of the development of revisionism in my essay. They only believe in anti-Soviet politics. Their attack is against the entire Soviet Union. In his essay "India's People Democratic Revolution" published in Deshabrati issue dated 16 May 1968, CM has written: "To successfully complete the peoples' democratic revolution in this country one has to actively oppose the country of the Great October Revolution – Soviet

Union". He considers the people of the Soviet Union to be our enemy. This is the politics of naked nationalism. CM wants to fight revisionism based on nationalism. His views are opposed to the position of the CPC. In the report presented at the 9th Party Congress of the CPC, Com Lin Piao writes: "It is our firm belief that the great proletarian class of the Soviet Union steeped in the history of revolutionary traditions and the people at large will surely revolt and be able to uproot this clique consisting of a handful of betrayers...." CM and his group's fight against revisionism is based on nationalism and not on the principles of proletarian internationalism. That is why CM has advised the rich class and the working class of Czechoslovakia to counter the Soviet revisionist attack. This is their strategy to fight Soviet revisionism. This is the theory of nationalist revolution. CM has given a revolutionary stature to the revisionists of Czechoslovakia and has put in place a strategy of destroying a section of revisionists with the help of another section of revisionists. That is why he has not been able to give a call to the proletariat of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and other such countries to unitedly fight against all revisionists. This is the difference between my call and their call. It is not at all clear to CM and his group as to what should be the key objective of a proletarian revolutionary programme in states controlled by revisionist leadership. The basis of revisionist rule in these states is the loss of dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus for the sake of communism in such states it is necessary to organise another October Revolution for the reinstatement of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus the Albanian Communist Party in its statement on the situation in Czechoslovakia has given a call: "...For the Czechoslovak people the only way to regain their freedom is the road of struggle without compromise to the end against the foreign invaders, the Soviet-German, Polish-Hungarian and Bulgarian revisionists, and against US imperialism and German revanchism and against all the local revisionists and reactionaries. This struggle will be difficult and protracted, but it is the only correct and possible road for the salvation of Czechoslovakia for the defence of freedom and socialism..."

"The Party of Labour of Albania, the Government of the Peoples' Republic of Albania and the Albanian People have faith in and call on the genuine Soviet-Bolsheviks and the Soviet people to rise up in struggle against the revisionist clique which is oppressing them, to make another Great October Revolution, to bury once and for all the ill-famed 20th Congress and its tragic consequences on a national and international scale, to overthrow the Brezhnev-Kosygin revisionist clique, to make invading Soviet forces leave Czechoslovakia and all other countries where these forces have been stationed for domination." And in such a situation CM and his group's call is for a nationalist revolution to be led by the rich class.

In my essay I had given another call: "Today in Czechoslovakia, Soviet Russia and Warsaw Treaty countries it is essential that new revolutionary communist forces are again organized so that in all these countries they can demolish the revisionist leadership of the Communist Party, re-establish the revolutionary essence of communism and thereby end the contradiction which had been generated between them leading to the establishment of true socialist interrelations based on mutual respect and equality. This is the force which can be the true friend and co-fighter with revolutionary China to bring in communism worldwide. There are signs of the birth of such a force in these countries. Its growth and powerful assertion is a historical necessity."

[3]

Now let us discuss SRC's thoughts and viewpoints on 1951 and 1964 Party programmes especially those related to strategies for land struggle. Thoughts on these two documents will reflect a particular political position.

SRC has written, 'Initially a forum was opened in Deshabrati to discuss about the 1964 Party programme. In this forum Parimal Dasgupta (i.e. me) published an old article of his, which primarily says that the 1951 programme was basically correct, which means the basis of Naxalbari politics is incorrect, both in terms of programme as well as strategy.' If SRC clearly expresses what he means by the programme and strategy of Naxalbari, it will help clarify his and his group's politics. Anyway, coming to my article, it is a critique of Basavapunniah's draft programme of the CPI (M) presented in 1964. I presented this in the 1964 party congress. SRC was then a member of the Party's regional committee. Other than making some ordinary changes, he did not oppose the draft programme. He was basically in agreement with the draft programme with some critique. CM did not oppose that document. In fact he supported that document. They never spoke about the 1951 document. And not only this, when after we openly took a stand to support the new politics of the 1967 Naxalbari peasant struggle, SRC in some of his articles referred to the transfer of India's state power as "independence". It is also to be noted that in Deshabrati 1st year, 1st issue dated 6 July 1967, the report published by SRC and his group on the background of the historic peasant struggle in Terai mentions "peasant struggles during independence" and "peasant struggles in 1948 after independence". There were murmurs among comrades regarding these articles of SRC. During this period, in reply to the ideological attack against us by leaders of the CPI (M), SRC's main allegation was that the party leaders were not correctly implementing the 1964 programme. He felt that the Naxalbari peasant struggle was a correct implementation of the aforesaid party programme. In his reply to an article by B.T. Ranadive, SRC, in his

article 'Creating disorder in peoples' democratic revolution', published in Deshabrati, 1st year, 4th issue, dated 27 July 1967, wrote: "The great struggle of the valiant peasants of Naxalbari and their organizers – the revolutionary communists of the Darjeeling district committee have upheld the revolutionary essence of our party's [(i.e. the CPI (M)"s] programme (the 1964 programme).

"There is nothing wrong with fact that many comrades may have different views on the programme."

"Comrades would know very well that differences of opinion regarding the class character of the Indian state did not come in the way of building up the Naxalbari peasant struggle." "To advance the revolutionary essence of the programme and advancing peasant struggle with all our effort is a very important task now...."

The nature of the state and its class character, definition of independence, government's foreign policy, government's economic policy, strategy of capture of power etc – on all such basic issues – the way the 1964 programme is written, it has become a complete revisionist programme. Thus trying to locate "revolutionary essence" in such a document is a futile exercise. On the whole when you pick out a few good words or slogans from a reactionary document and focus on them in isolation, then it becomes an effort to defend that document. This is a revisionist tactic. If we have to advance the new revolutionary politics of Naxalbari, then we have to completely discard the 1964 programme. But SRC thinks of defending that programme. That is why SRC's group attacks a few individual leaders of the CPI (M) but not the programme of the CPI(M).

After the publication of SRC's above mentioned article in Deshabrati, Moni Guha sent an article to comment on it and this was published in Deshabrati – 31 August 1967 issue. In that article Moni Guha raised questions on the analysis of class character of Indian State etc. in the 1964 programme. This could have given the impression to many that no one had questioned the 1964 programme on such basic issues earlier. That is why it was decided to publish my document, "About the programme of the 7th Party Congress" in Deshabrati. It was also decided that if SRC or any other comrade had any amendment, proposals or articles on the 1964 programme, they should also be published. SRC did not publish any of his amendment proposals. This is the history of publication of my article in Deshabrati.

The 1964 programme was brought in without discarding the 1951 programme or without giving any reason for it whatsoever. But the basis of the two documents are completely different. In the 1951 document the

character of the Indian State after the transfer of power is stated as: "India is the biggest dependent semi-colonial country in Asia still left for enslavers to rob and exploit." The class character of the government was stated as – the Congress is the party of the Kings, landlords, collaborators of British imperialism, representing the reactionary big bourgeoisie. The stage of revolution is peoples' democratic revolution and its character would be anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic revolution. About foreign policy it was stated that the government basically tows the foreign policy of the British imperialism. In the 1964 document the class character of the government is stated as "This government of the landlord and bourgeoisie led by the big bourgeoisie. "This meant that the government was independent; it had no economic or political linkage with imperialism. It was also stated that the government's foreign policy, despite many weaknesses, was overall neutral and anti-world war. In my document I had sharply criticized these aspects of the 1964 document and supported the aspects of the 1951 document which I mentioned earlier. I had written that: "On the whole Com Basavapunniah's draft programme's analysis and primary focus is confusing, vague, incorrect, unclear and weak and these are a version of revisionist political line and analysis. Actually the old revisionist political line has been expressed in a new language and has been given a new dressing." I compared this programme to be in the same category as that of Dange's CPI. Because of this criticism, the party leadership severely attacked those aspects of the 1951 programme relating to the nature of the state in the Calcutta party conference: the class character of the government, its foreign policy etc calling them "one-sided", "ultra-left", "dangerous deviation" etc. Most of the attack was centred round the analysis of the nature of the state. The party [i.e. the CPI (M)] disagreed completely with the Chinese Communist Party's (CPC) analysis of the character of the Indian government. Will SRC explain why my analysis, as presented in that document was wrong? I also attacked the 1964 programme on another important aspect – which was the party's line of peaceful capture of power. SRC and CM did not even oppose it then. Now I see that they are especially keen to prove that my document is nowhere a political basis of the Naxalbari peasant struggle. In the 1964 Party Congress what politics of Naxalbari and Mao Tse Tung Thought did they present? Now I see that they have suddenly gained wisdom. This is nothing but political opportunism. If we had criticized the 1964 party programme on its stand on the nature of the state, government's foreign policy, strategy for capture of power, weren't we carrying out a very important political struggle of that time? From 1962 onwards the CPC, in the name of "Nehru darshan" and other documents, put forward their analysis of the character of the Indian government and we accepted it and based on it we put forward our analysis of the Indian government and doing so was an important political struggle within the Communist Party. The Dange clique did not accept it and the CPI (M) which distanced itself from the Dange

clique also did not accept it. Thus in the end they (i.e. the CPI (M)) took refuge in neo-revisionism and ultimately became anti-China. From a wrong analysis of the nature of the state and the class character of the government began their historic evolution. SRC's group is unable to grasp the importance of the critique of the 1964 document based on the key elements of the 1951 document; they just keep their focus on the 1964 document. The seeds of contradictions and changes in the CPI (M) were already present in the struggles over the 1964 document. One has to understand this! This is the dialectical approach to understanding history. SRC's group's approach towards analysis or understanding is mechanical. They do not see incidents in their perspective; they just want to mechanically compare one incident with another and arrive at conclusions.

It is an historical misfortune that the Marxist Leninist Party [CPI (ML)] came into being attacking the 1951 programme. The political proposal of the ML Party, as published in *Deshabrati* – 15 May 1969 says: "The 1951 programme and strategic line were adopted based on an understanding that the Indian big bourgeoisie had a dual class character. By dual character it is meant that the Indian big bourgeoisie has an anti-imperialist role at times but also has tendencies to collaborate with imperialism or come to an understanding with it at times" This argument is wrong in factual terms as the 1951 programme did not have an analysis on the dual character of the Indian big bourgeoisie. Actually it is the 1964 document which has this dual character analysis of the Indian big bourgeoisie. The ML party's introductory note on the 1951 document is also wrong. The 1951 document was written in the background of the 1946-47 transfer of Indian state power and there was an analysis of the significance of the transfer of power. In this programme the political and economic analysis were based primarily on various aspects of India's incomplete anti-colonial revolution and neo-colonialist ties.

There is a definite political tendency in distorting and completely rejecting the 1951 programme. One result of that tendency is the policy and programme of the CPI (M). The tendency of the CPI (ML) will pull them towards a different but definite direction. Symptoms of it are latent in their political proposal. In its analysis of the class character of the government the ML party declares: "The Indian state is controlled by big landlord and comprador-bureaucratic capitalist class and the Indian government is an agent of US imperialism as well as Soviet social-imperialism. It is the big landlords and the comprador bureaucratic capitalists who run the state." The analysis of the nature of the state and the class character of the government in the above ML document has close proximity to the 1964 CPI (M) document. In this analysis imperialism is not mentioned as a class basis of the state and a term "agent" has been used. Thus effectively the theory of

neo-colonialism has been discarded. This actually supports the 1964 programme. The word "agent" is not part of any accepted political analysis; this is just a word used in slogans. Actually there is silence on the close relationship between rulers of India and forces of imperialism. But in the post World war era, the main characteristics of any neo-colonial state is that state power has an alliance with imperialism, comprador bourgeoisie and feudalism. By keeping this unclear or maintaining silence on this aspect, no strategy and tactic of peoples' democratic revolution can be drawn up and if drawn up, would be wrong. The ML party's political analysis of the semi-feudal character of the state is also hazy. The proof of a state's semi-feudal character is based on a state's dependence on economic help from imperialist countries. This kind of analysis has no clear political analysis about feudalism. Feudalism is an ally of imperialism and comprador bourgeoisie and the basis of their rule; which means that the relationship between these forces is the real political analysis. To say that dependence on economic help from imperialism is proof enough of the existence of feudal character is not a clear political analysis or such analysis actually obfuscates the real character of the state. Such an understanding or analysis will lead to many wrong strategies for fighting the enemies of revolution. The ML party document carries with it the possibilities of many wrong tendencies and views.

By not taking a holistic view of the state, CM is pushing the key focus of revolution in other directions. By locating the contradiction between the peasantry and feudalism as the main contradiction at present, he is making the key objective of peoples' democratic revolution fuzzy. He has written that "in the case of India, side-stepping this principal contradiction is resulting in all sorts of deviations. Even Parimal Dasgupta and his group are taking the same road". We have in our "position paper" claimed that the alliance of imperialism, comprador bourgeoisie and feudalism defines the character of the government; meaning we have identified these three as the main enemies. CM wants to focus only on feudalism as the main enemy. While characterizing people's democratic revolution Mao Tse Tung has written: "Those class forces which define the character of revolution are on the one side the main enemy and on the other the primary revolutionary forces. Presently our main enemy is imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism and the main forces to fight these forces are the wide cross section of people engaged in physical and mental labour which covers nearly 90% of the country's population. It means that presently the character of our revolution is new-democratic revolution which is different from socialist revolution." [Mao Tse Tung ***Selected Works***, Chinese edition, Vol. 4, p. 208].

Indian revolution is peoples' democratic in the present phase and our main enemies are imperialism, comprador bourgeoisie and feudalism. The entire attack of the revolutionary forces must be against these forces; but in the present world situation demolishing revisionism is also an essential revolutionary programme. Because the role of revisionism is counter-revolutionary and acts in favour of the aforesaid enemy forces. Thus the Chinese party has mentioned the four mountains as enemy of the Indian revolution – imperialism, comprador bourgeoisie, feudalism and revisionism. Thus the CPC says, "The shoulders of the Indian peasant are not only burdened by feudalism but their path to liberation is blocked by three other mountains – imperialism, agent capitalists and new revisionists"; thus obliterating these four enemies should constitute the main programme of the peoples' democratic revolution. Peasant revolution is a part of peoples' democratic revolution and also its primary axis. The CPC says, "Land revolution is primary to India's new democratic revolution." (**Peking Review** 1967, Issue 30, p. 19) Agricultural revolution would change the old feudal land relations, establish peasant ownership over land and based on this the country's industrialization would speed up. Through actions and activities within the purview of the peoples' democratic revolution the interests of imperialism would be eroded, the power of the comprador bourgeoisie would be destroyed and some control would be achieved over capitalism. Only through such a process would the path to socialism open up. Thus the strategy and tactics of peoples' democratic revolution should aim at destroying feudalism and other forces as mentioned and thus destroying the state apparatus controlled by them. CM by focusing only on feudalism and making it the only target of all revolutionary struggles is actually making the revolutionary forces turn away from overall objective of revolution. Thus revolutionary forces will not be able to proceed on the path of struggle with correct targets. This will result in one sided attack, no building up of mass front of the revolutionary class, ending in failures and hopelessness.

The strategy of revolution has to be based on Mao Tse Tung Thought. In any revolutionary struggle the leadership must be with the working class, there must be armed peasant struggle and revolutionary base areas have to be built in rural areas. After destroying the reactionary forces in villages strategies for destruction of reactionary forces in the city must begin, strong alliance between the working class and peasantry must be built up, a broad united front of revolutionary class and other forces of revolution must be set up, struggles of the working class and the other revolutionary forces must help and complement the primary peasant struggle – all these would be the basis of revolutionary strategy. CM by discarding the wider objective of revolution, cannot think of drawing up a strategy based on the mutual relation and the entirety of the above mentioned factors. Thus he is falling

prey to sectarian, sudden and disconnected thoughts. The main question he is raising is, "If everybody is involved in building up mass organisations, who will build up the secret (party) organisation?" It is through class based organisations that communists maintain their relation with the class, through class struggles raise the consciousness of people, test the party's policies at the actual ground level class struggles and based on real life experience and testing amend or expand the party's policies. Class organisations are like the veins and arteries of the party and the living link between the party and the people. CM's above mentioned question is not in agreement with Bolshevik thought.

CM's thoughts about the relation between mass organizations and party is mechanical. He has failed to understand the mutual relationship between the two or differences in the characteristics of the two. Revolutionaries use and lead class organisations to help the cause of revolution and reformists use it from the reformist perspective. This is the difference between a revolutionary programme and an economist programme. CM is blaming the party's earlier wrong policies on class organizations and thus discarding its necessity. This is like getting drunk by drinking toddy but blaming the toddy tree for one's drunkenness. In trying to build up his case against building up class organisations, CM is talking about many divisions among the peasantry and saying that agricultural workers organisations would create divisions in the peasantry. Thus without building any organisation he is just in favour of building a guerilla force of landless poor peasants.

Class division of society is a Marxist analysis. Based on this class analysis, Marxists build up different class based organisations to complement revolution at its various stages. In peasant struggles, who would constitute the peasant committees, whether independent agricultural worker organisations would be built or not, who would be particularly organized to maintain the militancy of peasant committees etc. are matters of organizational strategy. But because of this how can a communist even think of discarding class based organisations?

CM has also said, "Through building open mass organizations among peasants the tendency towards open struggle would increase among peasants and because of this we will become leaders of another revisionist mass organisation." According to CM revolutionaries will not be involved in any open struggles and that open, overground movements are revisionist. And revolutionaries cannot be leaders of any open organisation. All activities of revolutionaries would be secret and underground and subversive. Thus CM has given a line: " Only through building up a secret party organisation among the peasantry will the leadership of the poor landless peasant be established in the peasant struggle" Which means that this leadership of the

poor and landless peasants would be established not through class struggles and through organizational participation but through the activity of building up a secret party. So is CM's peasant movement without any basis? What is its basis? The basis is a new version of terrorist thought.

Nobody would say that revolution would be organized through open organisation. The main thing is about an understanding of the role of class organisations in organizing revolution. CM is advocating the politics of discarding class organisations which is completely against Marxist-Leninist organizational understanding. From this politics the revolutionary cadres of CM who will emerge will not be tested cadres from different movements and class struggles; but in CM's language they are "class conscious poor landless peasants". He assumes that without any exposure to class based struggles and movements these poor landless peasants would acquire class consciousness out of thin air. This is a metaphysical thought; like building up "santan dal" in Anandamath (a novel by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay). In terms of building up Bolshevik cadres CM's thoughts are opposed to Stalin, Dimitrov's crucial teachings and thoughts of Mao Tse Tung's mass line in party. Cadres without any connection with mass movements and public life can never be reflective of Mao's thoughts. And besides this what is all the more worrying is that CM's overall political thought is based on the peasantry and devoid of the working class which is against the principles of peoples' democratic revolution. And even among the peasantry CM's agency of struggle and revolution would be only the poor and landless. He is opposed to involving wider cross section of the peasantry in an anti-feudal struggle through mass movements and giving them any organizational basis. Only through building the party, with a strategy of struggle based only on the poor and the landless peasants is not a strategy of class based struggle of peoples' democratic revolution but is a strategy for socialist revolution. This will actually give birth to CPI's 1949 B.T. Ranadive's Trotskyist strategies. Such thoughts were also seen amongst Narodniks in Russia. Stalin had observed, "If poor peasants are considered to be the only revolutionary force because they are poor then tramps would be even better revolutionaries". It is but natural that such forces would also get organized around CM's theory.

Discarding class organisation and mass struggle, CM has come up with the only strategy of revolutionary struggle – guerilla warfare. Kanu Sanyal in his widely circulated report on the failures of a phase of the Naxalbari struggle has put forward this theory of guerilla warfare as the way to take this struggle to a higher stage. This very idea of raising the level of a failed and defeated struggle to a higher stage is impractical and sheer adventurism. At this stage the thought of taking a revolutionary struggle to a higher stage through guerilla warfare is similar to a thought which had emerged in the

CPC after 1929 when the Li Li San tendency reared its head. CM is very annoyed that I criticized this report of Kanu Sanyal because CM's theory of guerilla warfare is the basis of this report.

The (modern) father of CM's theory is Che Guevara. In the backdrop of Castro's capture of power in Cuba, middle class revolution mongering mixed with some Marxist rhetoric wants to position itself as the new Marxian strategy in the post war era. The bases of this theory are: (1) denying the role of proletarian leadership in revolution and recognizing only middle class leadership; considering the middle class to be the driving force of revolution (2) discard class struggle (3) deny the peoples' creative role in revolution (4) enthusing the masses not through political activity but through stunts (5) considering guerilla warfare as the only strategy of struggle and imagining self-sufficient guerilla units (6) giving importance to individual heroes (7) discarding the principles and practice of proletarian internationalism. All these tendencies are gradually becoming evident in CM's political thinking.

Mao's theory of guerilla warfare is based on politics and not based just on mere actions and not self-sufficiency. That is why Com Mao has pointed out three things to summarise the success of the Chinese revolution: 1) the party staying steadfast to the principles of Marxism- Leninism 2) the building up of a strong army under the leadership of the party 3) the building up of a broad united front of revolutionary classes under the leadership of the Party and conducting the struggle on this basis. Mao has said that the coming together of these three factors and their correct implementation have made the Chinese revolution successful. Che Guevara theory is opposed to Mao Tse Tung Thought. What is most important to note is that since this theory is not based on the principle and practice of proletarian internationalism its primary root will be or is already in nationalism. Middle class revolution-mongering will take refuge in nationalism and terrorism. In our country there will be efforts to unify Mao and Che by middle class revolutionaries; in fact it is from this trend that slogans like "in the city Che and in the village Mao" evolve. And CM will provide fuel to such politics. CM wants to prove that Com Lin Piao actually supports his views and writes: "We should remember poor and landless peasants will be able to establish their leadership over the peasantry at large only through leading guerilla warfare. Guerilla war is the one and only strategy for the revolutionary struggle of the peasants. No mass organisation by working openly can do this work. Thus the strategy put forward by Parimal Dasgupta for peasant struggle is opposed to the path shown by Lin Piao." CM has not explained what he means by "Lin Piao path". He has also not explained what he understands of my strategy of peasant struggle. But it is clear from what he says that he is against class based organisations and believes in this theory of some selected cadres unleashing guerilla war. Actually he has completely failed to

understand the theory of peoples' war of Com Lin Piao and in his own thoughts wants to see Lin Piao in Che Guevara. In the essay "Long Live the victory of the peoples war" Lin Piao says: "In order to be victorious it is absolutely essential that to the utmost extent possible a wide united front must be built up and continuously different policies have to be worked out so that widest possible number of people are brought together and the unity of those forces is ensured." In the above mentioned article explaining the international significance of the Chinese revolution, Lin Piao has written, "The following characteristics of the October revolution and the Chinese revolution are similar: 1) both revolutions took place with a Marxist Leninist party as the centre under the leadership of the working class 2) both had as their basis the alliance of the working class and peasantry 3) in both cases state power was captured through a violent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat was established 4) in both cases after victory of the revolution socialist system has been created and both these revolutions are inseparable parts of proletarian world revolution".

CM's views and his line has no relation with Lin Piao's views and thoughts. Actually it has a clear reflection of Che Guevara's views. Che Guevara says: "A guerilla can represent a poor peasant's land, animals and all their wishes and desires from birth to get all necessary things. In other words a guerilla – above everything – is a peasant revolutionary. A guerilla by individual example, by his own thoughts, plans and experience establishes the ideology of social reform.... The essence of guerilla war is that a group of individuals by their immediate strategic aims becomes the leading force of mass movements and after achieving the aims of the movement, builds up a new society, demolishes the old path and establishes justice..." (Che Guevara: ***Guerilla Warfare***)

The core statement of Com Mao Tse Tung's theory of peoples war is, "The revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on the masses." Mao Tse Tung's theory of peoples' war is strategically a part of proletarian revolutionary politics. And Che's theory tells the proletariat that it is powerless, that it cannot think on its own and that they have to depend on 'great leaders'. Che's theory appeals to the impetuosity of middle class romantic adventurism. This theory keeps the proletariat inactive and thus imperialist and counter revolutionary forces promote and prop up such thoughts so as to block the progress of Mao Tse Tung's revolutionary thought. Revisionist, imperialist and capitalist forces politically keep Che's theory in the role of its opposition and by doing so use it as its second line of defence. CM, also, by not giving a call to the working class, peasants and other exploited classes to get organized and by making their class struggle and organisation irrelevant or secondary and by giving a call to be dependent only on guerillas, is actually effectively keeping these

classes weak and inactive against their class enemies. He wants to replace Mao with Che. That is why CM and his group's thoughts cannot be accepted as revolutionary politics based on Mao Tse Tung Thought.

[The ML party proposal went through some changes and efforts were made to bring in changes proving the state's colonial and semi-feudal character. These changes happened after the publication of the 15 May 1969 issue of Deshabrati. But despite the amendments the ML party's analysis of the character of the state and government remained tied in knots – as it originally was. Thus I think that my critique as in this essay is still correct – Parimal Dasgupta]

Translated from Bengali by Avijit Wasi

Endnotes:

- 1) Deshabrati – Ideological fortnightly of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries and later the Bengali mouth piece of the CPI(ML).
- 2) babu – In Bengali this word has huge cultural connotation. Taken simply it means referring to somebody as mister somebody.
- 3) Mohammad Tughlaq – a medieval Indian king supposed to be whimsical.