

MARXISM
GANDHISM
STALINISM

C. G. Shah

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Dedicated
to
Little Mihir

Whom I most deeply love
With the Best Wish a Marxist can wish
That he may flower into a profound Marxist
And participate in the struggle for World Socialism.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I feel great joy and a privilege to have been given the opportunity of providing a brief life sketch of the author of this very significant work.

Sjt. C. G. Shah was born in 1896 in a middle class educated family in Ahmedabad. Under the conscious guidance of his father, a teacher in the Government High School, who was imbued with the liberal culture of the West, Sjt. Shah was initiated in the rationalist and democratic thought of the 18th and 19th century Europe during his high school and college days. He avidly studied during this phase the works of such eminent democratic thinkers as Voltaire, Rousseau, Burke, J. S. Mill, Macaulay, Thomas Paine and others. During this period he also perused a section of the best philosophical and artistic literature of modern Europe comprising the outstanding works of Tolstoy, Turgeniev, Gogol, Nietzsche, Max Stirner, Alexander Dumas, Eugen Sue, Dickens, Victor Hugo, Ernest Hæckel and others. He also familiarised himself with the great artistic creations of Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Keats, Byron and others. Further, during this phase he also concentrated on the study of the rich philosophical and artistic culture of India. He studied such crucial philosophical works as the Upanishadas, Shankarbhasha and others as well as beautiful artistic works of Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, Bana and others, all in the Sanskrit language.

His yearning for studying this classic literature, both of India and the West, was impelled by his desire to gather scienti-

fic knowledge and to have æsthetic enjoyment. He told me that his study of the western rationalist and democratic thought during this formative period of his life insured him against the pressures of the unscientific idealistic philosophies and reactionary authoritarian feudal social conceptions rampant in the extant traditional Indian society.

It was during this academic phase of his life, which ended in 1918 when he graduated from the Gujarat College, that his rationalist and humanist outlook was built up.

Sjt. C. G. Shah had a brilliant academic career. His father backed up by the Principal of his college planned for him (after his passing the Inter Arts Examination in 1916) the objective of becoming a member of the Indian Civil Service, in those days the most dazzling and coveted prize for an Indian. His father had made financial and all other preparations including a berth on a steamer. It was during this period that Sjt. Shah happened to read the life of Mazzini, the ideological leader of the national liberation struggle of the Italian people for the overthrow of the foreign Austrian domination. This book made a profound impression on him and made the inchoate nationalist urge implicit in Sjt. Shah explicit and articulate. Rather than become (in his own words) "an integral part of the apparatus of foreign oppression (the I.C.S.) of his people" he chose and decided to sacrifice this opportunity of a prosperous material life and high social status. He cancelled the programme though he had to steel his heart against succumbing to the tearful appeal of his father whose life aspiration was shattered by this decision.

Sjt. C. G. Shah, after graduating with Mathematics as his special subject in 1918, came into conflict with his parents on the twofold problem of his future occupation and marriage. He left Ahmedabad and came and settled in Bombay, the political and cultural metropolis of the Western India.

It was only a short time before, that the great socialist October Revolution broke out in Russia resulting in the establishment of the first workers' state in history. Sjt. C. G. Shah was one of the very few intellectuals who reacted to that Revolution sympathetically. These few intellectuals included S. A. Dange, S. V. Ghate, Muzaffar Ahmed and a few others. Though

this small group, in the absence of any Marxist literature available in India, had not adequately comprehended the principles of Marxism which guided the October Revolution, it almost *instinctively* gravitated to it. Their main source of information about the programme and objective of that Revolution was the garbled accounts of it published in the capitalist papers such as "The London Times," "The Manchester Guardian," "The Times of India" and other papers in India. Though these papers published distorted news of the programme of the October Revolution and of the speeches of Lenin, Trotsky, Bucharin, Zinoviev and other summit Bolshevik leaders to discredit the socialist Revolution, this group of Indian communists, the pioneers of the Marxist movement in India, were fascinated with such humanist slogans of the Revolution as "Private property is abolished", "None shall have cake unless all have bread", "Each for all, all for each", "Religion is the opium for the masses" and others.

Thus Sjt. Shah just in his early twenties, almost instinctively, oriented to Marxism. From now on he made the mastery of Marxism and dedication to the socialist movement as his life objective. Throughout his subsequent life, he has steadfastly adhered to this objective.

It was roundabout the year 1922, that Sjt. Shah made contact with Dange and Ghate who subsequently became some of the founders and eminent leaders of the Communist Party of India.

Discarding all other occupations, which would have made him materially prosperous but consumed his time and energy in irrelevant work, he took up a part time teacher's job in the Bhatia High School. Subsequently he met Sjt. R. B. Lotwala, a wealthy flour mill magnate and at that time an ardent socialist, who made him his private secretary and became his close friend.

Sjt. Shah, Dange and other Marxists who emerged later on were helped by Sjt. Lotwala in a variety of ways, specially in the matter of Marxist literature.

Sjt. Lotwala lost his conviction in Marxism in 1932. Sjt. Shah ceased to be his private secretary and, since then, maintained himself by giving tuition in Mathematics and from the

sporadic income from free-lance journalism.

Sjt. Shah told me that during the early twenties, the small group of Marxists could hardly make any effective impress on historical developments. This group could only spread ideas of Marxism and strive to build politically and ideologically trained cadres. It was the epoch of the undisputed sway of Gandhism when even the Indian intelligentsia was under the hypnotic spell of the Gandhian ideology. Further, the small group itself had still to consolidate its Marxism.

But though a small group, due to their impregnable conviction in the scientific character of Marxism and the socialist future of mankind, they felt the pioneers' joy.

At no time, Sjt. Shah was influenced by the ideology of Gandhism. In fact, he published in 1926 "The Hundred Percent Indian" which was a Marxist critique of Gandhism and which was described by M. N. Roy, at that time a summit leader of the Communist International, in his review of the book "as the first Marxist work published by an Indian Marxist in India". Poet Rabindranath Tagore, too, appreciated the work from his own viewpoint and conveyed to Sjt. Shah that he "has been deeply impressed with the culture, learning and sanity displayed in your treatment of the most complex and fundamental questions of the human civilization". Prof. Jadunath Sircar, the celebrated historian and then the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, wrote to him about his book as follows :

"I entirely agree with you in your defence of modern civilization and scientific progress and I admire your courage in boldly proclaiming what you consider good for our country, though the majority of our articulate people have been misled into holding a different view."

Philip Spratt, a former prominent British communist leader, the principal accused in the famous Meerut Conspiracy Case and now an eminent Radical Humanist, who came to India in 1927, writes in his reminiscences and reflections entitled "Blowing up India" about Sjt. C. G. Shah and his "Hundred Percent Indian" as follows : "I had noted the addresses of my prospective Indian contacts so cryptically that I should never have been able to make them out. Luckily on my second or third day in Bombay I saw in Taraporevalas a pamphlet : *Hundred*

Percent Indian, by C. G. Shah. Dutt had mentioned this name, and the pamphlet gave me his address. I soon met him, and we became, and remain, very good friends. 'Hundred Percent Indian' is a Marxist attack on Gandhi. Shah was considered rightly the most learned Marxist in Bombay.... When I last met him he remarked what a terrible Leviathan the Stalinist State had become..... he introduced me to all the members and sympathisers in Bombay."

Sjt. Shah was actively associated with the founding of many progressive rationalist and anti-imperialist movements and organizations which sprang up in the twenties. He was one of the founders of the first Birth Control League in India established in Bombay, the Bombay unit of the Independence of India League of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the President, also of the Bombay Youth League being one of its secretaries along with the late Yusuf Meherally. He was a member of the small Communist faction in the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, the President of the 'A' Ward Congress Committee and was a delegate to the Madras and Calcutta sessions of the Indian National Congress held in 1928 and 1929 respectively.

He also actively functioned in the All India Workers' and Peasants' Party established in the late twenties.

Sjt. Shah is essentially an intellectual. He admits he had no temperament or aptitude for organizational or mass work.

His principal activity during the last forty years of his life as a Marxist has been to propagate the ideology of Marxism and Marxist programmes mainly among the middle class youth through the printed and oral word. He has profusely contributed to Left papers and magazines during this long period. As a freelance Marxist writer, he contributed articles to various Indian and foreign magazines.

Besides, he has uninterruptedly conducted Marxist study circles for decades to propagate the basic principles of Marxism and to explain not merely economic and political but also philosophical and sociological problems from the Marxist standpoint.

A number of youths, who subsequently joined and some of whom even became active leaders of various Left parties in the country, attended these study circles conducted by C. G. Shah.

It was in 1934 that Sjt. Shah became aware of the Stalinist degeneration of Marxism, of the World Communist Parties and of the World Communist movement.

In 1940 Sjt. Shah was imprisoned as a detenu in the Nasik gaol. In 1942 when the Communist Party of India supported British imperialism in World War II and opposed the national liberation struggle of the Indian people, his break with Stalinism became complete and final.

However, unlike Burnham, Marleux and others who discarded Marxism itself as a reaction to Stalinism, Sjt. Shah continued to remain an unwavering Marxist defending in his oral and written propaganda *real* Marxism against this Stalinist distortion.

He continued to disseminate the principles of what he considered genuine Marxism, to evaluate historical events from the Marxist standpoint and to expose the bureaucratic and national chauvinist policies of Stalinist regimes and Stalinist parties.

He strongly criticised the anti-Marxist policies of the Stalinist Soviet government for forcibly (by military bureaucratic methods) extending nationalised property relations to the East European countries and setting up puppet Stalinist bureaucratic regimes in those countries. He branded those policies as policies of national enslavement and oppression incompatible with the basic principles of Marxism.

Similarly, he strongly condemned the aggressive and expansionist policies of the Chinese Stalinist government in forcibly annexing Tibet and seizing a part of the border territory of the Indian Union.

Similarly, he considers the suppression of the intra-party and socialist democracy in China, the Soviet Union and East European countries including Yugoslavia as fundamentally anti-Marxist and harming the world socialist movement.

Except for some time during the twenties, Sjt. Shah has not been a member of any political party or group. He has always been a free lance propagandist of Marxism carrying on his work mainly through study-circles and magazines. Though he has completed his sixty-seventh year, Sjt. Shah's Marxist conviction remains unshaken and his faith in the socialist future of mankind undimmed.

The book is a collection of Sjt. Shah's articles published in different magazines and lectures delivered on diverse topics, both theoretical and topical, during last over thirty years, from 1926 to about 1960. I enthusiastically welcome the publication of the book which contains profound as well as pungent reflections by one who has intensely observed and critically evaluated some of the most crucial and controversial problems that confront mankind today. I also wish that the author will follow up the publication of this book with that of others to enable the intellectuals to have his mature reflections on a wide number of subjects. I feel confident that this book will stimulate closer investigation into the problems discussed by the author.

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INTRODUCTION

Radiant Possibility

Like every biological species mankind has been carrying on its struggle for existence against Nature (its physical and biological environment) for tens of thousands of years. It has been conducting this struggle collectively and by means of technology.

A nodal point has been reached in this struggle of Man when, due to his accumulated scientific cognisance of the laws governing the material world surrounding him and resultant technological advance, he *can* triumphantly resolve the problem of physical survival i.e. the problem of extracting from his environment such means of existence as food, clothing, housing and others in sufficiently massive quantity as to meet the requirements of the entire human population.

This triumphant achievement of Man has been recognized by all eminent technologists, scientists, economists and sociologists of the contemporary epoch.

Automation in the field of machinery and electrical and nuclear energy in the domain of power mark the culminating point in this amazing advance.

The colossal productive power of the already existing technology, not to mention the certainty of its further rapid progress (even at an accelerated rate) on the basis of a global economic plan, has unfolded before mankind the resplendent perspective of a torrential flow not only of such material necessities of life as food, clothing and shelter but even of such objects of luxury as radio, telephone, television and others not merely

for a fraction of humanity but for all its members. In fact, as a result of this advance it has become possible to-day to transform the vision of plenty embodied in the ancient fairy tales, which signified the fantastic anticipation of the future plenty in human imagination, into reality.

The emergence of the phase of plenty for the first time in human history will imply the end of scarcity in the world of the material life of man, *in the final analysis* the material source of all human conflicts born of all forms of exploitation and oppression of man by man. With the dawn of the era of plenty, the perspective is also unfolded of the emergence of a human society all members of which are welded into a single unit and live, in fraternal bond and within the worldwide system of co-operative social relations, a single collective life without contradictory interests and resultant conflicts.

In such a society, the consciousness of every individual will be fully humanised i.e. socialised. The mutual relations between men will resemble those between the instruments of a musical orchestra where all artists contribute to the elaborating of the general symphony and each artist can find full self-expression only if all artists *simultaneously* achieve full self-expression. "Each for All" and "All for Each" will be the basic characteristic of the complex of social relationships integrating the individuals of that society.

For the creation of such a society which can only be worldwide socialist society, the prerequisite in the form of modern technology and power has already historically come into existence. What has yet to be achieved is their organization on a worldwide socialist basis.

And since it is Man who creates his own social organization, if Man fails to accomplish this crucial historical task of the present epoch, a veritable catastrophe including even that of the annihilation of the human species itself through a thermo-nuclear war will overtake him.

Grim Reality

In poignant contrast to *this* luminous vision of the radiant social future of contemporary Man, which has become possible (though is not still realized) due to his stupendous technologi-

cal progress, which seems so near and is yet so far, the existing social world with its various forms of oppression, exploitation and enslavement of man by man, nations by nations, classes by classes, and resultant massive poverty and unemployment, wars and revolutions, moral debasement and brutalization of tens of millions, presents a macabre nightmarish spectacle.

Not only a number of countries but even entire continents have become to-day blazing furnaces of armed conflicts. Further, the menace of even more aggravated crises and collisions looms over the world political horizon, even threatening the eruption of a thermo-nuclear war enveloping the entire humanity.

Pseudo-Solutions of the World Crisis

Outstanding economists, sociologists, philosophers and statesmen of the contemporary world have been advancing diverse solutions of the present world crisis.

Some of these eminent thinkers (Pigou, Kalecki and others) attribute it to the existing defective capitalist economic structure and suggest programmes of reconstructing the extant capitalist economy on a Welfare State basis while retaining its capitalist foundation intact. Others like Nehru hope to build a prosperous national economy on the basis of the postulates of a Mixed Economy and rear on that economic basis a flourishing social and cultural superstructure of society. There are others who see the salvation of their country in creating a society based on military bureaucratic state capitalism which they misconceive as socialism.

Still others (Russell, leaders of the M.R.A. and others) attribute the present *impasse* of the human society to the moral degeneration of man. They, therefore, advance schemes of moral regeneration of man to overcome the *impasse* and address ethical appeals to leaders like Kennedy and Khrushchev to abstain from war and seek peaceful settlement of momentous international disputes.

All these conceptions and programmes of social reorganization elaborated and put into practice by their 'architects' have failed to achieve the desired objective of building up materially, socially and culturally prosperous national societies integ-

rated further into a harmonious world society based on the extinction all species of conflict. In fact, in direct proportion of the propaganda of their slogans and programmes such as "Panchshil" (Nehru), "Peaceful Co-existence" (Khrushchev and others), "Welfare State and People's Capitalism" (Economic theoreticians of U.K., the U.S.A. and others), "Human Brotherhood Campaigns" (leaders of the M.R.A. and other amorphous supraclass humanists), "Universal and Complete Disarmament" and "Ban the Bomb", "class peace" (reformist socialists) and others, the disintegration process of the world society is further advancing. National and class conflicts are further accumulating and erupting, social antagonisms are becoming more aggravated, new aggressions are perpetrated and, above all, stock-piling of nuclear weapons is ominously mounting.

In defiance of the massive campaign of disarmament, armaments are gathering new momenta of growth. The social reality and its inexorable dialectic cynically mock at all these utopian economic devices and ethical and virtuous propaganda. The world social system is growing more contradictory and blood-soaked.

Instead of peaceful co-existence materialising, wars have been flaring up in the social world (Algeria, Yemen, Laos, countries of Africa). Instead of Panchshil being realised brazen and brutal armed Chinese aggression against India on the Sino-Indian border has taken place. Instead of social integration being achieved, class struggles, regional conflicts and other forces undermine whatever social integration was historically achieved in the past.

In direct ratio of the propaganda of "Peaceful Co-existence" and other pacifist talk and effort, more explosive focal points have emerged in the contemporary world to-day. Recent events (in Laos, Cuba, West Berlin and countries of Africa in the capitalist world; the Hungarian Revolution, the Poznan Revolt, the East German Uprising, Moscow-Peking Rift and Moscow-Albania conflict in the socialist world) corroborate this fact.

How is this paradox to be explained?

The protagonists of these concepts and programmes suffer from specific group, class and, as in the case of the ideologues

and the politicians of the socialist world, bureaucratic caste subjectivism. Their ideas and programmes are not derived out of the objective movement of the national and world society but are the rationalization of the material interests of the social aggregates whose interests they mirror.

However animated they be *subjectively* by their desire to create a prosperous national or world social existence, *objectively* they only evolve concepts and plans which reflect the interests of the class or the social stratum to which they belong and of which they are the concentrated consciousness. They are prisoners of class or group outlooks in varying degrees. They cannot see or see only distortedly the objective movement of history.

Class Roots of Ideology

All economic, political, ethical or sociological errors are, *in the final analysis*, rooted in the philosophical error.

The world outlook or the philosophy of even an outstanding intellectual (a Russell, a Keynes, a Gandhi) and his resultant sociological, political and economic theories are determined, consciously or unconsciously, by his class alignment. If they are aligned to the capitalist class which has outlived its historical usefulness to-day, they, in spite of their powerful intelligence, cannot recognise the historical necessity of abolishing capitalism and creating socialism. Their intellect will move within the matrix of their class or group outlook which, tragic as it is, they cannot transcend.

For instance, such a profound economist as Keynes was not convinced of the scientific validity of the Marxist theory of surplus value which discloses the mechanism of exploitation of the wage worker by the capitalist and resultant socialist class struggle of the working class and which logically lays bare all resultant features of capitalism like anarchy of production, *inevitable* cyclical crises, necessity of colonial conquests by powerful capitalisms leading to imperialist wars. Embodying the will to live of the bourgeoisie he was the very theoretical consciousness of that class in the politico-economic field, devising ingenious theories, programmes and techniques to stabilise moribund capitalism. He could see vividly in the realm of economic

phenomena everything except that capitalism itself had been outmoded and was an obstacle to the further development of human society *as a whole* though it may experience episodic flush in this zone or that as has happened in the U.S.A. and the West European countries after the end of the Second World War.

The social world has become an arena where the protagonists of various ideologies and programmes have been struggling for mass support. Only that ideology and programme of social reconstruction is *finally* selected by history, by the masses who make history, which reflect the objective truth i.e. the historical necessity.

Law – Governance of Society

Society like Nature is governed by law. Natural sciences disclose the laws governing the various domains of the physical world. Marxism, its theory of Materialist Conception of History, disclosed the general law governing human society of which the laws governing different societies are only special expressions.

Only those ideas and programmes which are in harmony with the objective movement of society are historically progressive and can be realized.

The cognizance of the law of social development can help also to locate the social forces and means to achieve historically progressive ideas and programmes.

All social conflicts, wars, revolts and revolutions, which rock the contemporary human world, spring from the social soil of the extant world social system. They cannot be exorcised into non-existence by mere anti-war propaganda, disarmament conferences, "Ban the Nuclear Weapons" campaigns, much less by moral preachings like those of the principle of human brotherhood and others. Nor can even the fear of a nuclear war involving the destruction of both the victor and the vanquished eliminate the danger of the outbreak of such a war in a situation when, for instance, the very existence of an imperialist power is jeopardized.

Every class or social stratum will defend the basic condition of its existence (in the case of the capitalist class, capitalist

private property), when threatened, by all possible means. Its consciousness will be insane in such a situation and it will not abstain from launching even the nuclear war.

This is the law of life which governs the behaviour of every living organism.

Since all social conflicts arise out of the existing social structure, these conflicts can be eliminated only by eliminating their genetic cause viz. that social structure itself.

Contradictory World System

The contemporary world social system is comprised of two sectors : one, the capitalist world and the other, the socialist world comprising the countries of the Soviet Bloc, Yugoslavia, Albania, China, North Korea and North Viet Nam.

The principal social contradictions of the capitalist world are as follows :

- (1) that between the exploiting capitalist class and the proletariat and other exploited classes in all capitalist countries giving rise to the socialist movement;
- (2) that between imperialist nations and their enslaved colonial peoples giving rise to national liberation struggles;
- (3) that between the capitalist nations themselves giving rise to inter-capitalist struggles.

The principal social contradictions of the socialist world are as follows :

- (1) that between the ruling bureaucracy — a privileged caste — and the people in all socialist countries as a result of the bureaucratic degeneration of the workers' state;
- (2) that between the socialist countries themselves ruled by their respective bureaucracies as a result of the nationalist degeneration of their states.

But the dominant contradiction and resultant social antagonism within the *entire* world social system is that between the forces of world socialist revolution (of which the socialist world is the partial-victorious expression and embodiment) and the forces of world capitalism.

Since the productive forces of modern society are complex,

have a world character and operate through the international division of labour, they demand, for their full functioning and further free development, world-wide planning. They require a socialist economic organization for that reason.

But the world bourgeoisie led by the U.S.A. imperialism would naturally resist such a programme and its consummation since socialism signifies the extinction of capitalist private property, the very condition of existence of the bourgeoisie as a class.

Since socialism is the historical necessity of our epoch, the struggle for socialism has a historically progressive significance.

Adopting this as the criterion, we can divide the social contradictions within the capitalist world enumerated above into the following categories :

Historically reactionary :

- (1) Inter-capitalist wars,
- (2) Imperialist war on socialist countries.

Historically progressive :

- (1) Socialist class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie within a capitalist country.
- (2) Wars of National Liberation which undermine imperialist capitalism.

Though capitalist property has been liquidated in the socialist countries in varying degrees and thus the material foundation of the socialist economy and society has been created, a privileged bureaucratic caste, which has suppressed proletarian democracy, rules in those countries.

Though since the death of Stalin, due to the pressure of the growing discontent of the peoples of these countries, a process of "de-Stalinization" has started in varying degrees, Stalinism and Stalinist bureaucratic regimes still persist there though in subdued and softened forms.

The struggles of the peoples of the socialist countries (the heroic Hungarian Revolution, the Poznan Revolt in Poland and others) for eliminating bureaucratic regimes and establishing genuine socialist workers' democratic regimes have a historically progressive character. This is because these struggles will eliminate the distortion and retardation of the advance of the societies of those countries in the direction of the socialist society

due to the bureaucratic regimes.

The struggles between the socialist countries, however, have a historically reactionary character since they signify a fratricidal war between those countries and their resultant weakening (ultimately the weakening of the forces of world socialism) to the advantage of the forces of world capitalism.

Contradictions, Progressive and Reactionary

The contemporary world social system is thus torn with numerous contradictions and resultant social antagonisms and conflicts.

Contradictions which are fundamentally irreconcilable cannot be reconciled. For instance, the contradiction between the imperialist country and the colonial country is irreconcilable and, sooner or later, it must give rise to the national liberation struggle of the enslaved colonial people and, in certain favourable conditions, to its victory. Similarly, the contradiction between the exploiting bourgeoisie and the exploited proletariat of a capitalist country is also irreconcilable and, sooner or later, must give rise to the socialist working class movement and, in certain favourable conditions, result in the socialist victory of the proletariat. Again, the contradiction between the bureaucracy of a workers' state and the people is also irreconcilable and, sooner or later, must give rise to an open struggle between them and, under certain favourable historical conditions, must result in the victory of the people.

Similarly, the contradiction between the capitalist world system with its implicit need for expansion and the socialist world must lead to a conflict between the two.

As Lenin defined, "Development is the struggle of opposites."

Neither fascist nor military dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (as in Pakistan) can for all time successfully suppress the urge and the movement for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism since the socialist urge of the people is only the subjective expression of the need for socialism, the basic condition for free and higher historical economic and cultural development of the societies within which such dictatorships are established. These dictatorships can only temporarily sus-

pend the operation of the basic contradiction within those societies (resulting in forcibly suppressing the socialist class struggle of the proletariat) and maintain a historically outmoded and putrefying capitalist social system.

Since the three contradictions mentioned above which manifest themselves in three types of struggle have a historically progressive significance, their development paves way for a historically progressive transformation of the contemporary world social system into an integrated world socialist system. Those who propagate the concept of peaceful co-existence between imperialist powers and enslaved colonial peoples and between the exploiting bourgeoisie and the exploited proletariat only stifle the functioning of the respective contradictions existing between them and thereby assist the perpetuation of the status quo.

Similarly, the sharpening of the struggle between the Stalinist bureaucracies and the peoples of the socialist countries plays a historically progressive role since it aims at eliminating the bureaucratic obstacle to the free economic, social and cultural development of the societies of these countries and the free development of the personality and creative powers of the individuals of those societies. Under socialism individual freedom should blossom and flower more than it ever did in any past or present society.

It was Trotsky who with his brilliant Marxist intuition predicted, even when the Soviet bureaucracy was at the apex of its power and was suppressing the faintest opposition to it by terrorist methods, that as a result of the further development of the Soviet society, the contradiction between the nationalised property relations and the existence of the bureaucratic regime will be aggravated till a stage will be reached when the people will launch a struggle against the bureaucracy for establishing socialist democracy. History has vindicated this scientific prognosis of Trotsky.

In contrast to these three historically progressive contradictions, two in the capitalist world and one in the socialist world, the contradictions viz. that between the imperialist powers resulting in inter-imperialist wars and that between the imperialist powers and the socialist countries resulting in the imperialist

war on the latter, have a historically reactionary significance. Those wars destroy on an extensive scale the productive forces of society including human beings and have, as their objective, the preservation of the historically outmoded capitalist social system.

Any imperialist war on socialist countries is a reactionary war. Imperialism attacks socialist countries not with a view, as Trotsky vividly states, to punishing the Stalinist bureaucracies for denying socialist democracy to the people but to destroy the historically higher socialist property relations.

A communist country cannot launch a war on another country to impose communism on the people of that country as China did against Tibet on the ground that it was once a part of the feudal Chinese empire. If it perpetrated this act, it would imply a flagrant violation of the basic principles of Marxism. Such an act is also impermissible from the standpoint of communist morality since communism is opposed to all forms of oppression including national oppression.

As Lenin remarked, people do not like missionaries with bayonets in hand.

Similarly, a communist country cannot forcibly seize the territory (or a part of it) of another country. China's armed aggression against India resulting into its forcible occupation of a part of the border territory of India also signifies the trampling upon the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

Such practices by a communist country discredit communism itself and harm the interests of the world socialist movement.

The growth of creative contradictions and resultant historically progressive struggles have a historically progressive significance. It is through the working of these contradictions and resultant struggles that social progress is achieved and higher social systems come into existence.

The reactionary contradictions and resultant historically reactionary social struggles like inter-imperialist war or imperialist war on socialist countries must be prevented from breaking out. If not, they would result in social retrogression and the destruction of the progressive gains achieved by mankind in the past.

Marxism reveals the genetic source of the development of a system viz. the basic contradiction within it. Its functioning provides life to the system and leads to its development, decay and final extinction but a creative extinction which gives birth to a new higher system, and so on and so on. The social evolutionary process advances dialectically i.e. through the creative vitality of contradiction within the human society. The theory of "Peaceful Co-existence" gives the impression of lumping together all species of contradictions and struggles (both progressive and reactionary), of condemning all types of wars (national liberation war, socialist class struggle, inter-imperialist war, imperialist war and others).

Philosophically speaking, it robs the system of movement, of development through its creative contradiction. By stifling this creative contradiction, it robs the system of its inherent power of self-negation resulting in the birth of a new higher system.

Politically, it disarms the oppressed and exploited nations and classes.

Ethically it would perpetuate national and class oppression.

But the contradictions cannot be permanently stifled by such utopian propaganda.

Searchlight of Marxism

Our epoch is tempestuous. The entire social world of man has become one blazing furnace of grim social struggles, wars, revolts and revolutions.

The world is a volcano and the world history has become a veritable hurricane.

Titanic events explode in the contemporary world with cyclonic speed. And the menace of a thermo-nuclear war perennially hangs over humanity which would result even in the annihilation of civilization and the human species itself.

Behind this bizarre and nightmarish landscape of the contemporary scene, a law is operating. The cognizance of this law is the prerequisite to trace the genesis of the momentous crisis in the present phase of human evolution, to evolve a scientific programme of the resolution of the crisis and to mobilize the social forces whose interests are also reflected in such a pro-

gramme.

It was Marx who discovered the law of movement of human society in general and of the capitalist society (its rise, development and ultimate inevitable collapse) in particular.

Though some secondary theoretical conclusions and prognoses of Marx regarding the capitalist society have been contradicted by history, by the real movement of history, the fundamental method (materialist dialectic, the best methodological tool evolved by man hitherto to decode reality) and basic theoretical conclusions as well as prognoses of social development (in its basic direction though not in point of time) have been corroborated by life itself.

The author is a convinced Marxist. Though he recognises the necessity of further enriching Marxism (as formulated and developed by Marx, Engels, Plechanov, Lenin, Trotsky and Caudwell) by incorporating into it the generalization of new developments which have taken place during the intervening period, he feels an impregnable conviction that the fundamentals of Marxism (its basic philosophical, sociological, political and economic theories) have been confirmed by history and life.

The book embodies an aggregate of articles published by the author in various magazines and lectures delivered by him before Marxist groups on diverse problems — philosophical, sociological, political and economic — in past over three decades.

They have been classified into four sections viz. (1) Theoretical, (2) On India, (3) On Gandhism and (4) On Stalinism.

Since the problems dealt with were chosen arbitrarily and not in conformity with a single scheme, they do not constitute a single pattern or form an inter-connected unified theme. The themes discussed represent an effort of the author to apply the Marxist method to some crucial problems.

Regarding these articles and lectures, each of these is a closed unit. Hence, repetition of certain concepts which are indispensable for the discussion of the central themes of some articles or lectures occurs in those articles and lectures.

The author has reproduced the articles and lectures in the volume strictly as in the original form not altering them in the

slightest. He did not consider it proper or truthful to recast them. They, thereby, reflect the political and ideological evolution of the author himself over this long period.

Further, the essays should naturally be read in the context of the historical situation in which they were written.

I express my thanks to the proprietors of the Popular Book Depot and particularly to Sjt. Ramdas Bhatkal for publishing this volume in the present elegant form.

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I

Theoretical

INTRODUCTION

SECTION I is comprised of essays, the majority of which were contributed as articles by the author to various magazines.

The essays deal with problems of crucial philosophical and sociological significance. As a convinced Marxist, the author has discussed these problems from the standpoint of Dialectical Materialism (the philosophy of Marxism) and Historical Materialism (the sociological theory of Marxism).

The essay "Individual and Society" deals with the relationship of the individual and society in its two aspects namely,

- (1) the individual as the product of society, *as well as*
- (2) the individual as the maker of society.

The author attempts to combat the error of non-Marxist philosophers, psychologists and sociologists who pose the problem as the individual vs. society. He has also discussed historically and materialistically many other aspects of the problem such as those of the formation of the individual's consciousness, the driving forces of the individual and social transformation and others.

The essay "Is Reason Innate in Man?" tries to refute the view that Reason is the innate psychic property of man. It tries to establish that the faculty of Reason emerged and has been historically developing with the emergence and development of human society (the product of man's collective struggle against Nature) and the resultant development of man, and also that Reason varies with different societies and with different classes in the same society.

In the essay "What is Progress? Basic Criterion" the author has stated that the level of development of the productive

forces (signifying man's level of control over Nature) should be adopted as the basic criterion of social progress. This is because all other forms of progress such as the degree of humanization of social relations, of the rise of material standards of life, of the increase of woman's freedom, of the progress of moral ideas, and of the emergence of higher and higher cultures (social, scientific, philosophical and artistic), in *the final analysis*, depend upon and are derivatives of the fundamental form of progress viz. that in the economic domain.

The essay "Origin of Ideas" represents the Marxist view that ideas originate in extant social material conditions and change with the change in social material conditions. The author has, however, tried to prove that ideas, though their genesis is in social material conditions, retroact on social material conditions also.

In the essay "Materialist Conception of History" the author has very succinctly (in a super-concentrated form) stated the basic idea—the central core of the theory—of social development as formulated by Marx.

The essay "What are Classes?" explains the Marxist conception of what constitutes a class. It also tries to trace the historico-economic causes of the dissolution of the pre-historic non-class tribal society, of the rise of class society (the extant capitalist society being its last type) and of the future inevitable emergence of world-wide classless communist society.

In the essay "Capitalist World, Its General Crisis" the author has tried to lay bare the fundamental reason of the present crisis of the world capitalist system which, according to him, is structural and not episodic. Further, the crisis is world wide in scope and has also invaded all domains of life (economic, social, political, cultural).

In the essay "Marxist Theory of State" the author has stated the Marxist view that the institution of the State emerged at a certain stage of the evolution of society (when society became class-stratified), that different types of states arose with the emergence of different class societies, and that the state is the organ of class domination. With such a genesis, the institution of the State will disappear in the future with the disappearance of classes.

In the last essay "Parliamentarism : Reformist and Revolu-

tionary” the author has tried to contrast the social democratic approach with the Marxist-Leninist approach to the Parliament. He has also explained the role of the Parliamentary front of struggle in the total working class struggle for socialism. He has tried to refute both the social democratic reformist and the anarchist “boycottist” conceptions regarding the Parliament and elections.

I

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

I

Man as Product of Society

ALL terrestrial material development, on the background of the cosmic milieu, culminated in the emergence of the biological species, Man, its most complex and conscious product.

Due to their peculiar physical structure, the individuals of the human species could not carry on the struggle for existence against their environment individually and by physiological means such as hands, teeth etc. Hence they always lived in society (as a tribe, a community, a people, a nation) and used technology (instruments of production) for the production of material means of sustenance (food, clothing, shelter, etc.). These instruments of production together with such pre-requisites of production as land, means of transport etc. and, above all, creative human labour power constitute the productive forces of society. As Stalin says :

The instruments of production wherewith material values are produced, the people who operate the instruments of production and carry on the production of material values, thanks to a certain production experience and labour skill — all these elements jointly constitute the productive forces of society.¹

The level of development of the productive forces and their character determine the nature of the social relations of men in production and, consequently, all social relations in general.

* Published in *The New Perspective*, January and February 1948.

1 Stalin, J., *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, p. 25.

Thus, the nature of the productive forces of the pre-historic society (stone tools of the paleolithic and neolithic periods, the bow and the arrow) determined the communist and tribal character of that society. The nature of the productive forces existing in the slave, feudal and capitalist societies determined the slave, feudal and capitalist character of those societies. As Marx remarks :

The hand-mill gives you a society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, a society with the industrial capitalist.²

And further,

The use and fabrication of instruments of labour, although existing in the germ among certain species of animals, is specifically characteristic of the human labour-process, and Franklin therefore defines man as a tool-making animal. Relics of by-gone instruments of labour possess the same importance for the investigation of extinct economic forms of society, as do fossil bones for the determination of extinct species of animals. It is not the articles made, but how they are made, and by what instruments, that enables us to distinguish different economic epochs.³

And again,

Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations.⁴

The development of productive forces is the point of departure of all social evolution. These productive forces continuously develop. At a certain stage of their development, they come in irreconcilable collision with the extant social relations of production. For their further free development, they need a new complex of social relations of production. This contradiction between the developed productive forces of society and the extant social relations of production is finally resolved, in class society, through the subjective action of class struggle, and will be resolved through planned economy in the

2 Marx, Karl, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 92.

3 Marx, Karl, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 159.

4 Marx, Karl, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 92.

classless communist society of the future. As Rudas remarks :
 The result of this contradiction between the productive forces and production relations in communist society will be a higher and higher form of communism. And this will continue while the conditions of our globe permit the development of human society.⁵

Thus, the historical process of the development of productive forces, at certain moments (nodal points) in historical evolution, leads to and is paralleled by a process of the structural transformation of human society. Primitive tribal society and the slave (in East European countries), feudal, and capitalist societies which in historical sequence succeeded it, together with the future world-scale communist society, constitute an ascending series of social structures brought into being as the consequence of the historical process of continuous development of the productive forces of the collective man. Further, the social transformation is accomplished through the subjective factor of human action.

The productive forces and the social organization determined by the level of development of these productive forces are the means of the collective man to effectively carry on his biological struggle for existence against his environment. Man has always lived in society (in spite of the view, to the contrary, of Rousseau and some other bourgeois sociologists) and has carried on economic production by joint labour of all its members (in primitive tribal society) or of a section of its members (in class society) and with the help of technology. This constitutes the material mode of existence of the human species.

Society *as such* (in the abstract) does not exist. It can exist only as a historical type, primitive communist, slave, feudal, capitalist and future communist. Man *as such* (in the abstract) does not exist. He exists as the individual of a particular society. *The general exists only through the particular.*

The individual man is born in a definite society independent of his will. At birth, there is no freedom of choice even for a Hitler, a Churchill, a Stalin, a Trotsky, or a Gandhi, to be born into this or that type of society.

Man is a biological individual at his birth, inheriting the genic

5 Rudas, L., *Dialectical Materialism and Communism*, p. 32.

structure from his parents which marks him with individuality which is his own and which distinguishes him from other individuals. His specific genic structure determines his specific capacity and temperament.

After his birth, the individual interacts with the milieu surrounding him which is essentially social. There is perennial interaction between him and the particular society into which he is born. Out of this interaction, from the very moment of his birth, his psychological structure and ideology are being built up. These are determined by the specific nature of the interaction between his specific genic structure as an individual and the specific type of society into which he is born.

Though capacity and temperament of the individual are determined at birth by his specific genic structure, the psychological traits and ideology which he subsequently develops are the product of his interaction with the surrounding social milieu.

The social milieu consists of the productive forces and the social relations of production determined by these forces (both these constituting the economic structure of society), the social institutions which are the outgrowth of the economic base of the given society, and the various ideologies existing in that society as the conscious part of the social superstructure determined by the economic base. "Social being determines social consciousness" (Marx), and these ideologies are the forms in which the humanity of that society becomes conscious of its material being. As Stalin remarks :

Hence, if in different periods of the history of society, different social ideas, theories, views and political institutions are to be observed; if under the slave system we encounter certain social ideas, theories, views and political institutions, under feudalism others, and under capitalism others still, this is not to be explained by the 'nature', the 'properties' of the ideas, theories, views, and political institutions themselves, but by the different conditions of the material life of the society at different periods of social development.⁶

It is obvious, therefore, that ideas cannot be in advance of the conditions of the material mode of existence of a society.

In class societies, the socio-economic structure is based on

⁶ Stalin, J., *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, pp. 17-18.

the existence of classes with different and even antagonistic class interests. The economic conditions of being of a class sooner or later determine the psychology and the ideology of that class.

How does the specific ideology of a class emerge? We will investigate this problem.

Every generation inherits from the past a certain culture. It constitutes its cultural capital to start with. In class societies, each class continues and reforges this inherited culture principally on the basis of the experience of its own class struggle carried on by it to serve its specific class interests which also increasingly builds up its class consciousness. The most intelligent and conscious individuals of a class together with the *declassified* individuals of other classes who migrate to the camp of that class, more or less assimilate the inherited and developing natural and social scientific culture of the epoch. They further generalize, from the standpoint of the class position and resultant class interests of the class to which they belong or, as in the case of the *declassified* intellectuals (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and others), of the class which they have identified themselves with, the class struggles in the existing society in its different phases. Through the lens of the specific consciousness of their class which they embody, these intellectuals reforge the inherited and developing culture of the given society into the culture (ideology) of that class. The consciousness of these individuals has a specific class structure and, therefore, the ideology (the philosophy, the sociological theory, the economic, political and ethical doctrines) which they evolve acquires a class character mirroring the needs and the interests of that class.

The process of forging a class ideology, basically out of the elements of the inherited and developing culture of the epoch and, further, on the basis of the experience of class struggles within the existing society, is determined by the specific texture of (class) consciousness of the intellectual vanguard of that class reflecting the position and interests of the latter in the given society.

All knowledge is generalized practice of man. As Mao-se-Tung observes, all natural sciences evolved out of man's practice of material production (relation between Man and Nature)

and social sciences (dealing with relations between men) out of the practice of social struggles. Social struggles take place between socio-economic groups, the genesis and nature of these groups being bound up with the particular mode of production on which a society economically rests. Further, the mode of production is determined by the nature and level of development of the productive forces of that society. That is why, in history, *particular* classes and class struggles emerge in a *particular* phase of man's social existence.

The inherited culture of a society is the basis and the point of departure for further cultural development. Each class, through its intellectual vanguard, carries on the further development of the old culture according to its own class consciousness, class position, and class needs and on the basis of its *own* generalization of the class struggles in that society.

That is why Lenin defined Marxism as "the winding up of the three main ideological currents of the nineteenth century, the English classical political economy, French socialism and German philosophy," by the intellectual vanguard (Marx, Engels) of the proletariat. Marxism was the proletarian class ideology, a proletarian class continuation and further development (by the intellectual representatives of the proletariat) of the past culture principally on the basis of the experience of proletarian class struggle. Due to the fact that inherited scientific knowledge of Man, in its historical evolution, had reached a stage when, after being reforged by a specific class viz. the proletariat through its intellectual vanguard, it could provide an objective comprehension of the natural and social worlds, the proletarian class ideology, Marxism, consequently became also for the first time, in the history of culture, a scientific ideology.

Similarly, Brahmo Samaj in India represented an attempt at *reforging of the inherited feudal Hinduism into bourgeois Hinduism by bourgeois intellectuals* (bourgeois because they considered bourgeois society as the ideal society) like Raja Ram Mohan Roy to meet the requirements of the development of a bourgeois society in India. It was the Indian counterpart of Protestantism which represented the reforging of feudal Christianity into bourgeois Christianity and which, in the immature phase of the development of the European bourgeoisie, be-

came the ideological weapon of that class in its struggle against the existing feudal society.

The material conditions of life of a class, its specific position in the economic structure of the society of which it is a part, and its resultant needs and interests determine, *in the final analysis*, the texture and content of its specific class consciousness and ideology.

A class, however, does not live in a vacuum. It feels the pressure and impact of other classes which surround it. There is perpetual interaction between classes.

In a class society, the social milieu comprises various ideologies and social institutions. It also comprises class antagonisms, class struggles, etc. which are absent in a classless society.

The individual is born in a particular society independent of his will. He is an individual of a given society. He derives his material and ideological nourishments from that society. Just as there are no society and men *as such* but only the society and the men of a particular historical period, so also there is no human nature *as such* but the *particular* 'human nature' of the *particular* humanity of a *particular* society only. The "human nature" of the individual is the product of his interaction (*as that individual, possessing a specific genic structure inherited at birth*) with the particular society into which he is born.

The individual man never lived alone; he has always lived in society. His consciousness was always the product of and was moulded by the interaction of his individual genic structure and the society in which he lived. The transformation of the social structure as a result of economic evolution at a crucial historical moment also leads to the transformation of the individual man, of his 'human nature'. As Rudas remarks :

One of the greatest advances made in historical science by Marx is precisely that of having shown that man is a historical product of the given society in which he lives. 'Human nature' therefore changes together with the development of society and as long as society is divided into classes, 'human nature' changes also with the classes to which its owners belong. The 'nature' of a capitalist is necessarily different from that of a Roman slave-holder or a feudal lord; and the 'nature' of a proletarian is again different, not only from that of a slave or a serf, but also from that of a bourgeois or a peasant

of our epoch.⁷

And further,

We saw that class society allows no room for a real human nature, only for a class nature of man. In class society there is no such thing as 'humanity', there are only classes. Even in primitive communism — a classless but very primitive society — there existed no humanity because mankind was divided into innumerable tribes lacking any unity between themselves, combating each other in eternal feuds. Only in (future) Communism there will be, for the first time in the history of mankind, humanity as a whole, divided neither into hostile tribes, nor into hostile classes or nations. But even then, 'human nature' will of course change and develop together with the development of society. Even then there will be no unchangeable, invariable 'human nature'.⁸

The individual man at birth has no innate or immutable psychological traits or ideological orientations, such as greed, envy, altruism, religious or ethical sense, solidarity feeling for fellow-men and others. In fact, these traits and orientations are the products of the subsequent interaction of the individual's genic structure with the particular social milieu in which he lives. As Christopher Caudwell remarks :

When we speak of 'man' we mean the genotype or individual, the instinctive man as he is born, who if 'left to himself' might grow up into something like a dumb brute, but instead of this he grows up in a certain kind of society as a certain kind of man — Athenian, Aztec or Londoner. We must not think of the genotype as completely plastic or amorphous. It has certain definite instincts and potentialities which are the source of its energy and its restlessness. Nor are all genotypes alike. Men differ among themselves because of inborn characteristics. Society is not, however, opposed to this inborn individuality; on the contrary, the differentiation which comes with increase of civilization is the means of realizing men's particularities. Man cannot choose between being an artist or a scientist in a society which has neither art nor science; nor between biology and psychology where science is still no more than vague

⁷ Rudas, L., *Dialectical Materialism and Communism*, p. 29.

⁸ *ibid*, p. 30.

astrological superstition.

This genotype is never found 'in the raw'. Always it is found as a man of definite concrete civilization with definite opinions, material surroundings, and education — a man with a consciousness conditioned by the relations he has entered into with other men and which he did not choose but was born into. Men were originally drawn into these relations by their struggle with Nature or outer reality.⁹

Thus, 'the individual vs. society', the individual contraposed to society, is a fundamental error. The individual man can exist and realize the unfoldment of his potentialities only through society.

Since the individual man, due to the weakness of his bodily structure, always lived in society, he always felt solidarity feeling for fellow humans. The social consciousness of man is not *inherent* in his nature but is the product of the collective labour process and resultant social life in which he is obliged to participate for survival. Social consciousness, in the final analysis, is a social material product.

Since the collective labour process was limited in the primitive communist tribe to a small number of humans, the social consciousness was limited and the solidarity feeling of an individual member of the tribe was restricted only to those humans. He felt feelings of indifference or hostility towards humans organized in other tribes.

Since the collective labour process will envelop the entire humanity in the future worldwide communist society for which the material basis has now been created by capitalism in the form of the highly developed productive forces, international division of labour and a unified world economy, the individual of that society *based on cooperative communist social relations on a world scale* will develop a solidarity feeling for *all* members of humanity. The live feeling of brotherhood among all men will be the psychological product of that society based on the worldwide collective labour process, social ownership of means of production, cooperative social relations of production and resultant elimination of objective conflict of material interests among men. The dream of noble humanitarians like Christ

and Buddha of a society based on the practice of brotherliness among men will materialize then, *and then only*, because after centuries of development of productive forces of humanity, the economic pre-condition for the emergence of such non-antagonistic and cooperative social relationships would have been created.

Communism is proletarian humanism, is scientific humanism.

In a class society, though all its members are enmeshed in the web of a single economy, the class ownership of the means of production creates an objective conflict of material interests among owning and non-owning classes. The common material interests of the class of owners (in spite of conflict of individual or sectional interests among themselves) create a solidarity feeling in them restricted to their own members. The common material interests of the members of the non-owning exploited class kindle in them a feeling of solidarity restricted to themselves. In class society, therefore, as a result of the antagonistic material interests, social consciousness common to all its members does not exist. In such a society only separate class consciousnesses exist though all its members are enmeshed within the network of a single economy. No amount of propaganda can replace separate class consciousnesses by a single organic social consciousness among its members. Consciousness is the product of material conditions of existence and the separate material interests of different classes create separate class consciousnesses, class psychologies, and class ideologies in which classes become conscious of their different or antagonistic material interests.

For securing livelihood, the individual man enters into definite economic relations with other men. He has never been an isolated individual struggling alone against Nature for extracting nutrition from the latter for self-preservation. He has always struggled against Nature in union with his fellow-men, and, hence, is always found, in time and space, a member of a society. In primitive tribal society, the individual man was a member of one of the tribes which though internally united was warring against other tribes. In slave, feudal and capitalist societies the individual man, who is always a member of a definite class of a particular class society, has been always engaged in struggle with another class in that society as also,

as a member of that society, engaged in a struggle with other societies co-existing with it. Only the proletariat of a nation, *as it becomes class-conscious* in the process of its class struggle against its own bourgeoisie, develops international proletarian class-consciousness, unites with the proletariat of other nations and, in alliance with them, organizes a worldwide struggle for ending world capitalism and creating a worldwide classless communist society. In future communist world society, the individual human will be a member of a society which will comprise the entire mankind and which will be based on the elimination of all struggle between man and man and on co-operative social relations among its members. *Then alone, he will develop a truly human consciousness.*

The individual man of a class society, however, is a member of a society which is disunited, which is torn into classes with irreconcilable conflicting material interests and, therefore, perpetually struggling with one another.

Further, in a class society, he inevitably belongs to a particular class all members of which, as Lenin observes, stand in identical relations to the means of production, occupy identical position in the economic structure of society, earn livelihood in an identical way. He belongs to the class of slaves, slave-owners, serfs, artisans, landlords, capitalists, professional groups peasant proprietors, moneylenders, tenants, land labourers or others. He is not merely a biological individual but a socio-economic type e.g. a capitalist, a worker, a tenant, a serf, a slave, or a slave-owner.

Just as man *as such* (in the abstract) has never existed but only as the man of savage society, barbarous society, slave society, feudal society or capitalist society, the individual *as such* (in the abstract) has never existed except as the individual belonging to the collective pre-historic tribe, or, in class society, belonging to one of the classes comprising a particular class society. For instance, in contemporary capitalist society, an individual belongs not only to the multitude of human beings living in the capitalist phase of existence of the human species but also is a member of one of the definite classes composing the capitalist society. Thus, in the tribal society, there were tribal men. In class society, there are class men. *Pure human beings have never existed possessing pure human nature. Similarly, man*

armed with pure Reason immanent in him is a pure fiction.

In fact, man himself, his body, sense organs, intelligence, "Reason", consciousness etc. are the products of a long drawn-out bio-historical struggle between the prehuman ape-ancestor of man and its environment. It was in the process of this struggle waged in groups and by means of technology, most crude in earlier stages not transcending stones and other objects picked up from the environment, that the human body, with its specific sense apparatus and brain, was increasingly forged. Collective labour process carried on with increasing purposefulness, by means of technique, was the specific form of this struggle. While changing Nature through labour practice (economic production), the ape-ancestor of man changed its own physical structure and was transformed more and more into a human being developing more and more "Reason", intelligence. Language developed as the indispensable means of carrying on collective labour activity in production by the developing man. There cannot be thought without language and the human mind, thought, consciousness, were, in the final analysis, the offspring of economic production and resultant social life. As Engels remarks :

Labour is the primary basic condition for all human existence and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself.....

Darwin has given us an approximate description of these ancestors of ours. They were completely covered with hair, they had beards and pointed ears and they lived in bands in the trees.....

Almost certainly, as an immediate consequence of their mode of life, for in climbing the hands fulfil quite different functions from the feet, these apes when moving on level ground began to drop the habit of using their hands and to adopt a more and more erect posture in walking. This was a decisive step in the transition from ape to man.¹⁰

And further,

Much more important is the direct demonstrable reaction of the development of the hand on the rest of the organism.....

The mastery over nature, which begins with the development of the hand, with labour, widened man's horizon at every new

¹⁰ Engels, F., *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 279.

advance. He was continually discovering new, hitherto unknown properties of natural objects. On the other hand, the development of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by multiplying cases of mutual support, joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at the point where they had something to say to one another. The need led to the creation of its organ; the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed by means of gradually increased modulation, and the organs of the mouth gradually learned to pronounce one articulate letter after another.¹¹

And still further,

First comes labour, after it, and then side by side with it, articulate speech — these were the most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man, which, for all its similarity to the former, is far larger and more perfect. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments — the sense organs. Just as the gradual development of speech is inevitably accompanied by a corresponding refinement of the organ of hearing, so the development of the brain as a whole is accompanied by refinement of all the senses.....

Hundreds of thousands of years — of no greater significance in the history of the earth than one second in the life of man — certainly elapsed before human society arose out of a band of tree-climbing monkeys. Yet it did finally appear. And what do we find once more as the characteristic difference between the band of monkeys and human society? Labour.¹²

Man slowly generalised his first semi-instinctive collective labour practice and the foundation of natural sciences was laid. The instincts of the individual needed to be adapted to the needs of collective labour and art was born. As Christopher Caudwell remarks, art arose out of the necessities and the rhythm of collective labour practice. Scientific knowledge born of the generalization of previous social practice of collective man

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 282.

¹² *ibid*, pp. 284-85.

guided his present practice and, with further practice when generalized, it became richer. Increasing scientific knowledge helped man to improve tools, the material means of economic production. In the process of operating the progressively improving technique, men developed greater and greater technical skill. His psychology was built up in the process of his participation in the economic and resultant general social life of society. At a given moment, the existing social ideologies and institutions, arising as a superstructural outgrowth of the economic base of a society and also as a historical continuation of the past institutional and ideological capital of society, also contributed to modify and build up the psychology and outlook of the people of a given society. As Marx remarks, "While changing nature man changes his own nature."

Humanity *as such* never existed. It existed as a humanity living in a particular society resting on a definite system of production and with a definite superstructure which was determined by the economic base and *which though arising from this base also retroacted on it*. The individual humans of a particular society cannot transcend the fact that they are historical products of that society. They cannot transcend the historical limitations of the particular phase of social existence in which they collectively live. Even the revolutionary ideas of the revolutionary class of a given society arise out of the concrete tasks emerging from "the needs of development of the material life" of that society which, for further development, demands a revolutionary transformation of that society. As Stalin remarks :

New social ideas and theories arise only after the development of the material life of society has set new tasks before society. . . . New social ideas and theories arise precisely because they are necessary to society, because it is impossible to carry out the urgent tasks of development of the material life of society without their organizing, mobilizing and transforming action.¹³

This explains why only certain groups of revolutionary ideas emerged in certain societies only. Revolutionary democratic ideas emerged within feudal society just as revolutionary socialist ideas emerged within capitalist society. Ideas cannot

13 Stalin, J., *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, p. 20.

be in advance of economic evolution. They are the products of a particular society.

In class society, different classes composing it exhibit different psychologies and evolve different ideologies determined basically by the material conditions of their class existence and their class interests and, further subject to their mutual impact.

All individuals of a class are not however identical. Their genic structures differ. Consequently, though they, sooner or later, evolve the same psycho-ideological structure, they differ among themselves. The specific genic structure of the individual of a class, which makes him react to and interact with its class and total social milieu in a specific manner, builds up the specific psycho-ideological structure of that individual. Hence, though basically the individuals of a class, due to their identical conditions of life and labour, come to possess, sooner or later, as class struggle develops, the same psycho-ideological structure, variations of this are found among its different members. The psycho-ideological structures of the individuals of a class, though basically having the same class character and content, exhibit individual peculiarities, are variants of the common class psychology and ideology.

In class society, there are class men having only a class 'human nature'. The 'human nature' of an individual is the individual expression of the 'human nature' of the class to which he belongs.

Society is not only the instrument of the individual man for the development of his personality and creative power but for his very survival. He can survive only through society. At his birth, he is born into a definite society. He has no free choice here. The biological individual that he is at his birth, his interaction, from birth onward, with the definite type of society into which he is born, forges him into the particular man he actually becomes. As Christopher Caudwell observes :

Society is a creation by which man attains a fuller measure of freedom than the beasts..... The essential feature of society is economic production. Man, the individual, cannot do what he wants, alone. He is unfree alone. Therefore he attains freedom by co-operation with his fellows. Science, by which he becomes conscious of outer reality, is social. Art, by which he becomes conscious of his feelings, is social. Eco-

conomic production, by which he makes outer reality conform to his feelings, is social and generates in its interstices science and art. It is economic production then that gives man freedom consciousness develops by the evolution of language, science, and art, and these are all born of economic production. Thus the freedom of man's actions depends on his material level, on his economic production. The more advanced the economic production, the freer the civilization.¹⁴

And further,

Russell, as we know and value him, is primarily a social product. Russell is a philosopher and not an animal because he was taught not only manners but language, and so given access to the social wisdom of ages of efforts. Language filled his head with ideas, showed him what to observe, taught him logic, put all other men's wisdom at his disposal, and awoke in him affectively the elementary decencies of society-morality, justice, and liberty. Russell's consciousness, like that of all useful social objects, was a social creation. Society made him, just as it makes a hat.¹⁵

Since collective man's control over Nature through collective labour practice increases, technology improves; total wealth grows; division of labour progresses; leisure accumulates; scientific knowledge (generalized social practice) advances; philosophic and artistic cultures become richer; social relations determined by the rising level of economic evolution become more extensive in scope and, even in the period of the existence of class societies, less and less coercive (slavery superseded by serfdom and serfdom succeeded by wage labour); the biological individual at his birth gets better and better social environment and therefore greater and greater freedom and opportunities for the development of his powers and personality.

Society based on economic production, carried on collectively and by means of technology, is the fundamental instrument, in its biological struggle for existence, of the species, Man. Society develops and, at a certain stage, undergoes a revolutionary transformation as a result of the operation of the contradiction between the productive forces and the existing social

14 Caudwell, Christopher, *Studies in a Dying Culture*, pp. 211-2.

15 *ibid.*, p. 214.

relations of production at a certain point in the development of this contradiction. This transformation takes place, in class society, through class struggle (the expression of this contradiction in class society), through the subjective action of a revolutionary class the liberation of which is bound up with the liberation of the productive forces from the existing historically outmoded social relations of production. Thus emerges an ascending series of historically higher and higher societies, tribal, slave, feudal, capitalist, and future communist society. The historical succession of these societies reflects man's increasing control over Nature, his environment. The human species biologically improves on the basis of this social-developmental process.

The individual member of the human species can survive only by being a member of society. He would otherwise perish or, in rare cases, if brought up from birth among any non-human species, sheep, wolves, or elephants, as some legends say, would develop not into a man but half man, half non-man. He would, due to his human physical structure at birth, possess brain but not thought or human consciousness since these are social products, products of the interaction of the individual man with the social milieu surrounding him. Thought is not possible without language and language is acquired by living in society. Ideas of man are ideas of particular objects and processes of the world which are derived through collective social practice and acquired by him through education and social exchange. Outside social life, there is only instinctive reaction to the environment as witnessed in the case of non-human species. Thought, human consciousness, intelligence, are social products and acquired by the individual man through society.

Since the individual is the product of society deriving his physical, psychological, and ideological nutritions from society, he develops in consciousness, intelligence, knowledge, aesthetic sensibility, solidarity feeling, and creative capacity, with the historical development of society, with its ascent to higher and higher levels of economic and resultant social, and cultural existence. The individual of the future communist society, which will be based on co-operative social relations and the resultant solidarity and brotherly feeling among men, and which further will be based on plenty and all the material and cultural

gains of all past epochs and their astonishingly rapid subsequent development under the conditions of communist social environment, will be extremely rich in scientific knowledge, aesthetic susceptibility, social feeling, physical strength and personal charm as well as in creative power. As Trotsky remarks:

Communist life will not be formed blindly like coral islands, but will be built consciously..... Man, who will learn how to move rivers and mountains, how to build people's palaces on the peaks of Mont Blanc and at the bottom of the Atlantic, will not only be able to add to his own life richness, brilliancy and intensity, but also a dynamic quality of the highest degree. The shell of life will hardly have time to form before it will burst open again under the pressure of new technical and cultural inventions and achievements.....¹⁶

And further,

Man will become immeasurably stronger, wiser and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic, his voice more musical. The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic. The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx.....

And above these peaks new peaks will rise.¹⁷

Heart is almost electrified with joy at the vision (scientifically arrived at and based on a historical prognosis) of the man of the future communist society portrayed above.

Though man is the product of society, the product of a definite historical milieu, he is, at the same time, the architect of history, the maker of society. We shall next investigate into the problem of the *active creative role of the individual in history*.

II

Man as the Maker of Society

THOUGH MAN is the product of society, of a definite historical milieu, he is at the same time the architect of history, the maker of society.

All that exists in society, is implied by society, nay society

¹⁶ Trotsky, L., *Literature and Revolution*, p. 254.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 256.

itself, is the creation of conscious and unconscious human activity.

It is man that created the material technique of production. He has used this technique for realizing products without which his very physical existence cannot be maintained. Throughout tens of thousands of years of his existence, he has been improving this technique till it has grown into the formidable and complex technique of contemporary society.

This technique of production, which has now assumed marvellous proportions, has not been a gift of any mythical benevolent deity but is the product of man's own creative activity.

Further, man is not only the architect of the material means of production but is also the creator of the different systems of social relations within which he operates these material productive forces. It is man that created different modes of production in different periods of his social existence. Various economic structures viz. primitive communist, slave, feudal, and modern capitalist, which generally emerged in historical succession in the life of every community, were created by man himself. It is man that changed slave economy into feudal economy and feudal economy into capitalist economy. The productive forces, which man (the inventor, the scientist) was developing, demanded, at a certain stage of their development, new social relations of production for their free development. These new production relations were also the product of human activity.

Thus, both the productive forces of society as well as social relations of production have been man's creations.

In the contemporary capitalist epoch, the productive forces of man have already developed to a point when, for their *free (unretarded and undistorted)* development they require socialist production relations. The world working class movement has for its objective the substitution of communist production relations in place of the existing capitalist production relations. This is not only the condition for the *free* development of productive forces (*free* and further economic evolution of society) but also for the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery (its class liberation) and of all mankind from all economic exploitation and resultant political oppression of man by man. Thus, man himself will be the architect of the future worldwide communist system of production relations.

In the sphere of the political life of society, too, different state structures, different constitutions and systems of laws, which came into existence in history, were the products of human activity. For example, in a number of European countries, it was the rising bourgeoisie which organized a political revolution, shattered the state of the ruling feudal nobility and recreated in its place the modern capitalist state which, as a state form, corresponded to the new expanding historically progressive capitalist mode of production. Similarly, it was the Russian proletariat which, through October Revolution, created the proletarian state, the historically determined lever for transforming capitalist society into communist society.

Thus, state structures are also the product of man's action.

Similarly, social institutions like family (all types found in history, matriarchal, patriarchal, polyandrous, polygamous, monogamous), caste system, and others, were created by human activity. It is also man, that, under the stress of qualitatively changed economic conditions, evolved different conceptions of social relationships in different historical periods, and, through his practical activity, reconstructed social institutions.

Ascending higher in the pyramidal structure of society which rests on the economic base, we encounter realms of ideology such as religion, morals, arts, philosophies, natural sciences and others comprising the sphere of the ideological life of man. Here, too, it is evident that all these "ideal products" are man's creations. The multitude of world outlooks (religious and non-religious), idealist and materialist philosophies, moral conceptions, art theories and art creations, as well as the rich scientific knowledge of the natural world embodied in natural sciences like physics, chemistry, biology and others, and of the social world embodied in social sciences, are also the products of human labour.

So all intellectual and artistic products are, like material products, also the creation of human beings.

Thus, man is the maker both of his material and ideological life. He is constantly engaged in building it, demolishing it, recreating it.

Thus, man is the architect of history, the maker of society.

This is an apparently paradoxical phenomenon of man, the product of society, also becoming, at the same time, the maker

of society. It is an instance of the law of the dialectic unity of opposites.

This paradox can be resolved when we consider man not as *abstract man who does not exist but as concrete, real, historically determined and developing man, the man of a particular society that he really is.*

Man, as we saw previously, is born into a particular society independent of his will. His infinite transactions with that society, from birth onward, builds up his psychology and ideology. To that extent, he is the product of that society.

The material life of society is, however, not stationary but ceaselessly dynamic due to the continuous development of its productive forces. The changes in the latter demand modification or even revolutionising of the existing social relations, social institutions, state structures etc.

The exigencies of the free development of the material life of society create and set new tasks to mankind. When men become conscious of these tasks, new ideas are born. These new ideas inspire men to practical efforts which result in the transformation of society.

Thus, man, who is the product of a definite society, evolves new outlooks, theories, social doctrines and concepts of social organization under the impact of the changes in the material base of that society.

Within feudal society in Europe, the productive forces (trade, manufacture etc.) were developing. These productive forces could expand *freely* only if feudal social relations were supplanted by capitalist social relations. Democracy in all spheres of social life, religious, political and others, was the condition for the development of capitalist economy. Outstanding members of the bourgeoisie, at that time the historically progressive new class, became conscious of this necessity and they (Voltaire, Rousseau, the Encyclopaedists) evolved democratic conceptions of social reorganization and thereby became the ideologues of the bourgeoisie, the architects of the historically progressive new capitalist mode of production. Without the aid of these new ideas, the bourgeois democratic revolution which accomplished the overthrow of the feudal society (an obstacle to the further economic and resultant cultural development of society) and led to the establishment of the capitalist

society (which provided free expression to the developed productive forces of society) would not have been possible.

Voltaire, Rousseau, Holbach, Helvetious, Diderot, and others were the conscious expression of the new social forces developing within the feudal society. The productive forces had developed in the feudal society to a point when they needed for their free development the destruction of that society and the establishment of the capitalist mode of production as the dominant mode of production. These men became conscious of the new modes of society for its further development and evolved, under the stress of these needs, democratic ideas which were the instruments for mobilizing the people for a revolutionary overthrow of the feudal society and its armed guard, the feudal state, and after the seizure of power by the bourgeoisie, for the consolidation of the new bourgeois society.

It was, thus, through the activity of man that the feudal society was destroyed and the capitalist society created. *Thus, man, the product of society, is also the maker of society.*

The ideological leaders of the bourgeoisie conceived bourgeois democratic ideas *precisely because* these ideas were the condition for solving the specific tasks of society which evolved at the given stage of its development. These ideas themselves were the products of the socio-historical milieu of the period.

Individuals, who create new ideas which become the ideological means to change society, are not *abstract* human beings but concrete living human beings of a definite society. When they become conscious of the tasks confronting society by its economic development, they evolve and formulate new ideas.

What ideas and ideals man will evolve, is determined by the socio-historical milieu in which he lives. Man makes history, changes society, by means of definite ideas which determine their programmes and strategies but these ideas themselves arise under the stress of the actual social conditions. That is why *particular* ideas arise in *particular* societies only.

All ideas, reactionary or progressive, which propel men to make or mar history, to retard or accelerate social advance, are social products. Man, the creator of these ideas, is himself a social product and hence the conceptions which he evolves are

socially determined. As Marx remarks :

As individuals express their life so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.¹⁸

The fact is, therefore, that definite individuals who are productively active in a determinate way enter into definite social and political relations.....

And further,

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, *the language of real life*. Conception, thought, the mental intercourse of men appear at this stage as the direct efflux of men's material behaviour. The same is true of mental production as expressed in the language of the politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc. — real active men as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life process.¹⁹

Since man is a *historically determined concrete living man*, the ideas that he evolves, the motives that he feels, the desires that move him, are determined by the social milieu in which he lives, with which he interacts. Thus even the *ideal* forces which drive him to action and change society, for the better or the worse, are social products.

Thus, the cannibalistic urge does not form the ingredient of the psyche of the man of slave, feudal, or capitalist society. The democratic view of life does not embarrass the man of slave or feudal society (in its rising phase). The urge for socialism becomes a mass urge only in the imperialist or the declining phase of capitalism when the highly developed productive forces demand socialist social relations of production. Fascist ideas are created by fascist ideologues only when the crisis of

18 Marx, K., *German Ideology*, p. 7.

19 *ibid.*, pp. 13-4.

capitalism deepens to an acute point, with the result that conditions of life begin to grow intolerable for the proletariat, class struggle sharpens and threatens to take a revolutionary form. In the changed social situation, the bourgeois democrat turns into a fascist.

Similarly, desires, the psychological driving force for action, also are the desires of the historically determined *concrete* living human beings and not abstract human beings who do not exist. That is why a particular group of desires are felt by men of a particular society. There are no *abstract* human beings with *infinite* human wants or desires. What wants and what desires will evolve and move men to action are determined by the type of society in which they live. As Christopher Caudwell remarks :

In fact man's desires are also subject to necessity. They change with history, with the change of methods of production and corresponding alteration in the superstructure of society. Yesterday a Roman glutton; to-day an Egyptian hermit.²⁰

Man's creations in spheres of art, philosophy, natural sciences, technology, are also historically determined for they are the creations of the historically determined men, who create on the basis of a definite society with its definite level of technical, economic and cultural development.

In the sphere of art, the art creations of the artist are determined so far as their ideological and emotional content is concerned, as observed by Christopher Caudwell, mainly by his ethical theory, political affiliation, and philosophy. These are determined for the artist by the class position he occupies in a definite class society.

Man makes history but cannot make it *arbitrarily*. If the programme of social reorganization he evolves is not in harmony with the objective tendency of social development, the economic movement of society, it will only founder.

There is no arbitrary freedom of will for man in the sphere of historical creation. The social objective must be scientifically derived out of the tendency of social development which is basically determined by the economic movement of society.

Freedom, as Engels said, is consciousness of Necessity.

Social development, like that of Nature, is law-governed. The economic processes of society determine all its life processes. Just as to change Nature it is indispensable to study the laws governing different domains of Nature, to change society one needs to study the law governing society.

Man can consciously make history only if he comprehends the law governing the social developmental process, only if he knows the basic law of the economic movement of society. He needs to evolve the programme from the objective (economic) tendency of development of society.

If the programme is in conflict with this objective tendency, he, with all his genius, will fail to realize it. Such unhistorical attempt on his part to strive against the historical tendency of social development will only retard social advance.

We will illustrate this.

Gandhi propagated for thirty years or more the programme of the resuscitation of pre-capitalist handicrafts. In spite of his immense hold over the people and the financial support he received from the Indian bourgeoisie for political strategic reason (to divert the agrarian masses from the road of class struggle), the programme remained unrealized. This was due to the fact that it was in contradiction to the objective (economic) tendency of development of society. It contradicted the laws of economic evolution.

Similarly, all programmes evolved by even the most outstanding economists of the bourgeoisie (Keynes and others), fascist or non-fascist, to stabilize the world capitalist economic system today i.e. in the epoch of imperialism or the decline of capitalism, cannot succeed since the level of development of productive forces and the resultant advanced degree of socialization of labour, have, on a world basis, long reached a point when they have come into irreconcilable clash with the capitalist social relations of production and national frontiers and demand, for their free functioning and further development, socialist production relations on a world scale.

Only those men, groups and classes can make history, re-organise society on a historically higher level who have conscious comprehension (Marxist revolutionaries) or unconscious sensing (Cromwell, Napoleon and other bourgeois revolutionaries of the epoch of rising capitalism) of the tasks confronting society

by its economic development. They alone can evolve programmes which are in harmony with the economic movement of society and therefore are capable of being fulfilled.

Man is free to resolve successfully those tasks only which are set to society by its economic development. In the contemporary phase of human existence, the phase when capitalist property relations have grown into an obstacle to further economic evolution of society, when "from being forms of development of productive forces they have become fetters on their development" (Marx), when the developed productive forces demand, for their free movement and growth, socialist economic relations, *man is free only to create socialism.*

Those individuals, groups, and classes, which attempt to conserve the historically outmoded capitalist system by political, economic, and ideological means, can only retard the growth of the historical movement of the proletariat for socialism. It is the working class in contemporary society which, by its very position in the socio-economic structure, is historically determined to end the capitalist system and create socialist society. *Its class liberation can be accomplished through socialism only which is also the need for the free economic development of society.* Sooner or later, the proletariat, the subjective agent of social transformation, *must*, through experience and education, rise equal to its historical task of being "the grave-digger of capitalism" (Marx) and the architect of socialism.

The bourgeoisie and its supporters can preserve capitalism for some time due to the immaturity, ideological, political and organisational, of the proletariat, by political and other means. But they cannot arrest the increasing disorganisation of capitalist economy which proceeds from the dialectic of capitalist economy itself. Their best attempts to stabilise that economy will prove abortive since the capitalist mode of production has come into collision with the "needs of further development of the material life of society" which demand the socialist mode of production.

Individuals, groups and classes, which are engaged in bolstering up a social system grown incompatible with the already developed productive forces of society (contradiction between form and content) cannot make history but can only temporarily prevent history from being made by historically

progressive revolutionary social forces.

The will, the desires, the wants, the ends, the purposes and the ideas of the individual, are the product of the interaction of that individual with his specific genic structure and the social milieu which surrounds him. But once these are engendered, they drive the individual to practical activity which retroacts on and influences society also.

In this wider sense, all members of a society are constantly engaged in modifying, changing society. Individuals, who are members of a reactionary class, retard social progress. Individuals, who are members of a historically progressive class the interests of which are bound up with the resolution of the tasks confronting society by its objective economic development, accelerate social progress. As Engels puts it, the historical event is the resultant of the conflicting wills of the multitude of individuals composing society.

As stated above, man is the product of the society into which he is born independent of his will. Subsequently, through his practical activity, he changes that society but can change it only in the direction determined, *in the final analysis*, by its economic movement. As Engels remarks :

We make our own history, but in the first place under very definite presuppositions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are finally decisive.²¹

Man's freedom of action thus moves within the limits of strict determinism i.e. he is free to achieve only such social aims as are determined by and derived from the stage of the economic development of that society. He thus achieves freedom of action only when the objective of that action is the resolving of the tasks arising out of the exigencies of the free economic development of that society.

This is a dialectical movement, of man, himself a product of society, subsequently (here cause and effect interpenetrate) retroacting on society itself and modifying it. As Marx observes:

In history at every stage there exists *a material outcome*, a sum of productive forces, a historically created relation to nature, and a historically created relation of individuals one to another, which outcome is handed down to each successive generation by

21 Marx, K. and Engels, F., *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 475-6.

its predecessor. Hence in each stage of history, there is a mass of productive forces, *capitals*. While they are in fact *modified* by the new generation, they also, on the other hand, *prescribe* to the new generation its conditions of living, and thus give it its *definite* development, its *specific* character. *Thus circumstances make men as much as men make circumstances.*²²

And further,

Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth. He makes it out of conditions, not such as he himself has chosen but of such as lie ready to his hand.²³

The individual, through his practical activity, retroacts on the society of which he is the product. His practical activity is guided by motives which are determined by his psychological and ideological structure. In spite of individual peculiarities, this structure, in class society, has a class character and content since the individual is not an *abstract* individual (Marx Stirner's Ego or unique "I") but a *concrete* living individual who is a member of one of the classes of a definite class society. The psychology and ideology of a class of which those of its individual members are only variants, are determined by the position of that class in the economic structure of society and its resultant specific class interests. The class is subject to the ideological and other pressures of other classes, but sooner or later, it builds up its own class psychology and class ideology on the basis of the entire material-cultural milieu of the period.

But the nature of classes is determined by the character of the mode of production which further is determined by the nature and level of development of the productive forces of that society.

Thus, *in the final analysis and in the final analysis only*, the motives of the individual emerge from the material milieu, out of the conditions of the material life of a society.

The individual need not be necessarily conscious of the social material forces behind the motive which moves him to practical activity and of which the motive is only the reflection in his head.

While forging a new society, men often imagine that they

²² Marx, K., *German Ideology*.

²³ Marx, K., *Eighteenth Brumaire*, Chapter 1.

are reviving an old one. As Marx remarks :

Thus did Luther masquerade as the Apostle Paul; thus did the Revolution of 1789 to 1814 deport itself as Roman Republic and Roman Empire alternately.²⁴

In fact, Luther and the architects of the French Revolution were engaged in consolidating a bourgeois society in place of the feudal one.

Similarly in contemporary India, bourgeois Gandhi, while actually engaged in consolidating the capitalist society, laboured under the hallucination that he was reviving Ram Raj i.e. the feudal society of ancient India.

The ideological and political leaders of the French Revolution also imagined that they were building an *ideal* society based on Reason, on the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, while actually they were forging a bourgeois society based on capitalist property relations and resultant capitalist exploitation of the proletariat.

Thus the individual need not necessarily be cognisant of the historical forces behind the motives that move him. His will, motives, desires, views, purposes, though conditioned by the historical milieu, need not be felt as so conditioned by him.

Christopher Caudwell portrays the phenomenon of the mutual influence of the individual and society thus :

A man is born with certain responses determined by his heredity, in a certain environment determined by its past. As he lives his life, innate responses and environment interact to form his consciousness, which is thus the result of a mutual tension between environment and instinct, begetting a continual development of the mind. Since all actions involve an equal and opposite reaction, he, in turn, changes the environment during each transaction which changes him. His environment of course includes other human beings.

A hero is a man whose life is such that, his instinctive equipment being what it is, and his environment being what it is, the effect he has on his environment is much greater than the effect it has on him. We may, therefore, say that he is a man who dominates and moulds his environment.²⁵

²⁴ *ibid*, Chapter 1.

²⁵ Caudwell, Christopher, *Studies In A Dying Culture*, p. 23.

But the individual can dominate and mould his environment only if he consciously or unconsciously makes as his objective the solution of the tasks set by society. As the same author observes :

Hitler and Mussolini drew their power from the same source as Lenin drew his, from the tension between capitalist social relations and the growth in productive forces. And by the usual irony of revolutions these charlatans appear at first as angels of construction and conservation and the hero seems the destructive element. Only later it is seen that their role is opposite, that the charlatans by wasting man's energy in vain regression are disintegrating all social relations, and that the hero by the very movement that sweeps the old forms off the stage brings into being the new.⁵⁶

He further observes :

Lenin had no doubt as to his tasks. The future he had to call into being was communist society and he knew how it was contained within and could be released from bourgeois social relations.²⁷

The great man cannot arbitrarily change society. Social development proceeds according to law and is, *in the final analysis*, determined by the economic movement. The development of the productive forces at certain nodal points of growth demands new economic relations, new social institutions. Great men become conscious of these tasks and struggle to resolve these tasks. The material prerequisite for the resolution of these tasks already exists within society since the tasks themselves arise out of the development of society. Great men are precisely great because they are aware of or sense the tasks set to society by its economic evolution. They, thus, become the subjective expression of the objective necessity and are able to transform society in accordance with the stage in the development of productive forces. They are free only to change society in harmony with the tendency of its economic development. The great man "serves as an instrument of necessity and cannot help doing so owing to his social status and to his mentality and temperament, which were created by his status

26 *Ibid*, p. 31.

27 *Ibid*, p. 40.

This too is an *aspect of necessity*. Since his social status has imbued him with this character and no other, he not only serves as an instrument of necessity, and cannot help doing so but also, he *passionately desires and cannot help desiring to do so*. This is an *aspect of freedom* and, moreover, of freedom that has grown out of necessity i.e. to be more correct, it is freedom that is identical with necessity — it is necessity transformed into freedom.”²⁸

That great men who transform society on a historically higher level are social products is proved by the fact that they, sooner or later, always emerged when historical necessity arose for them. Cromwell appeared in the epoch of bourgeois democratic revolution in England. Lenin appeared to organise the working class revolution in Russia when the free development of productive forces of Russian society demanded a democratic and socialist revolution.

Further, the great man is able to change society because he can influence the mind of the masses *who actually demolish the old society and recreate a new one*. This is because the mind, sooner or later, follows the economic movement. The disintegrating economy engenders limitless misery for the masses. Under the impact of this misery the masses increasingly discard old outlooks and attitudes to the *status quo*. The great man can predict such new mental orientations on the part of the masses. Since his call, programme, and slogans are determined by the historical tasks set before society and since the solution of these tasks is bound up with the liberation of the masses from the existing forms of oppression and exploitation, the latter respond to his call, programme and slogans with increasing enthusiasm and in increasing numbers.

The great man is, further, inevitably linked up with the historically progressive class of which, in fact, he is the most conscious expression. The great man in alliance with other leaders, *only less outstanding than him*, takes initiative at a certain stage in the maturity of the historically progressive class, and builds up the political party of that class comprising the most advanced and conscious individuals of that class. The

28 Plekhanov, G. V., *The Role of the Individual In History*. pp. 12-13.

party is the instrument of the class to accomplish its historical mission to transform the historically outmoded existing society into a historically higher new society determined by the level of development of productive forces of society at that stage.

The class projects a galaxy of other leaders, the great man being only the most outstanding among them. Napoleon was surrounded by a group of marshals less brilliant only than him; Lenin was reinforced with a whole cadre of Bolshevik leaders (the Old Guard) who were just short of him in ideological and political stature. Of course bourgeois historiographers, consistent with their idealistic philosophy and individualistic social theory, overestimate the role of the outstanding leader in the social revolution.

The great man is distinguished from other leaders only by his deeper insight into the historical dialectic. He develops on the basis of the entire material and cultural evolution of the society of the period.

The drama of social revolution culminates in the transformation of one society into another, its historical successor, unfolds itself thus: In the declining phase of a society i.e. in the phase when the socio-economic structure begins to throttle *free* development of productive forces, an all-pervasive social crisis ensues. It envelops all spheres of life, economic, social, *political* and cultural. The economic crisis leads to increased material suffering for the mass of people which becomes intolerable.

As Marx remarks, the slave-owners cannot, during the declining phase of a society, maintain slaves within the system of slavery itself. There exists in society simultaneously a class bound up with the new productive developments of society (the bourgeoisie in the declining phase of feudalism, the proletariat in the declining phase of capitalism). It becomes the historical task of this class to lead the struggle for social transformation. This historically creative class projects a vanguard (in modern times a political party) composed of the most conscious members of that class. The class increasingly rallies round the party as it gathers more experience of class struggle and assimilates this experience *with the aid of the vanguard*, its party. As the crisis deepens, other oppressed and exploited strata of society rally round the historically creative class and its party. The

class, led by the party headed by a group of leaders among whom the Great Man is only the most outstanding leader, becomes the leader of all sections of society which feel the pressures of the historically outmoded society, and, through a great historical struggle, a Social Revolution, brings about the social transformation, through a programme determined by the extant level of economic evolution of society.

Thus the great man makes history through his deep comprehension of the tasks set by society, tasks which are determined by the economic evolution of society, through the mobilization of the practical activity of the historically progressive class of which he is the most class conscious expression and, therefore, the towering leader as well as of the broad masses of society whose very survival demands the social transformation. As Plekhanov puts it :

.....if I know in what direction social relations are changing owing to given changes in the socio-economic process of production, I also know in what direction social mentality is changing; consequently I am able to influence it. Influencing social mentality means influencing historical events. Hence in a certain sense I can make history.....²⁹

29 *Ibid*, p. 52.

2

IS REASON "INNATE" IN MAN?

REASON has been described by almost all exponents of the cult of bourgeois Rationalism together with M. N. Roy (the founder of the philosophy of Radical Humanism) as the 'innate' faculty in man to discriminate between good and bad, true and untrue. Reason, they declare, is the 'inherent' trait of the psyche of every member of the human species.

This assumption that Reason is 'immanent' in man and is the natural, organic trait of his human psychic structure is an error born of the idealistic, anti-materialist, unhistorical, and metaphysical conception of Reason on the part of its protagonists. From the standpoint of biological evolution, man did not evolve from the anthropoid ape as a new species armed with the 'innate' faculty of Reason.

There is no 'ingrained' quality of 'the rational' in man which he can use to determine 'the rationality' or 'the irrationality' of a doctrine, an institution, or a social system. All things are in flux. Man himself *as such* (in the abstract) does not exist. He himself and his faculties (his body with sense organs and brain, intelligence etc.) were the product of the interaction of the anthropoid ape with its environment resulting into the progressive transformation of the latter into a human being developing those faculties more and more. Man's intelligence, Reason, and other faculties were thus not 'innate' but only evolved in the process of bio-historical evolution and subsequently experienced a perennial historical development. Human society, in which the individual man is born and lives, is also in a state of un-

* Published in *Mankind*, March, 1957.

interrupted change and dialectical (through contradiction) development. Thus, man, his intelligence and 'Reason' as well as his social organization are all in a constant state of change and movement. All these are bio-historical and socio-historical products, not fixed things. There is no 'absolute' man equipped with 'absolute' Reason as there are no 'absolutely' rational phenomena (a doctrine, an institution or a social system).

Man himself has been the product of a long drawn-out bio-historical process of development and transformation. It was not that the human species, armed with the faculty of absolute Reason, sprang into existence from the ape species, its biological ancestor, at a single specific moment due to the operation of any law of instantaneous biological mutation. Though the emergence of the human species was the emergence of a new biological entity, the bio-revolutionary transformation of the ancestor ape species into man itself was a long drawn-out process. In the struggle for existence, through the interaction between itself and its environment, the ancestor ape species was increasingly transformed into the human species with increasing physical and psychic human traits. There took place a progressive transformation (requiring millions of years) of the ape-species increasingly into the human species through such stages as those of ape man, thereafter man-ape and subsequently man. Even man has not always been a static full-fledged man but been constantly developing into a higher and higher type of man till, at present, he is the man of the existing stage in the history of man's biological struggle for existence, the man of the modern capitalist phase of the historically developing human existence.

In fact, man's body, his sense organs, his intelligence, his Reason etc. have been the product of this process of stupendous bio-historical and socio-historical evolution and hence have been constantly evolving and changing. Due to the fact that man has been carrying on his struggle against Nature, due to his specific physical structure, *technologically*, he has not undergone after he left behind the initial phases of ape-man and man-ape (when his technology was weak) any appreciable physiological transformation. While in the case of all other species, the contradiction (the biological struggle for existence) between the species and its environment leads to the physical transformation

of the species, in the case of the human species the contradiction has taken the form of that between the productive forces and the production relations resulting into the uninterrupted modification of the human society and, at a nodal point of its evolution, its transformation from one type into another, e.g., tribal, feudal, capitalist and, in the countries of the Eastern Europe, socialist. The biological contradiction gave birth to the emergence of human society in which, subsequently or rather simultaneously, the contradiction between the growing productive forces and extant production relations provided the basic cause of all social change and development.

It was through the united struggle of its members that humanity defended itself against its environment and increasingly controlled it. It was through his social productive practice that man controlled Nature. He generalized his expanding and deepening economic and social practice and built up increasing natural scientific and social scientific knowledge. Man's body and sense organs also developed through this struggle. His intelligence, Reason also developed through it.

All knowledge of man, also his developing faculty of Reason, are thus social products, products of the collective struggle of man carried on incessantly against his environment.

Man was not equipped with any 'innate' Reason as he emerged from the ancestor ape species. Reason developed as a psychic human trait in proportion that the ancestor ape species, through socially and technologically conducted biological struggle against its environment, became increasingly transformed into the human species, in proportion that this struggle increasingly took the form of economic production. Man constantly improved his technology and increased his knowledge of the natural and social worlds surrounding him through the practice of material production and that of social relations determined by the productive forces. As Mao-tse-Tung remarks, all natural sciences arose out of the practice of economic production and all social sciences arose out of the practice of social relations. Sociology emerged in the process of class struggle during the eighteenth century in the rising period of capitalism. In fact, the level of development of man's intelligence, Reason, etc. was conditioned by the level of development of his economic practice (the level of efficiency with which the human species carried

on the biological struggle against its environment) and the practice of social relations. *Though emerging out of this dialectically interconnected two-fold practice these sciences as well as the developing man's intelligence and Reason also subsequently influenced that practice.*

Reason is not, thus, 'immanent' in man. It is, on the contrary, a socio-historical product and grows with the growth of production and social practice of man. Intelligence and Reason are social products i.e. developed in the process of material production and the practice of social relations determined by the level of productive forces. They are social products in the sense that they arise out of the social living of man based on a specific type of the mode of socially carried on economic production determined by the nature and level of the productive forces at a given historical moment.

The individual man is equipped with human brain which is the organ of thought, emotion, and volition. But these psychological and ideological capacities of the individual man are not products born of any direct interaction between the individual man who has never lived or could live alone in Nature, outside human society but are, on the contrary, born of his interaction with the natural and social worlds by living in society. Thought is not possible without language and language is a social product which arose out of the exigencies of social and purposeful material (economic) production. As Christopher Caudwell has explained, the instincts of the individual when adapted to the needs of social life through the assimilation of traditional knowledge, language, etc., become transformed into human thought and emotion which, for every individual, is an individual part of the content of the total conceptual and emotional experience (determined by the level of social practice) of the human aggregate living in a given society. Thus the intelligence of the individual human is a social product. His Reason is a social product. His conception of what is rational or irrational is determined by the nature of the society in which he lives, usually by the outlook of the socio-economic group to which he belongs in that society.

Man's intelligence and Reason are social products and not 'innate' qualities of the individual man. After coming into being, they further developed in the constantly developing social

life of man. Throughout the long period of human existence men have always lived together in society being impelled by the biological need to wage successful war against the environment for securing necessities of life. It was in this ancient struggle as old as man that intelligence, knowledge, and Reason of man were forged and further developed. Social living based on social labour is the genesis of intelligence and Reason of the individual man.

If the individual were to be isolated at his birth and to live segregated from human society amidst Nature, he would perish or, if he survived, he would be living like a beast instinctively and without thought, since, without language, which is a social product and which is acquired through living in society, there can be no thought, rational or irrational. Man ingrained with the innate faculty of Reason is, hence, only the fantastic invention of idealistic sociology.

Bourgeois Rationalism or the cult of 'innate' Absolute Reason is based on two assumptions : first, the individual man possesses the 'inherent' faculty of Reason by virtue of the very fact that he is a human being. Rationality is the 'innate' property of the human psyche. It is the 'innate' faculty of Reason which differentiates man from other species. Man is rational because he is *born* man. Animals are irrational or non-rational and instinctive because they are not *born* human. Rationality is the essential ingredient of the psychic structure of *man as such*. Here this group of Rationalists conceive man as an idealistic abstraction and not as a historically developing man. They conceive also Reason as an idealistic abstraction and not as the historically developing Reason of the historically developing man.

The exponents of this Absolute Reason call upon all men to examine and judge all institutions, practices, ideologies, and regimes with the aid of this 'innate' faculty of Reason implanted in themselves. They declare that they will be able to judge the rational or irrational character of these through the illuminating searchlight of the faculty of Reason inherent in themselves.

Absolute Reason must be provided with criteria to judge and pronounce upon the absolute rationality or irrationality of such institutions, all phenomena, and events. The exponents of the cult of Absolute Reason lay down for the individual man

criteria for that purpose viz. Truth and Good. But both Truth and Good are conceived absolutely, *independent* of time or space.

Thus bourgeois Rationalism conceives pure abstract human beings armed with the criteria of Absolute Good and Absolute Truth pronouncing absolute judgment on the rationality or the irrationality of social institutions, ideologies, regimes, and human practices. These are good or bad, true or false i.e. rational or irrational for all times and under all conditions. These Rationalists are not taking a historical view. In the social sphere they remain basically utopians since they do not deduce programmes of social reconstruction on the basis of an analysis of *actual* social conditions and their historical tendency of development but evolve them *a priori* from their own conception of what is Absolute Good, what is compatible with Absolute Reason. But in real life things are not so simple as these Rationalists imagine. Things have no fixed properties. What was good yesterday, an aid to human progress, has degenerated to-day into an obstacle to that progress. Institutions play a contradictory role in different historical situations. Even in the same society, conceptions of Good vary with different classes and social groups. As Hegel said, in the process of historical development what is real becomes unreal, what is rational becomes irrational, what is necessary becomes unnecessary. We shall illustrate this from history and life.

The capitalist mode of production was a historical product. It evolved within the womb of the feudal society as a consequence of scientific inventions and discovery of new lands with the resultant expansion of trade and manufacture etc. Rising capitalism in the West European countries came into collision with the feudal state, the feudal society, and the feudal religion which obstructed its further development. The bourgeoisie, the bearer of this new mode of production, through a series of bourgeois revolutions, overthrew the historically outmoded feudal society and established the new bourgeois society based on the capitalist mode of production.

Now, if we are *pure* Rationalists i.e. subscribers to the cult of Absolute Reason, we must brand all societies based on exploitation as irrational. The new capitalist society which replaced the feudal society was, also like its predecessor, based on exploitation. It substituted the exploitation of wage labour

for the exploitation of serf labour. From the standpoint of Absolute Reason both these societies were equally reprehensible since both were equally irrational.

We will not here inquire into the question how and by what criterion Absolute Reason 'ingrained' in man comes to consider exploitation itself as irrational and hence reprehensible.

Capitalism, though based on exploitation, was however, a progressive and historically higher form of social existence than feudalism. During this phase of human existence (the dawn of capitalism), historical pre-requisites necessary for the complete elimination of exploitation of man by man and for the emergence of a classless world socialist society, such as a high degree of development of material productive forces of mankind, the resultant historically necessary high level of socialization of labour and productivity of human labour, the birth of a numerically strong class-conscious proletariat, the emergence of Marxism as the generalization of all accumulated scientific knowledge of man as the necessary ideological weapon of the proletariat in its struggle for the socialist overthrow of capitalism and others, had not yet matured. It was in the course of the subsequent development of capitalist society that these historical pre-requisites for its own elimination as well as for the establishment of world socialist society were to develop. Historically, the rise of capitalism was a progressive event in History.

From the standpoint of abstract Rationalism, which postulates Absolute Justice as the criterion to determine the rationality or the irrationality of a social system, rising capitalism would be branded as an irrational social system not to be countenanced since it was still based on exploitation of man by man (wage slavery). This despite the fact that it was overthrowing serfdom, combating medieval obscurantism, attacking a regime based on the privilege of birth, advocating equal rights of all citizens, liberating the developed productive forces from the shackles of feudal property relations, advancing science and technology in the face of most ferocious persecution, secular as well as ecclesiastical, of the feudal state and religion, proclaiming the principles of the sovereignty of the people in place of the principle of the Divine Right of the King and the nobility, and struggling for democracy.

The truth is to the contrary. Capitalism was the product

of a *real* and progressive historical development. Like the natural world, the social world is also governed by law. Objective necessity underlies the development of the material world, both physical and social. This real movement of Nature and History is an objective truth. Rational action would signify action *in conformity with this real movement*. Just as it would be irrational, utopian and, therefore, disastrous to defy the law of gravitation and oppose it in action on the ground of Absolute Freedom, it would have been utopian and irrational to have opposed the bourgeois democratic revolution on the ground that the bourgeois society it aimed at establishing was also based on exploitation and therefore contradicted the 'rational' principle of Absolute Justice. To recognise the real movement of History, to study its tendency of development and forge human action in harmony with this progressive developmental tendency, *alone* is rational human behaviour.

This is why Marx, no Absolute Friend of capitalism, supported all bourgeois democratic revolutions in the nineteenth century. Progressive historical development had, during that phase of social evolution, prepared prerequisites only for creating the next historically higher type of society viz. the capitalist society. He, therefore, criticized utopian representatives of the proletariat who prematurely evolved programmes of the socialist reconstruction of society for which historical conditions had not at that moment matured.

Marx, however, recognised that just as the advent of capitalist society was the result of the *real* movement of history, the struggle of the incipient proletariat against the capitalist system of exploitation was also *real* since it arose out of the irreconcilable conflict of class interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the capitalist society. By his analysis of the dialectic of capitalist society, he foresaw that this class struggle must terminate to the political victory of the proletariat leading to the establishment of a classless socialist society free from exploitation of man by man.

Therefore, while supporting bourgeois revolution against feudalism and criticising premature socialist programmes of utopian socialists, Marx also supported the proletariat even during that period in their struggle against the bourgeoisie since he recognized its real and rational character and prognosticated

in *The Communist Manifesto* its future political victory and the subsequent creation of a socialist society by it.

Capitalism was rational in its rising period in the double sense: first, it was the inevitable product of a long process of historico-economic evolution and secondly, it symbolized a less irrational system of social relations when contrasted with all past social systems. After reaching its peak, it lost its creativeness and historically progressive significance. In the extant imperialist phase of its evolution it has been obstructing the free development of productive forces. In the political sphere it is increasingly suppressing democracy and ruling by fascist methods. In the cultural field, it is reviving idealistic philosophy and resuscitating religion. In its desperate struggle for survival it is threatening a nuclear war. Further, it is creating mass unemployment and unbearable physical and moral suffering for increasing strata of the people.

Thus, capitalism which was, in its ascending phase, progressive has become retrogressive since it has come into collision with the objective (techno-economic) development of society and hinders the material, social and cultural progress of humanity. The genesis of the deep crisis of the capitalist world lies in the fact that capitalist relations have come into irreconcilable conflict with the amazingly developed productive forces of human society. As stated earlier, mankind has been fighting Nature by means of productive forces functioning within the social organization appropriate to those productive forces. The perennial development of these productive forces is a *real* movement in history since it is the result of the perennial will to live, arising from the need of self-preservation, of the human species. Existing capitalist social relations thwart the *free* movement of these productive forces and, therefore, one can describe capitalism as having now become *unreal* and *irrational*. *Capitalism which was real and rational has thus, at a certain stage of its development, become unreal and irrational.*¹

1 It is true that astounding progress of the productive forces of the capitalist world has taken place after the Second World War. Industrialization has advanced and an amazing new source of power viz. the atomic energy has been discovered. But when we remark that capitalist property relations have grown into a fetter on the development of the productive

The present productive forces of human society now require for their *free* development socialist social relations. The advanced social nature and level of the development of the present productive forces inexorably demand socialist relations of production. Thus socialist programmes, which had at the dawn of capitalism a utopian and therefore irrational character, has now acquired a real and rational character. Socialism is the historical truth of the present phase of social development. The programme of socialist reconstruction is the only rational programme to-day as the programme of the bourgeois democratic reconstruction of society was the only rational programme when feudalism ceased to be a progressive social system and, by obstructing further economic and cultural development of mankind, became a reactionary social system and therefore unreal and irrational.

To recognize historical causation (objective necessity and law-governance in social development) and causality in Nature and utilize this knowledge for human purpose is to act rationally and thereby achieve freedom also. As Engels states, Freedom is the cognizance of the Necessity of the objective world (Nature and Society) and utilizing it for human purpose.² Programmes must be deduced not from the principles of Absolute Good, Absolute Truth, Absolute Reason etc. which are mere myths but from the scientific study of the actual tendencies of the real natural and social developmental process.

forces of society, we mean their *free* development. While in the rising progressive phase of capitalism, those property relations, barring the episodic cyclical crises, were aiding and accelerating the growth of the productive forces, to-day in the declining phase of capitalism those very property relations obstruct and retard their development. All the possibilities of their development are not realized due to the contracting world market, the monopolist stranglehold over the economy and other reasons. Further, capitalist economy is able to stabilize itself even in the U.S.A. by concentrating on and expanding the armanent sector or what Marx described as "the industry of human slaughter". In the same country, farm production is artificially restricted. Though there may be absolute advance of the productive

2 Engels, F., *Anti-Duhring*, pp. 130-131.

To sum up, there are no *pure* human beings ingrained with the innate faculty of Reason. Human intelligence and Reason are socio-historical products and grow in expanding social practice and its generalization by the historically developing man. Reason varies with societies, also with various classes and social groups comprising the same society. Degrees of development of human intelligence and Reason are limited by the stage in the development of production practice and man's practice of social relations in a given society. They are reflected in the total scientific knowledge of that society. In class society, they are, as Christopher Caudwell observes, distorted by the divergent class outlooks based on divergent class interests of various classes. Reason too has a class character since it only helps

forces in the capitalist world, this advance is retarded, slowed down by the extant capitalist property relations. These productive forces would advance far more rapidly, if those property relations were eliminated and socialist economic relations created. Further due to a contracting market even the existing productive forces are not always fully operated.

This view is decisively corroborated by the outstanding fact of our epoch viz. the phenomenal development of productive forces in the socialist countries like the U.S.S.R., a development that promises even to overtake and outstrip the powerful capitalist economy of the U.S.A. The tremendous economic advance of the U.S.S.R. is basically due to the new property relations created by the October Revolution viz. the social ownership of the means of production and resultant universal planning and not due to the Soviet bureaucracy. The various economic policies of the ruling Soviet bureaucracy has only *retarded and distorted* the economic advance of the Soviet Union. This advance would have been still greater but for the distorted economic policies of the bureaucracy.

That capitalism has become a brake on the free and rapid development of the productive forces of society and that socialist ownership of these forces, in spite of the bureaucratic distortion, assures such development, is clearly demonstrated when we compare the economies of the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union and their rates of development. If the capitalist social system continues, due to the very dialectic of that system even the absolute (though retarded) advance of its productive forces would inevitably give place to their absolute decline in course of time.

every class to rationalize its basic class interests. In capitalist society the Reason of a member of the capitalist class would rebel against any suggestion of the abolition of capitalist private property. To him socialism is irrational and capitalist private property an immortal rational category. A capitalist, whose consciousness is conditioned mainly by the conditions of the capitalist class being and the capitalist class environment, would honestly consider the capitalist social system as rational and the socialist one as irrational. On the other hand, a class-conscious worker would proclaim the capitalist social system as irrational and the socialist system as rational. In class society there are only class men whose world outlook, Reason, etc. have a class character and content. The irreconcilable conflict of class interests becomes conscious in contradictory class world outlooks. What seems rational to an exploiter will appear irrational to the exploited. "The lion's good is the lamb's evil."

In classless socialist society too, there are no *pure* human beings endowed with an unerring faculty of Absolute Reason. The intelligence, the Reason, the capacity to judge the rationality or the irrationality of an institution, an event, or an action, possessed by an individual member of that society is determined by the total social and natural scientific knowledge possessed by it in a given stage of its development and also according to the capacity of that individual member to assimilate that knowledge. Human Reason develops with the never-ceasing development of society through the never-ceasing social practice of men.

The exponents of the cult of Absolute Reason suffer from idealistic prejudices. They conceive man as *pure* man, abstracted, not man as a developing historical category. They conceive man's psychological faculties also as *absolute* and *innate* faculties being immutable parts of the basically unvarying *psyche* of pure man. In reality, as we observed before, these faculties have developed through the historically changing social being of man as a result of the collective struggle of united humans against environment. This struggle takes the specific form of economic production in the case of the biological species. Man, and, in the final analysis, is the genetic source of thought, consciousness, intelligence, technology, sciences, arts and language. Changes in thoughts, emotions, consciousness etc. take place as a result of changes in social relations. When the highly deve-

loped productive forces demand new social relations of production, old conceptions are outmoded and new ones arise embodying the awareness of the necessity for their change. Conceptions which were hitherto regarded as rational are now regarded as irrational. The individual in isolation cannot acquire not only scientific knowledge but even human consciousness and thought. The thought of the individual about a flower is not the product of a direct automatic brain reaction to the flower. Thought develops through the mediation of society. It is the product of living in society. This is established by the fact that there cannot be thought without language and language emerged as a social product out of the exigencies of economic production.

So again, the assumption of a *pure* human being ingrained with the faculty of Absolute Reason is a historical, psychological, biological, philosophical, as well as sociological error.

3

WHAT IS PROGRESS ? BASIC CRITERION

HUMANITY is a biological species. Like all other biological species, it is perennially engaged in the struggle for existence against its environment. This struggle, this interaction between the species and its environment (subject-object relation), is the basic fact of its existence and is the genetic cause of all changes in its life history.

Unlike other species, man, due to his peculiar physical structure, does not struggle against Nature directly i.e. physiologically. Man is not armed with such bodily organs as claws, paws, sharp horns, and others whereby he could transform elements of his physical and biological environment into appropriate means for the preservation of his physical existence such as food, clothing, etc. This weakness of his physiological structure also explains why man struggles against Nature in association with other fellow-humans. In fact, man would have perished if he had attempted to conduct this battle individually and physiologically.

His physiological weakness prompted man to use ready-made objects in his natural environment, in the earlier phase of his existence, as tools or technology which became his material weapon to transform elements of Nature into forms suited for his use to preserve his life. Or to put it differently and more precisely, as the struggle for existence of the anthropoid ape, man's biological ancestor, increasingly took the form of the

* Published in "Mankind".

labour process (economic production), carried on by tools and socially, the anthropoid ape was increasingly humanized, became more and more man. Thus, incipient man has always struggled against Nature with tools and in association with fellow-humans. He has always lived in society and organized economic production in association with fellow-men. *In brief, he has always fought Nature collectively and technologically.*

The exigencies of economic production, which is social and purposeful production by means of technique, led to the simultaneous emergence and development of *language*. Also in the process of the manipulation of his environment through collective labour practice, man gathered knowledge about the physical, chemical, and biological properties of the variegated objects and processes of Nature, which led to the birth and development of *natural sciences*. Further, the instincts of biological men who composed society had to be "adapted to the necessities of social life". They had to be transformed into social emotions. This led to the emergence of *art*.

Thus, the genetic cause of technology, man's collective economic life, social organization, language, sciences and arts, was the ancient biological struggle of humanity against its environment.¹ These phenomena, however crude in the beginning, we may say, originated simultaneously, in that biological struggle and had, *in the final analysis*, a biological value as man's weapons to manipulate his environment effectively.

Since man's struggle against his environment is the fundamental fact of his existence, the interests of this struggle provide the basic criterion to appraise all social institutions. How far they help this struggle is the measure of their usefulness. Thus all social institutions should be judged from this standpoint viz. how far they are, in the final analysis, biologically valuable, how far they assist man's basic struggle against his ancient adversary, Nature.

Since the productive forces (technology and others) constitute the basic weapon of man in this struggle, the preservation and further development of these productive forces become the supreme interest of man. How far a social institution is biologically valuable to man is therefore equivalent to how far it

1 Refer : Caudwell, Christopher, *Illusion and Reality*.

assists the preservation and further development of these productive forces.

Progress in the development of productive forces is the genetic cause of all forms of progress of collective man, social, economic, and cultural. Collective man ascends to higher and higher levels of material and conscious cultural existence in proportion to the progressive development of his productive forces which development is the reflection of man's increasing mastery over his environment. *Technological progress is the root and the condition of all other forms of human progress, social, economic, artistic, philosophical and others.*

We will illustrate this objective sociological truth from history as follows :

(1) Technological progress or improvement of the material tools of production by increasing the productivity of human labour has increased the total material wealth of the collective man. With technological advance, he produced more with the expenditure of the same amount of labour. For instance, in the sphere of production of food, man's technique progressed from the stone tools of the primitive period of his social existence to the iron plough whereby he laid the foundation of agriculture or of artificial and relatively plentiful production of food from the soil. From the stage of the plough, the technique advanced to that of the tractor which, when universally used on a world-wide scale, has unfolded the perspective of unprecedented amount of food for all mankind with the investment of much less labour.

In the field of production of industrial goods, collective man has advanced from the stage of garments made out of the bark of trees by means of crude tools of the primitive epoch to the modern factory phase when mass production of cloth has been possible.

Even these two illustrations prove *how with technological progress man's material wealth has increased.*

It is true that in all class-societies, slave, feudal, and modern capitalist, which in general, historically followed the dissolution of primitive tribal communist society, increase in wealth of society due to technological progress has been inequitably shared, the exploiting class seizing the lion's share of it. Nevertheless, we find that there has taken place also an *absolute*

advance in the material standard of life of the exploited classes due to this increase. From the standpoint of the level of advance of material life, the slave, the serf, and the modern wage labourer, form an ascending series. Though the disparity between the respective shares of the exploiting and the exploited classes in the social products achieved by the respective technologies of those societies has been accentuated, still there has been an *absolute* rise in the material standard of the exploited classes. This is due to the technological progress of man from one social phase to the other.

(2) Technological progress resulted in the increased division of labour (in the domain of production) which, through the system of world-wide exchange relations under capitalism, *has now unified the entire humanity into a single economic unit*. This became feasible also because technological progress led to the invention of means of rapid transport such as steamships, railways, and airplanes. The entire historical process of the economic and the *resultant* social integration of tribes into communities, of communities into nations, of nations into an economically welded single mankind, has been brought about by the progressive development of technology. Thus technological progress has achieved, for the first time in the life history of humanity, the integration of all separate groups of the human species into a single whole. It has forged entire humanity as a unified single army to master its terrestrial environment.

(3) Technological progress, at a certain point of social evolution, by increasing the productivity of labour, made the differentiation of material and ideological labour possible in society. At a certain level of the development of the productivity of social labour, *not all* the labour of *all* members of society was required to maintain these members. Leisure for a section of society as a result of its withdrawal from economic production was created. This leisure was the prime condition for exclusive concentration on ideological creations such as art, philosophy, science, etc. as separate activities of society. These non-economic activities did exist in extremely crude, we may say in embryonic form, even in primitive society resting on a weak technique. However, they were collectively carried on and fused in the collective economic life of the tribe (collective labour songs, harvest dances, and others). With technological

advance, ideological labour became separated from material labour and artists, philosophers, scientists emerged as distinct groups in the social world.

It is true that the societies which historically followed the primitive society were class societies based on the exploitation of the toiling non-owning classes by the exploiting classes which owned means of production and hence could exploit the former, that the leisure created due to the increased productivity of labour as a result of technological progress was monopolized by the exploiting classes or the conscious and unconscious defenders of the interests of those classes, and that the ideological creations of these groups (their philosophies, political and ethical theories, arts etc.) had a basic class character and content and hence served the interests and aspirations of those classes. Still, during the rising phase of a society, the exploiting class played a historically progressive role and not only developed productive forces but evolved philosophies, arts, and sciences, which, though they had a class character and content and served class interests, had also elements of permanent human value. Thus, though these ideological creations were *class* creations with a *class* character and content and, further, though they served *class* interests, there were also positive and creative scientific and artistic elements within them which were a permanent gain for humanity as a whole and were critically separated and taken over by subsequent societies.

Since the ideological creations were a part of the super-structural outgrowth of the economic base of society and arose out of the socio-economic practice of that society, the amount of truth embodied in them was commensurate with the social practice of humanity at that stage of social evolution which, *in the final analysis*, was determined by the degree of man's conquest over Nature embodied in the degree of development of the productive forces during that phase. This was the historical limitation of these ideological creations. It must be noted that the inherited culture of a given society is the outgrowth of the social-economic practice of all past societies.

(4) Men stand in definite relations to one another in the sphere of production. These social relations of production are, as Marxism reveals, determined by the state and level of development of the extant productive forces. Since the productive

forces (of which technology is the core) increasingly develop, these social relations of production are continuously modified. At a certain stage of the development of the productive forces, the social relations of production undergo even a structural transformation. They are replaced by another system of social production relations (in class society through a social revolution) which are in harmony with the advanced productive forces and which facilitate their further and free development. In this way, with technological progress higher and higher systems of social relations come into being. Thus, in some countries, (in countries of Eastern Europe), there emerged slave, feudal, and capitalist societies as a historical developmental series. Though slave, feudal, and capitalist societies were based on the exploitation of one class by another, there took place, as a result of technological progress, in every succeeding society an increase in the productivity of social labour and resultant growth in its total material wealth. Also due to the very character of the newer and newer techniques, the forms of exploitation changed and exploitation became progressively softened. Thus slavery relaxed into semi-slavery or serfdom and serfdom softened into modern personally free wage labour. Thus technological progress led to a progressive diminution and softening of economic servitude in history. Technological progress led to progress in the degree of economic liberty of the mass of toiling people.

(5) With the rise of class society, the institution of the state came into existence. The state has always been, in history, the decisive instrument of the economically dominant exploiting class of society to protect its class ownership of means of production and its resultant exploitation of the non-owning toiling section of society. The state is the apparatus of class coercion.² Since the exploited classes would challenge private property and resist the resultant exploitation to which they are subjected by the owning exploiting class, the state exists to overcome their resistance. Political coercion thus becomes necessary to safeguard economic exploitation.

With the change in the level of productive forces, new

2 Refer : Engels, F., *Origin Of Family, Private Property And State*. Also Lenin, *State And Revolution*.

economic modes of production, new social classes bound up with these modes of production and new class states embodying the political class rule of economically dominant social classes have emerged in history.

Since technological progress brought about a progressive softening of the form of economic exploitation, reducing slavery to serfdom and serfdom to modern wage labour, the political counterpart of economic exploitation viz. political coercion of the mass of people also underwent a progressive relaxation. With technological progress, there has taken place, in history, progress not only in the degree of economic liberty but also in the extent of political liberty. We find today the economically exploited classes in all capitalist societies enjoying equal political rights as the exploiting classes. This liberty, *though formal and not real due to the capitalist conditions of social existence*, was unknown to the slave or the serf of past historical periods. Thus technological progress is the genetic cause of the growth of political liberty also, culminating in the capitalist era in the acquisition of equality before law of all citizens, civil liberties, equal franchise, and others.

(6) As we saw above, technological advance leading to increasing division of labour welded scattered independent economies of isolated societies in which ununified humanity lived into a single integrated national and subsequently world economy. The increasing economic unification of humanity leads to its increasing social, political and cultural unification. Larger and larger units of humans living a common economic, social, political, and cultural life come into existence. Solidarity ties begin to envelop larger and larger numbers of humans. In pre-British India, independent self-sufficient village economy based on a backward technology could unify, economically and hence socially, only a few hundreds of humans in a village restricting solidarity feeling only among these few hundreds. Capitalist economy based on advanced technology has unified the contemporary Indian people into a single economic whole and engendered a solidarity feeling among them, the feeling of nationalism. Thus technological progress leads not only to economic and social integration of larger and larger number of humans but also kindles a solidarity feeling and common consciousness among them. Village consciousness is replaced by

national consciousness, which animates millions of human beings comprising the Indian nation who live a common economic and political life. This common consciousness with which millions become vibrant expresses itself in the emergence of a national culture embodying the desires, the urges, and the aspirations of the collectivity called a nation. National consciousness thus is, *in the final analysis*, a product of technological development at a certain level when it economically unifies the entire people into a single community, a nation.

Today productive forces have developed on such a scale that it has engendered a division of labour which is not merely national but worldwide, has created an economic interdependence of all nations comprising humanity. Entire humanity has become unified into a single economic whole. The productive forces of contemporary society have a supranational character. They have transcended the limitations of and are stifled by the existing capitalist social relations of production as well as by national state frontiers. The free development of these productive forces in the present imperialist i.e. declining phase of capitalism is obstructed by these two factors. The general crisis of world capitalist economy is objective evidence of this. The international division of labour and the high degree of socialization of labour achieved are the results of technological progress. The productive forces of human society in the present phase of their historical development demand their world-scale socialist organization. To be in line with the technological progress humanity must now liquidate capitalist social relations of production which, as Marx predicted, from being forms of development of productive forces have been transformed into their opposite viz., fetters on their further unhindered development. Mankind is confronted with the task of creating new social relations of production viz. socialist production relations. Such creation would constitute a new socio-historical advance of collective man. By creating a socialist economy and society, collective man would not only be liberating the technical and other productive forces of society from the shackles that retard their free development but thereby also will eliminate classes and class exploitation. Though slave, feudal, and capitalist societies were stages in the progressive social development of collective man, though these societies in their first phase deve-

loped the productive forces of man, increased his scientific-knowledge, enhanced individual liberty, and added to his philosophical and artistic culture, basically they were class societies founded on the exploitation of man by man. Their historical right to emergence lay in the fact that in their earlier phase, they provided for the growth of material productive forces of man which are his weapons to fight Nature. In fact, even these exploitative class societies had this biological value. Socialism, on the contrary, will be a social system based not on the exploitation of man by man but on the fraternal collaboration of all human beings on a world-scale. The present level of development of the productive forces of the capitalist society provides the material basis on which the classless worldwide socialist society can be built. Social progress today would imply the march of collective man toward socialism.

With the crystallization of larger and larger groups (the tribe, the community, the people, the nation, and the socialist humanity), in the final analysis as a result of technological progress, the consciousness of the individual man increasingly became social and will finally become truly human in world socialist society. Increasing economic unification of human beings through extending division of labour and their resultant economic interdependence becomes the material condition for the emergence of wider and wider consciousness of man. With the progress of man in the techno-economic field, man's consciousness also progresses. It is deepened and broadened. It is true that in class societies in spite of the economic welding together of all members of society, due to the class structure of these societies class consciousness inevitably emerges among them. The material reason for the emergence of class consciousness is the objectively existing irreconcilable conflict of class interests in class society. Even then, solidarity feeling for the members of the same class animate the large mass of individuals (far larger than a few hundreds who constituted the population of the pre-capitalist self-sufficient village) who comprise that class, a constituent part of the modern nation. Common life further creates a solidarity feeling, specially when a society is not decisively differentiated into well-demarcated classes. However, this solidarity feeling is restricted to the members of that society. In pre-British autarchic Indian village, the communal

consciousness of the villagers was hence restricted in range. The villager did not feel organic affinity, in absence of common economic and resultant common political life, with extra-village humanity with which he had no vital links. It was a solidarity feeling for and among the local group of humans and in no way for the rest of humanity. In contemporary Indian capitalist society composed of classes with contradictory material interests, though the consciousness of the members of that society does not possess a homogeneous social quality as in the case of the members of the small non-capitalist autarchic village, the feeling of solidarity which a member of a class of the larger Indian society experiences has a wider range. He feels affinity to *all* members of his class which exists on a national scale and is numerically larger than the village population. Further, capitalism, in the course of its development, created a world economy and an economically unified world capitalist society composed of classes which existed on an international scale, solidarity feeling which even transcended national limits. In this way, for instance, the world working class developed the emotion of international proletarian class solidarity and class consciousness and forged organizational weapons of a world-wide character for the elimination of the world capitalist system and the establishment of the world socialist society. This is a distinct progress in the growth of social consciousness of the individual man.

But when socialism is established on a world-scale, when classes are hence eliminated, when human society becomes the association of equal workers, *then only* truly human emotion i.e. emotion of affection and solidarity feeling for *all* members of the human species will emerge. The consciousness of man which progressed through various stages of development, such as tribal, national, or class, will flower into a truly human consciousness. For such a consummation and culmination, the historico-economic condition had to come into existence viz. a certain level of development of productive forces of humanity which would economically weld the entire mankind into a single unit and which would provide the necessary material basis for creating a classless socialist society on a global scale.

(7) Every advance in the scientific knowledge of man also constitutes progress. Scientific knowledge arises out of the

labour practice of man, guides subsequent labour practice, and emerges further enriched from that practice. With the increasing advance of scientific knowledge of the physical and social worlds, man progressively liberated himself from the domination of religious mysticism, idealistic and other distorted interpretations of the world, superstition, magic, and alchemy. He increasingly comprehended the laws governing the movement of the natural world and utilized this knowledge for his own purpose such as invention of new techniques etc. Finally, he discovered the law governing the movement of society also (the Marxist theory of Materialist Conception of History). Just as natural sciences like physics, chemistry, biology, agronomy, and others arose out of the needs of production, the social sciences emerged out of the needs of class struggle in society during the rising phase of capitalism in Britain, France and other countries. Production practice gave birth to natural sciences; the practice of class struggle engendered social sciences. Historical Materialism, the theory of social development of Marxism, is the final culmination *hitherto* of the historically developing social-scientific knowledge of man through ages.

(8) Man has always tried to generalize the scientific knowledge of nature and society, which progressively increased from phase to phase, into a world outlook or a philosophy giving a composite picture of the world as a whole. His scientific philosophical knowledge, *in the final analysis*, was derived out of his knowledge of the laws of separate spheres of the world, which evolved in the process of his practice in those spheres. Philosophy was the generalization of the separate sciences, including those pertaining to society and human thought. Weak social practice due to low level of technology in earlier stages of his existence misled man into conceiving a predominantly erroneous religio-mystical and idealistic picture of the world but this was increasingly replaced by a scientific materialist understanding of the universe. Dialectical Materialism, the philosophy of Marxism, is the culmination of the *hitherto* developed scientific philosophical knowledge of man.

Technological progress brought into existence higher and higher systems of social relations. Society progressed also in point of its total wealth, scientific knowledge, leisure, artistic and philosophical culture and other things. With such a pro-

gressive development of society, the individual found greater and greater scope and freedom, more and more favourable social conditions and material means, for the development of his personality. It is true that, in class society, the class monopoly of the material and ideological wealth of society appreciably deprived the members of the exploited classes of the opportunity to utilize this wealth for their own benefit. Still as a result of the progressive growth of this wealth the exploited individual also increased his share in it though only *absolutely* and not relatively. This resulted in the increasing realization of his personality and self-consciousness. For instance, the individuality of the wage worker of the capitalistic era is less throttled than that of a slave or a serf. When the contemporary capitalist society which no longer corresponds to the present level of development of productive forces is replaced by the world communist society, the individual will find unheard of scope for the multi-sided expression and development of his protean personality due to the amazingly rich material and ideological resources and nourishments which will be unleashed in the communist society.

Thus we see that all forms of progress such as growth of individual liberty and scope for development of human personality, expansion of man's natural-scientific and social-scientific knowledge as well as his scientific philosophical understanding of the world, increased socialization and humanization of individual consciousness, more and more extensive unification of humanity and growth in democratic and co-operative social relations till they envelop all humanity, increased softening of man's economic servitude till it is replaced by his socialist liberation from all economic servitude — all these forms of progress depend, *in the final analysis*, upon man's economic progress. And this is quite natural because it is in the sphere of production that collective man is conducting struggle against his ancient and perennial enemy, Nature. "While changing Nature, man changes his own nature also." (Marx). Increased mastery over Nature is bound up with increased unification of humanity, increased advance in culture, increased democratic and humanized social relations etc. Progress in the sphere of development of productive forces is, *in the final analysis*, the parent of all other forms of progress, social, economic, and cultural, collective

or individual. It must be noted that non-economic developments *do* retroact on the productive forces and the economic base of society, but they originate *in the final analysis* in techno-economic development. They only accelerate or temporarily retard the techno-economic development but cannot change the *direction of this development*. Sooner or later, *barring accidents*, social structure and social consciousness must alter in consonance with the techno-economic reality.

That society, therefore, can be described as progressive which is conducting with increasing efficiency the biological struggle of collective man against his environment. This increased efficiency is reflected in the uninterrupted development of technology and in the resultant increased productivity of human labour and enhancement of material products. The use of improved technique also strengthens the technical skill of the working-population. Since production is carried on by humans by entering into certain definite social relations determined by the nature of technology, improved technique leads to the emergence of higher and higher systems of social relations of production. When the labour process becomes more and more collective, it concentrates men in larger and larger numbers in centres of production, integrates them in the basic sphere of social life viz. that of economic production and increasingly suffuses them with co-operative habits and collective consciousness. Increased economic cohesion leads to the growth of collective psychology and social consciousness (in class society, class consciousness).

That society can be described as progressive which, due to the advance in economic production and resultant increase in total social wealth, inevitably elevates the standard of life of the toiling population and softens the element of coercion in social relations. The very new mode of production, which productive forces at a certain level of their growth demand and which is established through the subjective action of the historically progressive class, ushers in new social, economic, and political relations which are less coercive than those in the previous period. In a class society, though exploitation persists, more liberty and opportunity develop for the exploited classes *in its ascending phase* due to the general increase in the totality of social products. Relaxation of coercion in the economic field

is reflected in a progressive diminution of coercion in the spheres of social and political relations. For instance under capitalism, socially oppressed groups like women, untouchables, and others achieve increased liberty which is also the very condition for the functioning of the new capitalist economy. Rigid caste more and more gives way to mobile class. Hereditary privilege, the condition of functioning of the feudal economy, yields to equal (though only formal, *de jure*) opportunity, equal legal and social rights and other freedoms which also are the very conditions of the functioning of the historically higher capitalist economy in its ascending phase.

That society can be described as progressive which, as a result of economic advance, increases thereby also its scientific culture. Sciences grow out of the needs of the material practice of man embodied in economic production but, after arising out of it, subsequently assist and accelerate the tempo of improvement of technology and resultant expansion of production. Scientific knowledge existing in an economically advanced country is greater than that existing in economically less advanced country. Similarly, scientific philosophical culture of the former is richer than that of the latter. As a result of the increasing scientific knowledge born of production and social practice, *the basic source of man's knowledge of the objective world*, there also takes place a progressive diminution of superstition, religious mysticism, and obscurantist notions, and a progressive increase of scientific knowledge in all historically evolving societies. Philosophy or the world outlook of society also in this way unfolds an objectively truer and truer picture of the Universe as economy advances to higher levels.

Moral conceptions as well as human feeling reach higher and higher levels as economy advances since scarcity—the economic source of all inhumanity—thereby progressively decreases. For instance, the humanity living in the capitalist epoch recoils with horror from practices of cannibalism, slavery, or serfdom.

It is true that in class society, the ruling exploiting class often deliberately preserves religious superstition and mysticism which have become incompatible with the existing accumulated scientific knowledge of man, with a view to sabotaging the growth of a correct understanding of the world among the ex-

exploited classes lest such an understanding may drive them to the road of the struggle for the elimination of that society based on exploitation. However, the ruling class of a particular society, whose existence is bound up with a certain mode of production based on a certain level of development of productive forces, requires, *in its own class interest*, to preserve that mode of production and, hence, certain minimum social and cultural conditions required for the functioning of that mode of production. It, therefore, maintains a certain amount of scientific knowledge as well as the necessary minimum of social freedom. For instance, even the Nazis, the counter-revolutionary defenders of moribund German capitalism, could not liquidate natural sciences or rehabilitate the long-expired institution of slavery. They could not also resurrect cannibalism because cannibalism is incompatible with the preservation even of decaying capitalism. It is true that they liquidated civil liberties and propagated reactionary unscientific doctrines like the myth of race etc. However, since they based themselves on capitalism they had to maintain a certain minimum limit in their war on scientific culture.

Further, in the declining stage of a class society, when the ruling class and the particular mode of production with which its very existence is bound up have outlived their historical usefulness and when they have degenerated into an absolute reactionary obstacle to further economic and cultural progress of society, the other class, its historical antithesis, which is destined to play the historical role of the eliminator of the historically outmoded society and of the architect of a new historically higher society, becomes the heir and defender of existing productive forces *as well as* all scientific culture of that society. Any increase in the strength of this class, since it is a historically progressive force for preventing the existing productive forces and culture of that society from being increasingly destroyed by the reactionary ruling class as well as for establishing a higher social system which would facilitate the further advance and growth of these productive forces and culture, constitutes social progress. In the era of imperialism or the general decline of capitalism, when capitalism has grown into an obstacle to the further development of man's productive forces and scientific culture, therefore, *whatever strengthens and assists socialist revolution*

of the proletariat constitutes progress. This would be the supreme criterion of progress today when human society is menaced with retrogression or even extinction by capitalism. Whatever helps the class struggle of the proletariat (which has socialism as its objective) against the bourgeoisie constitutes progress. In class societies, there are only class values. *Only* those political, moral, aesthetic, and other values which assist the proletariat in this historic struggle for socialism, which help to integrate the proletariat with the peasantry and other exploited classes, which infuse class consciousness and solidarity feelings and instil a powerful socialist urge among the toiling masses are progressive. Dialectical and historical materialism together with Marx's analysis of the dynamics of capitalist society provide a scientific and a truthful portrayal of all reality in general and specific capitalist reality in particular. They furnish a true understanding of the capitalist society and its inner contradictions and resultant social antagonisms. They thereby also indicate the historically correct road to socialism. The spread of Marxism, therefore, also constitutes progress. Further, in the present historical epoch, any advance in the practical struggle of the proletariat for the elimination of capitalism brings the moment of the radiant socialist rebirth of human society nearer. Therefore, any such advance is also progress.

Thus, progressive development of collective man from tribal, slave, feudal and capitalist phases of social existence *finally* culminates into the emergence of his world-scale socialist existence which envelops the entire humanity. This existence is characterised by relations of co-operation and feeling of solidarity among *all* members of humanity. A social organization embracing the entire human species comes into being. A truly human emotion and general human consciousness animate all members of the human species, now welded into a single unit. Further, socialist society existing on a world-scale will inherit and be based upon the entire material and cultural achievements of all previous periods of social existence. It was only when the productive forces, developing from the very early dawn of human existence when they comprised only a few stone tools to the final phase of the capitalist era when they had grown into mighty machines, reached a certain limit of historical growth

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and acquired a deep social character (social character of means of production in capitalist society), that *the material premise* for the building of socialism was created. The socialist organization of the amazingly developed modern productive forces of society will create the material condition for building a world socialist society based on the humanizing of all relations between man and man as also for the all-sided development of human personality. All human beings, man, woman, child, under socialism become economically free and culturally creative. The basic condition for the emergence of these material and cultural freedoms of man was a certain level of development of productive forces i.e. a certain degree of mastery of man over Nature. It was in the process of developing these productive forces, of building social relations corresponding to various levels of development of these productive forces that man's scientific, philosophical, and artistic culture also progressively developed. His consciousness also was increasingly enlarged (tribal, national) till it grew into a truly human i.e. socialist consciousness. The individual consciousness became more and more socialised.

By creating socialism man will become the master, for the first time in his long history, of his own social organization. For the first time he will plan his collective economic and social life. All social antagonisms born of conflicts of class interests will be eliminated from society with the elimination of classes. Modern highly developed productive forces of society which demand and make possible their socialist organization on a global scale would yield plenty in the domain of production thereby overcoming the existing scarcity of products. The material source of human conflicts will be for all time liquidated. Products will be almost as plentiful as water and air. Hence, struggle over their appropriation will disappear. "To every one according to his need" will become a reality. The relations of the members of the world communist society will resemble those of individual instruments of a musical orchestra where each instrument creatively collaborates with others, evolves a collective symphony and also finds self-expression at higher and higher levels. Common material interests satisfied through relations of co-operation will provide the material reason for the birth of a social consciousness among its members. The condition for the development of each will be the very condition for the deve-

lopment of all. Variety of individuality of its members will remain; but their conflicts will vanish. A variegated material and cultural life in the creation of which all members of humanity take part will emerge. The life of the unified communist humanity will become one song of creation. As Engels remarks, "From the realm of necessity, man leaps into the world of freedom."

4

ORIGIN OF IDEAS

IDEAS are a phenomenon existing in the world of human beings. Human brain is the organ of thought, thoughts being the product of the brain of man. Thoughts did not exist on planet earth before man equipped with a specific type of brain emerged in the course of material evolution on the planet.

This is in contrast to the idealistic conception of the origin of ideas according to which ideas are the offspring of mind which exists independent of matter. One group of idealistic philosophers even interpret the material universe as the creation of mind (objective and subjective idealism). Another group of idealistic philosophers interpret the material universe as the medium through which mind having a supra-material origin and existence expresses itself.

These idealistic conceptions of mind and ideas contradict the known facts and conclusions of natural sciences. Before life (living matter) evolved on earth, there existed only physico-chemical processes. Before man, the most highly organized form of matter hitherto developed on planet earth, emerged in the course of the biological evolution of living matter, there existed, in addition to the physico-chemical processes, such forms of living matter as birds, animals, and aquatic creatures which were, in varying degrees, equipped with the psychic property of instinct. Instinct developed in the process of the interaction between these forms of life and their environment and, like human mind, it too was a property of matter organized in a specific way.

The ape ancestor of man, in the process of interaction with its environment (which took the form of collective labour process of the members of the herd) increasingly became man.

In this process, the brain of the ape increasingly developed into the brain of man, as the ape increasingly became transformed into man. Mind, thought, human consciousness is only the product of the human brain, a part of the human body which is a specific organization of matter.

Ideas, however, are not the *automatic* products of the human brain or of the interaction of that brain and the environment. Ideas originated in the historical process of the evolution of social life of human beings. It must be noted that the birth of ideas is bound up with the birth of language which originated as the means of communication among humans. Ideas are only ideas of the things and processes of the material world and are possible only through the medium of language. Language arose out of the necessities of economic production which men in union organized for the production of material means of sustenance carried on with tools of production. Ideas were the product of the multi-lateral process of the transformation of the particular ape species, the biological ancestor of man, increasingly into the human species. We will briefly enumerate the various aspects of this transformation process. The primate, as a result of its interaction with its environment, developed increasingly into a man equipped with the human type of brain. The ape man, the man ape, and the full-fledged man, due to their weak physical structure, always lived in herds and groups, jointly carrying on the struggle against their environment, increasingly less instinctively and more purposefully and consciously as their brains became more and more human in the process of the struggle (the collective labour practice). They evolved tools and organized economic production, the specific form which their joint struggle against their environment took. The emergence of ideas, of language through which ideas are expressed and are only possible, of economic production carried on collectively and with tools, and of the social organization has been a single process. All these emerged almost simultaneously and interacted among themselves. However, the primary factor is collective labour practice, of which ideas are the derivative. First, labour practice though social was predominantly instinctive but as that labour practice expanded and deepened, man's brain also developed and acquired capacity for thought. He generalized this

practice and developed a complex of ideas expressing them in language. Ideas were forged in the process of joint labour practice. Though human brain has capacity to think, thoughts emerge only in the process of joint labour practice of men and their resultant collective social life.

That ideas are social products can be proved by the fact that if an individual is isolated at his very birth from society and if he at all thereafter survives, he will not have any thoughts since without language thoughts are not possible. Such a man has a brain with the capacity to think but can have no thoughts since without language, which is learnt through society, thoughts are not possible. He will have sensations but not conceptions.

Since ideas originate from *social material practice* and advance through further *social material practice*, they emerge in the head of the individual man only through living in society, through economic and social intercourse with fellow humans. Since ideas have social material roots, they are limited, in quality and quantity, by the level of the economic and resultant social practice of collective man in a given stage of social evolution and also the resultant general cultural conditions existing at that time. Ideas are the ideas of a particular group of *real* and historically determined men in a given stage of evolving concrete human existence. Ideas reflect (and subsequently influence) the social material being existing at a given level of historical development. Ideas may correctly reflect the social being or may provide a distorted image of that social being. As Marx observes :

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and material intercourse of men, *the language of real life*. Conception, thought, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same is true of mental production, as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc. real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, upto its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life process. If in all ideology men and their cir-

cumstances appear upside down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life process.

... we set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also necessary sublimates of their material life process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics and all the rest of ideology and the corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, also their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second, it is the real living individuals themselves, as they are in actual life, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.¹

This explains why only a particular group of ideas (scientific as well as unscientific) appear in a particular society in a particular phase of development. Religio-mystical conceptions in the realm of philosophy are preponderatingly rampant in epochs and societies when social practice, based on a low level of productive forces, is weak as in pre-historic, slave, and feudal societies. Rationalist and democratic conceptions emerge as dominant conceptions in a bourgeois society. Socialist ideas, Marxist and non-Marxist, emerge when capitalist society based on the capitalist mode of production is established and the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat sharpens.

Ideas are the product of and reflect in the human head the social material conditions of life and resultant social relations. They subsequently retroact on those very parent conditions and social relations and become levers of their transformation through practical human activity guided by those ideas.

It is in the process of social practice that ideas are gene-

1 Marx, K., *German Ideology*, pp. 13-15.

rated. The body of scientific ideas constituting natural sciences like astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology and others originated and developed in the process of material production or the struggle of man against nature for the production of material means of sustenance together with scientific experiment in the laboratory. The body of knowledge constituting social sciences originated and developed in the process of creation and transformation of social relations or in the process of class struggle which led to the alteration of the old social relations and the creation of new social relations. The body of scientific ideas constituting philosophy originated and developed as a world outlook derived out of the generalization of man's knowledge of the natural world through natural sciences and that of the social world through social sciences. Since social relations were determined by the given mode of production, the philosophy or the world outlook *in the final analysis* was determined by the mode of production.

Social practice in the domains of material production and social relations is the genetic source of ideas. For a certain period these ideas guide and develop social practice till a stage is reached when the developed social practice outstrips the old pattern of ideas and the ideas become outmoded. Further, free development of the material life of society demands at this stage new social relations. A group of men become conscious of this social (historical) necessity and new ideas spring in their heads. A new pattern of political, moral, juridical, philosophical and aesthetic conceptions emerges in the minds of those men, which guide man to accomplish the practical transformation of the old system of social relations into a new one as demanded by the advanced productive forces of society. The old ideas are discarded and new ideas are evolved which signifies a historical and dialectical continuation of the old ideas (their creative negation). The new ideology *includes* the scientific elements existing within the old ideology. These new ideas of economic and social relations, state structure, moral norms, aesthetic criteria etc. are synthesized into a new ideology.

The new ideology is the historical and dialectical continuation of the old ideology. It is the reconstructed form of the old ideology in the spirit of the new conditions of material being (new economic conditions) and the necessity of their

further development. Thus the economic development determines how and in what way the old ideology will be altered in a new form.

Theory arises out of practice. After emerging as a generalization of previous practice, it guides and develops present practice till a stage is reached in the development of practice when the old theory from being a form of development of practice becomes a hindrance to its further development. The old theory is reconstructed in the light of developed practice and a new theory is born which includes the scientific elements within the old theory. This is the law of the dialectical development of ideas, of the historically accumulating human knowledge. The new ideas are the historical dialectical continuation of the old ideas reconstructed in the light of the new social practice of man.

The new ideas influence and assist the further development of the material life of society. They have a formidable and decisive organizing and transforming power. Animated by the new conceptions, the masses led by their ideological and political leaders demolish old historically outmoded socio-economic and state structures and reforge them on a new historically higher basis corresponding to the level of development of the productive forces.

A society lives through two stages, one ascending and the other declining. In the ascending stage, the social relations of production continue to be in conformity with the developing productive forces in the sense that the latter can freely develop within their framework. Such a mode of production, even though based on exploitation (slave, feudal, or capitalist), is rational in the sense that it assists man to carry on more and more effectively the biological struggle for existence against his environment which takes the form of economic production. *This biological value of the mode of production (slave, feudal, or capitalist) objectively determines its real and rational character.* Political institutions corresponding to the economic structure also acquire a real and rational character. Men of this society become conscious of the rationality of the given economic and resultant social and political order through the prevailing ideology comprised of economic and political theories, ethical conceptions etc.

It is true that in such societies based on class exploitation and class oppression, their historically real and rational nature during their rising historically creative phase when they develop productive forces as well as a higher system of social relations and culture is challenged by two groups of ideologues who express the urge of the exploited masses for freedom; the one, the reactionary group which advocates a return to the past (e.g. Carlyle and Ruskin who, recoiling from the atrocities of extant capitalism advised a return to the extinct feudal society) and the other, the utopian group which, independent of the process of *real* development of society through a progressive series of stages, evolve schemes of societies, non-exploitative and ideal, which however cannot be realized since they are not conceived in accordance with the real development of society (technological development). The ideologies of both these groups from the standpoint of real development are unreal, hence irrational.

But if a class society in its ascending period, when it develops economy and culture on a level historically higher than the preceding society, is historically rational, the struggle against class exploitation of the exploited class within that society is inevitable and hence also real and rational. That is why Marx, while recognizing the progressive nature of capitalism, in its ascending phase, in relation to the pre-capitalist feudal society, supported the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism since it was the class which, when historico-economic conditions further matured making capitalism reactionary, hence historically unreal and irrational, would eliminate capitalism and create socialism, a social formation higher than capitalism and based on advanced productive forces which the latter itself would create. He hated capitalism but recognized the historically progressive role of capitalism during its first phase. As a scientific sociologist, he recognized that socialist society could not be created at will but only when capitalism had created within itself both objective and subjective pre-requisites for its own negation and for the establishment of socialist society. He stated that no society can disappear till there is room for the development of productive forces (both material and cultural) within it, i.e. till it is real and rational. That is why Marx criticized utopian socialists and stood for supporting anti-

feudal bourgeois democratic revolutions which had for their objective the establishment of bourgeois society on the basis of productive forces developed at that moment. However, unlike the bourgeois ideologues who invested capitalism with absolute rationality and therefore with immortal existence, Marx saw in it only relative rationality and that too only in its ascending phase of existence, when it was abolishing serfdom, evolving democratic culture etc.

Marxism was a historical continuation of the old pattern of the sociological, economic and philosophical ideas but only through their reconstruction in the light of the social practice of man (both practice of production and that of class struggle) and from the standpoint of the proletariat during the era of capitalism. Lenin, therefore, described Marxism as "the winding up of the three principal ideological currents of the nineteenth century viz. classical English political economy, French socialism and classical German philosophy".² Thus Marxism was both a historical continuation of the old human culture and also its reconstruction on a qualitatively new basis in the light of the social and scientific practice of man further developed during the capitalist era. Marxism was the old culture remoulded so that it reflected the need of development of the material life of society towards a socialist future. Knowledge develops dialectically since the material life of society develops dialectically. The new pattern of ideas is not merely the logical continuation of the old pattern of ideas but also the recasting of the old pattern on the basis of the generalization of the new social and scientific practice of man determined by the developing material (economic) life of society. Thus economic development determines in the final analysis the altering of old patterns of ideas into new patterns.

Ideas are ideas of things and their relations. It is through practice that these relations are consciously grasped. Ideas, therefore, originate in and are the product of social material practice of men. They have social material origin.

Old ideas become outmoded when practice reaches a certain nodal point in its development (scientific research, industry, class and other social struggles). Old ideas are then

² Lenin, *Teachings of Karl Marx*, p. 6.

recast into new ideas which comprehend the new practice and include all scientific elements in old ideas. Since historically developing social practice of man is a dialectical process, historically developing and succeeding patterns of ideas also constitute a dialectical process, (Classical political economy dialectically passing into Marxist economy, Newtonian physics into Einsteinian physics, bourgeois democracy into proletarian socialist democracy etc.). Such is the origin and the law of transformation of ideas.

5

MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY : ITS CORE

THE materialist conception of history is the theory of social development as formulated by Marx.

“Marxism”, as Engels stated, “is the science of the most general laws of movement of nature, society, and human thought.” Dialectical materialism or the philosophy of Marxism is comprised of the most general laws of movement of the Universe (which it expounds as material) as a whole. These laws find *special* expression in separate domains of the material Universe, become special laws of those domains giving rise to separate sciences. For instance, in the domains of mechanical and physical processes, as Lenin observed, the special laws governing them gave rise to the science of mechanics and that of physics; in the sphere of chemical processes to the science of chemistry; in the domain of organic matter, to the science of biology. Finally, in the world of the life processes of the human species, they gave rise to the science of society or sociology. However, as we stated above, since the Universe is monistic, is made of the same stuff, matter, these laws governing *separate* domains of the Universe are only *specific* expressions of the general laws of development of the material universe as a whole which are dealt with and constitute philosophy or the world outlook. Dialectical materialism is the philosophy of Marxism.

The materialist conception of history is the Marxist theory of social development. As Darwinism revealed the laws govern-

* Published in *The New Perspective*, August, 1957.

ing the processes of organic matter (living matter) and laid the foundation of the science of biology, the Marxist theory of social development viz. the materialist conception of history reveals the basic law governing social development and, since the law is scientific i.e. it correctly reflects socio-historical causation, Marx, by discovering it, made, for the first time, sociology scientific.

According to this theory, social phenomena, like all natural phenomena, are also governed by a law, a special law of their own. Marx stated this law as follows :

In the social production of their means of life, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will; production relations which correspond to a definite stage in the development of their productive forces. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a legal and political superstructure arises, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond.

The mode of production of the material means of life determines, in general, the social, political, and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of human beings which determines their existence, it is their social existence which determines their consciousness.

At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing production relationships or, what is but a legal expression for the same thing, with the property relationships within which they have hitherto moved. From forms of development of the productive forces, those relationships turn into fetters upon them. A period of social revolution then begins.

With the change in the economic foundation, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations, we must always distinguish between the material changes in the economic condition of production (changes which can be determined with the precision of natural science) and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic — in short ideological — forms in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out to an issue.

Just as little as we can judge an individual by what he thinks of himself, just so little we can appraise such a revolutionary epoch in accordance with its own consciousness of itself. On the contrary, we have to explain the consciousness as the outcome of the contradiction of material life, of the conflict existing between social productive forces and production relationships.

No social order is destroyed until all the productive forces for which it gives scope have been developed; new and higher production relations cannot appear until the material conditions for their existence have ripened within the womb of the old social order. Therefore, mankind in general never sets to itself problems it cannot solve since, looked at more closely, we always find that the problem arises only when the material conditions for its solution exist.¹

Here Marx succinctly formulated the basic law of social development.

The law has been described as the Materialist Conception of History since it takes, as its point of departure, the development of productive forces as the determinant and, in the final analysis, the genetic cause of all social phenomena such as various economic systems and the classes bound up with these systems, diverse state structures based on those economic systems with their legal and other institutions, all ethical, religious, artistic, and philosophical conceptions which appeared in human society, in all epochs and lands.

• Due to his physiological weakness, man has always lived in society and struggled against Nature by means of technology. Man invented tools, collectively operated them, and organized economic production. This fact distinguishes man from all other animal species.

The instruments of production wherewith material values (necessary for his physical existence) are produced, *the people* who operate the instruments of production and carry on the production of material values, thanks to *certain production experience* and skill — all these elements jointly constitute the *productive forces* of society.²

1 Marx, Karl, *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*.

2 Stalin, J., *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, p. 25.

These productive forces are transmitted from one generation to another and further improved. The character of the productive forces and their level of development determine the social relations of production between men. The totality of these production relations constitutes the economic structure of society. The communist economy of tribal society corresponded to the primitive nature of the technique developed and operated by tribal humanity. Due to the weak technique, the productivity of labour was low and the entire labour power of *all* members of the tribe was indispensable for production even to just maintain their physical existence. Since there was no surplus production, no section of the population could remain outside the sphere of productive activity and live on the product of the labour of the rest of society. Thus no exploiting or parasitical class could exist in primitive tribal society. The communist economy and the communist social structure of tribal society was due to this low level of development of productive forces. The social and economic structure of society is thus basically determined by the state of productive forces.

The productive forces, and consequently the productivity of human labour, further developed till a stage was reached when the economic conditions for maintaining a non-working class came into being in historical evolution. This led to the emergence of class-stratified society. The slave, feudal and capitalist societies have been the historical types of class society based on the monopolist ownership of the means of production by a non-productive, non-working class of society exploiting the rest of society which actually operated these means of production and produced material values. This class, on the basis of private ownership of means of production, exploited and lived on the labour of toiling classes of society.

In the process of their development, the productive forces find in the existing economy, as stated above by Marx, an obstacle to their further development. At a certain stage, through social struggles between classes (social revolutions), the old economy is replaced by a new economy which corresponds to the needs of free development of the advanced productive forces. As Marx remarks,

Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces.

In acquiring new productive forces, men change their mode of

production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations.³

The emergence of slave, feudal, and capitalist economies and social structures based on those economies took place after productive forces of society reached certain nodal points of their development. They were moments when the economic system was qualitatively transformed and brought in line with the level of development and the character of these productive forces which could not freely develop within the framework of the old economic system or mode of production.

The contradiction between the constantly developing productive forces and extant production relations is the *demiurge* of all social development. Society develops through this basic contradiction.

Changes in the mode of production or the economic structure of society explains the changes of all social relations and their congealed expression viz. social institutions. The prevailing communist mode of production in tribal society explains why there were no social classes within that society and therefore no exploitation of man by man. As a result of the development of productive forces, subsequently a new mode of production came into existence viz. the slave mode of production which corresponded to the developed productive technique in ancient Greece and Rome. The emergence of the hitherto historically unknown phenomenon of classes viz. the slaves and the slave owners in human society was thus due to the emergence of the new slave mode of production which itself emerged, *of historical necessity*, due to the advance of the productive technique within tribal society.

Due to the same reason viz. the further advance of productive forces, the feudal mode of production with which was bound up the emergence of new classes, the serfs and the feudal nobility, superseded the slave economy. Since the productive forces further developed within feudal society, at a certain stage of their growth they came in collision with the framework of feudal economy. Through a new social revolution (the great French Revolution in France), the feudal mode

3 Marx, Karl, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 92.

of production was replaced by the dominant capitalist mode of production which implied the emergence of historically unknown two new classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The subsequent amazingly rapid development of productive forces under capitalism has given a decisive social and world-wide character to both the productive forces and the process of production (international division of labour) which have hence come in irreconcilable collision with the existing capitalist social relations of production (capitalist private property) and national frontiers. The advanced productive forces demand a socialist mode of production on a world scale, thereby demanding the elimination of classes and the transformation of class society into a world scale classless communist society.

Even in communist society, since the productive forces will not cease to develop but, in fact, develop with a historically unknown tempo, they will come periodically in clash *with the existing type of communist production relations*. The contradiction between the productive forces and production relations as the basic contradiction of society and the decisive *final* cause of all social development will continue to operate in communist society also. However, the contradiction will not be resolved through any class struggle since there will be no classes in it with their antagonistic class interests but through collective planning, implemented through the collective fraternal and enlightened action of its members. *Higher and higher types of communist society will thus continue to emerge in the history of mankind.*

According to the materialist conception of history, social consciousness is the product of and is determined by social being. As Marx has remarked, the mode of production determines man's mode of conception. Ideas are the ideas of the working men and are determined by their mode of work. In tribal society, the communist mode of production built up cooperative habits, collective feeling, a communist consciousness among its members though limited to themselves only. In class society, (slave, feudal, or capitalist) the organic collective consciousness of tribal man is sundered into two kinds, the consciousness of the exploiting class and that of the exploited class. The world outlooks, the moral theories, the political views of classes with diametrically opposite interests are in-

evitably divergent. In fact, even the institution of the state with its laws and military-bureaucratic machinery which protected the class structure of society based on private property in means of production and resultant exploitation of the toiling class by the owning class, came into existence only when, as a result of the development of productive forces, private property and hence class-stratified society came into being. In fact, the entire political and ideological edifice of society is finally built on the economic foundation. Transformation of the economic base brings about sooner or later transformation of the non-economic superstructure. Till the growth of the productive forces is slow and is compatible with the preservation of the mode of production, both the economic structure and the political, legal, social and ideological superstructure persist. It, undergoes only minor modifications. But when the contradiction between the expanding productive forces and the production relations sharpens, *becomes qualitative*, the historical necessity of a complete transformation of the economic structure as well as the social and cultural superstructure, arises. The entire economy and the social and cultural superstructure enter the phase of organic crisis. *In class society, the human agent which brings about this transmutation is the revolutionary class bound up with the advanced productive forces* which accomplishes the transformation of the historically outmoded old society into the new society.

New revolutionary social ideas are generated during the period of the growing incompatibility of the productive forces and the old mode of production. During this period, the economy declines and the exploitation and the resultant misery of the masses reach intolerable limit. Revolutionary ideas reach out to the masses, imbue their consciousness and thereby, as Marx remarked, become material forces. Old conceptions in economic, political, ethical and philosophical spheres are increasingly replaced by new ones which mirror the need of new social forms needed for the further development of the material life of society. As Stalin remarks,

Out of the conflict between the new productive forces and the old relations of production, out of new economic demands of the society there arise new social ideas; the new ideas organize and mobilize the masses; the masses become welded into a

political army, create a new revolutionary power, and make use of it to abolish by force the old system of relations of production and to firmly establish the new system. The spontaneous process of development yields place to the conscious action of man, evolution to revolution.⁴

It must be noted that the essence of a revolution lies in the transfer of political power from one class to another and change in social relations of production or in property forms.

Though the social, legal, political, moral, philosophical, and art superstructure is determined by the character of the economic structure of society, *the elements of this superstructure subsequently retroact on the economic base*. There is a perennial interaction, reciprocal modification both among the various elements of the superstructure as well as them and the economic base. However, the mode of production and the social relations generated by it are, *in the final analysis*, the genetic cause of all ideological consciousness of society, all its moral, political, and philosophical conceptions, irrespective of the fact that these conceptions after arising exert a reciprocal influence among themselves as well as on the economic movement of society. Further, in the final analysis, when the productive forces have reached a level when they cannot further *freely* develop within the shell of existing production relations, *sooner or later* these production relations must give way to new and appropriate production relations. Correspondingly, men become conscious of this fundamental requirement of society which leads to the growth of new conceptions of law, morals, political theory, etc. life of society.

Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic etc. development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic-base. It is not that the economic position is the *cause and alone active*, while everything else only has a passive effect. There is rather interaction on the basis of the economic necessity which *ultimately* always asserts itself. The state, for instance, exercises an influence by tariffs, free trade, and even the deadly inanition and impotence of the German petty-bourgeois, arising from the miserable economic position of

4 *ibid.*

Germany from 1640 to 1830 and expressing itself at first in pietism, then in sentimentality and cringing servility to princes and nobles, was not without economic effect.....

So it is not that the economic position produces an automatic effect. Men make their history themselves, but only in given surroundings which condition it and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other political and ideological ones, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the red thread which runs through them and alone leads to understanding.....

The further the particular sphere (of the superstructure) which we are investigating is removed from the economic sphere and approaches that of pure abstract ideology, the more shall we find it exhibiting accidents in its development, the more will its curve run in a zigzag..... The axis of this curve will approach more and more nearly parallel to the axis of the curve of economic development, the longer the period considered and the wider the field dealt with.⁵

⁵ Marx, K. and Engels, F., *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 517-8.

6

WHAT ARE CLASSES?

A CLASS is a group of persons standing in an identical relation to the means of production. We will illustrate this.

In the contemporary Indian society, factories, mines, land etc. constitute the principal means of production of material values necessary for maintaining the life of its members. Among these, factories, mines, and other means of industrial production are owned respectively by factory owners, mine owners, and other groups who themselves do not operate them but hire, in the labour market, the labour power of factory workers, mine workers and other groups of workers to operate them. These owners have one thing in common viz. they *own these specific* means of production and *themselves do not operate them but hire labour for that purpose*. They, thus, stand in an identical relation to these means of production. They are known as industrial capitalists.

This group of industrial capitalists with those of commercial and financial capitalists *who are associated with the process of production* constitute the *capitalist class* in the country.

Workers in factories, mines, railways and other enterprises owned by capitalists constitute the class of proletarians. They stand in an identical relation to these means of production and transport in as much as they do not own them but work them on the basis of the sale of their labour power to those owners.

Similarly, landlords, feudal and capitalist, tenants and land labourers are other classes of the contemporary Indian society. The members of each of these classes stand in an identical relation to the means of production viz. land. The semi-feudal

* A lecture delivered before the Marxist Study Group in 1956.

landlords constitute a separate class since all its members have the basic feature in common viz. they own land which they do not themselves work on, but rent it to the tenants who pay rent to them. The tenants, since all of them do not own land but toil on it and pay rent to the landlords, form another distinct class. There exists also the class of capitalist landlords who own land which they themselves do not cultivate but get it cultivated by hired labourers. These hired land labourers form another discrete class since they do not own land but cultivate them by selling their labour power to the capitalist owners of land.

There is another class, the class of peasant proprietors all of whom stand in an identical relation to the means of production viz. land, since they own land as well as work on it. This class is composed of individuals who are owner-toilers.

These are some of the principal classes comprising the modern Indian society.

Classes emerge only when the means of production are owned by a section of society. In primitive tribal society, the means of production and products were the collective property of the tribe. This was due to the fact that the productive forces of tribal society were weak, the resultant productivity of human labour was low, and the collective labour of *all* members of the tribe was necessary to maintain the tribe. If a section of the tribe had tried to establish private ownership of the means of production and, on the basis of it, evade productive labour and live on the labour of the non-owning section of society, the tribe would have been extinguished. This is because as a result of the low development of productive forces, the total amount of products of the labour of the working section of society would not have been sufficient to maintain all members of the tribe. The nature of the productive forces thus determined the primitive communist structure of tribal society, and the primitive communist mode of production.

The productive forces, however, did not remain stationary. They developed within the primitive society and at a certain stage of their development, they led to a productivity of human labour *when the labour of only a section of society applied to the advanced productive technique* could create enough products not only to maintain that working section but *all* members

of the society. Thus a historico-economic condition came into existence for the exploitation of man by man, for the private property in the means of production, for the rise of classes in society. Society became class-stratified, was broken into classes one of which owned exclusively the productive technique of society, did not participate in the process of production, did not itself labour but lived on the labour of the other section of society. In this historical situation classes and class exploitation emerged in the social world.

The nature of the productive forces determines the nature of the mode of production, the nature of the classes which come into being, in a society. At a certain stage of their development, they gave birth to a slave economy and a slave society. With the further development of productive forces within the slave society, the slave mode of production became historically obsolete. The advanced productive forces reflected in the progress of techniques of agriculture and artisan industry came in inevitable and irreconcilable clash with the production relations of slave society, with the institution of slavery. They could not further develop within the matrix of the slave mode of production, in fact were being stifled within that matrix. The contradiction between the advanced productive forces of production and the extant production relations obtaining in slave society was reflected in sharpened class struggles between the slave owning class which was interested in preserving the slave mode of production and the rest of society the life conditions of which deteriorated as a result of the decline of the slave economy and the resultant intensification of class exploitation. The conflict culminated in the birth of the feudal society based on a feudal mode of production resting on serfdom, on a system of feudal property relations. The level of historically developed productive forces needed for their further development the feudal type of production relations. With the emergence of the feudal mode of production new classes emerged in human history, the feudal nobility and the class of serfs.

The productive forces, however, did not stabilize at the same level during the feudal phase of social existence of man. Scientific knowledge of man improved in the process of production practice and scientific experiment. This led to the invention of new techniques and lifted the productive forces of

society to a higher level. The new productive forces (manufacture, trade) and the new type of capitalist production relations corresponding to them developed within the feudal society as a result of which new classes such as those of manufacturers, traders, and workers came into existence. These new productive forces, new production relations and new classes based on the new productive forces and production relations were alien and hostile forces within the feudal society. The new class, the bourgeoisie, bound up with the new capitalist relations of production resting on the new developed productive forces, came into inevitable and mortal conflict with the class of the feudal nobility, the very existence of which was bound up with that of the feudal mode of production and the feudal society based on that productive system. The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the feudal nobility finally ended in the triumph of the former, the liberator of the new expanding productive forces of trade and manufacture from the feudal shackles, the bearer of the capitalist social relations of production which was the historically appropriate form within which these forces could further develop. Through a series of victorious anti-feudal bourgeois democratic revolutions, the feudal society was superseded by the capitalist society in a number of countries. Thus, in the final analysis, the nature of the productive forces sooner or later determines the production relations (both constituting the economic structure) and the resultant social, political and ideological superstructure of society. By determining the production and general social relations on which the political and ideological superstructure of society is further based, the productive forces, have brought into being, during their historical career of development, the succeeding series of new economic and social structures, new classes, and new ideologies during the period of the class phase of man's social existence.

The productive forces continued to develop further within the new capitalist society composed of a multitude of social classes among which the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were the fundamental classes. In any society, as history shows, there always survive elements of the old society, unliquidated remnants of the old economic forms and old classes bound up with these economic forms. But as the new society continues

its development, the dominant new mode of production weakens and increasingly eliminates these economic survivals and class remnants. The historical tendency is towards this consummation. It must be noted here that in the new society even these economic survivals of classes of the past society are subordinated to the dominant extant economy and dominant economic class. In the existing Indian society undissolved feudal economic forms and classes of old society are subordinated to the dominant capitalist economic form and the ruling bourgeoisie. At a certain stage of their development, the productive forces which are by their nature dynamic and ceaselessly grow find in the capitalist property relations within which they develop, *an obstacle to their further expansion*. This is the period of the decline of capitalism or imperialism. The capitalist social relations of production, as Marx observed, instead of being the form of development of the productive forces, are transformed into fetters on their *free* and further development. This is evidenced by the fact of the *general* (structural) crisis of contemporary capitalist world economy, of increased frequency of the cyclical crises within the framework of the general (structural) crisis, of the *retarded* development of the productive forces, of a *retarded* progress in technical advance on a world scale. The crisis of the capitalist system is also reflected in the sharpened social antagonisms between classes and nations and the resultant outbreak of imperialist wars, national liberation struggles of colonial peoples and socialist revolutions.

In the process of their development within capitalist society, the productive forces have acquired a volume, a depth and a social character which have become now incompatible with the capitalist social relations of production as well as their organization on a narrow national basis. The productive forces have acquired a supranational character bringing into existence, through the international division of labour a single world economy. At the present level of their historical development, the productive forces demand their worldwide organization on a socialist basis. Their social character is incompatible with any mode of production based on private property, capitalist or any other. Their supranational character demands their world organization and operation on a socialist planned basis. The development of the productive forces, at its present his-

torical stage, has unfolded the perspective of the emergence of the world socialist society.

This birth of a worldwide classless socialist society will not take place *automatically* but through the subjective action of class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie whose very existence as a class demands the *preservation* of the historically outmoded system of capitalist production relations.

The resistance of the bourgeoisie will however be overcome by the proletariat. Objective necessity of social development demands socialism today. The contradiction of the modern productive forces and the capitalist production relations must be and will be resolved through the replacement of capitalism by socialism by means of the creative initiative of the proletariat. The contradiction between form and content, capitalist property relations and modern productive forces, will be resolved sooner or later. The production relations must conform ultimately to the (social) character and level of development of productive forces.

The nature of productive forces determines the economic structure of society. As we have seen previously the handmill provides the technical basis of the feudal society with the feudal nobility in command just as the steam-mill that of the capitalist society with the bourgeoisie as the ruling class.

The nature of productive forces in tribal society due to their very weak development determined the *communist* character of tribal social relations. But this primitive communism was based not on entire humanity but only on a small tribe. Further, it was based on meagre production, on *appalling* scarcity. The scientific knowledge of the tribe about the world around it, due to its production practice at a very low level, was extremely limited. It had nebulous conceptions of the phenomena of nature and life. In fact, magic, animism, totems, and taboos generally comprised its ideology.

With further development of productive forces, class societies, generally slave, feudal and capitalist based on different systems of private property in means of production, came into being in a historical succession. Thus exploitation of class by class came into existence, in the social world. With the emergence of class society based on private property in means of production and resultant exploitation of one class by another, the institution

of the state inevitably came into being. The state became the weapon of the propertied and hence economically dominant class to perpetuate the specific mode of production based on private property in means of production and resultant exploitation of the toiling non-owning section of society, by the owning section. The state was the organ of class coercion, the "gendarme" which guarded the privileged class position of the owning class and its exploitation of the rest of the society against any challenge to them by the latter. The state was, as Lenin observed, the product of the irreconcilable conflict of class interests, of resultant class antagonisms in class-stratified society. The specific structure and organization of a particular class state in a particular class society were determined by the character of the extant mode of production and the specific class needs of the economically dominant class in a specific phase of existence.

The state did not exist in primitive communist tribal society since it was not split up into antagonistic classes. There did not exist any objective conflict of material interests among the members of tribal society. "Each for all" and "all for each" was the basic feature of its life process.

Thus man has lived a stateless social existence in the past. Stateless societies have existed in history. The state is a historical category of the phase of class-stratified social existence of man. Since it was the offspring of the class structure of society and resultant irreconcilable class antagonisms, it will disappear in historical evolution when classes disappear and *again* society is reorganized on a classless basis.

During the historical period of the existence of class society (slave, feudal, and capitalist) the productive forces developed enormously. This development of productive forces under capitalism had long ago reached the historical limit when, the abolition of private property in the means of production, the resultant disappearance of classes, and the establishment of socialist relations of production are required as the further condition of their development. Historically, it is within capitalist society that these productive forces have matured to that historically necessary limit. Capitalism itself has thus created the material (economic) premise for the building up of a classless, stateless communist society. It has also brought into exist-

ence the modern class of proletariat, the subjective agent of the transformation of capitalist society into communist society.¹

Consciousness is the product of matter, being. It arises from matter, reflects matter, and retroacts on matter. Social consciousness is the product of social matter (economic conditions), of social material being. In the human world, as Marx observed, the mode of production determines the mode of conception of man.² A social consciousness with individual variations among its individual members arises only when the mode of production is social (socialism). In classless society, there exists collective consciousness among its members, a feeling of solidarity among them. The material genetic cause of this social consciousness and emotion of solidarity among *all* its members lies in the fact that there does not exist any *objective* conflict of material interests among them due to the social ownership of means of production and the co-operative form of labour. In class society, on the contrary, due to the private ownership of means of production and *resultant* class exploitation, an *objective* conflict of material interests among classes springs into existence. A class increasingly becomes conscious of its own material interests, separate from and, in some cases, even antagonistic to those of other classes. Thus, in the process, first, of *spontaneous* class struggle, class consciousness comes into existence. A class psychology and a class ideology are forged. In class society there cannot be a homogeneous social consciousness of all its members since the material interests of its members are not identical. Since the modes of earning livelihood of various classes and groups comprising the class-stratified society are different and often even antagonistic, a multitude of different class philosophies or world outlooks, ethical conceptions, economic and political theories, even aesthetic norms, exist, both contraposed and juxtaposed, to one another, in class society. The proletarian class ethics glorifies all activities of the members of the proletariat which weakens capitalism and advances the socialist liberation struggle of the proletariat. The bourgeois class ethics glorifies all activities of

1 Refer : Marx, Karl, *The Communist Manifesto*.

2 Refer : Marx, Karl, *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*.

the members of the bourgeoisie which stabilizes and strengthens capitalism and effectively combats the proletarian struggle for the elimination of capitalism. Ethics, like other non-economic phenomena, has, in class society, a *class* character and is a *specific generalization of the interests of a particular class*. *There is no room for a human ethics or art and culture in class society.*

It must however be noted that a class does not automatically develop class consciousness. A class not only feels the impact of its own class milieu but also that of the total social milieu. A class does not live in social vacuum but ceaselessly interacts with other classes. It feels the pressure of the ideologies of other classes also. The economically dominant class, which controls state power as well as the material means of creating opinions and emotions (the school, the press, the cinema, the stage, the radio), is able, *in initial stages*, to inoculate other classes with its own class world outlook, ethical conceptions, economic and political views, and aesthetic norms, which are various generalizations of its own class interests. As Marx observes, the ruling ideas of an epoch are the ideas of the ruling class. Since, however, class society is based on the irreconcilable conflict of material interests of classes and resultant irreconcilable class antagonisms, it becomes inevitably an arena of class struggle. The specific economic and other conditions under which an exploited class lives, increasingly and *first spontaneously*, urge that class to come into clash with the exploiting class. In the process of this class struggle, the exploited class develops increasingly its class psychology and general class consciousness. From being the class *for the other class*, it, is increasingly transformed into a class *for itself*. As class solidarity based on the consciousness of common class interests spreads among its members, the exploited class evolves its own class ethics or a set of rules for the behaviour-pattern of its members which subserve its specific class interests. Since, however, a class is the product of the socio-historical process, of all previous social evolution, it cannot build up a correct conception of its genesis, its precise position in the particular society and its specific historical role, merely from its limited experience of day to day struggles. Such a conception can be built up only on the basis of a general mastery of the entire culture of society (as Lenin remarked), past and present. The advanced elements

of the class and the *declassed* intellectuals of other classes who recognizing the historically progressive role of that class (in the present capitalist era, the proletariat) join its camp, master the existing inherited culture, reforge it into a new ideology, the ideology of that class, and disseminates it among increasing strata of that class. As Lenin remarks, the workers can develop only trade union consciousness from economic struggles. They can develop *full* class consciousness i.e. the consciousness of their historical role of the "grave-digger" (Marx) of capitalism and the architect of communism only when they study Marxism, particularly historical materialism and the special law of motion of the capitalist society. Marxism is the generalization and further development of all former and existing natural-scientific and social-scientific knowledge of humanity. Any further development of scientific knowledge is the logical continuation of all previous achievements of man's scientific knowledge acquired on the basis of the needs of production (struggle against nature) and class struggle within society.

In class society, since there exists an objective conflict of interests among classes, there cannot emerge human values, norms and criteria. There can exist within that society *only class values*, norms, and criteria. Only in the future communist society when, due to the disappearance of classes, society will become classless and hence homogeneous, when the objective conflict of interests of man and man will vanish, when the very condition for the development of each individual is that all must also develop and *vice versa, then alone* the socio-historical premise will mature for the birth of *the truly human emotion, ethics, culture and art*. In class society, all ideological phenomena *by necessity* have a class character and are mutually antagonistic. They are the forms in which various classes become conscious of their specific antagonistic class interests. In classless communist society, individuals will vary but there will not exist any conflict of interests among them due to the social ownership of means of production, co-operative character of labour, plenty guaranteed by highly developed productive forces and the communist nature of culture. The culture of the communist society will be a single variegated whole, variegated since each unique individual member will make his own unique

contribution in building it. In class society, on the contrary, the total culture is composed of various conflicting class cultures of antagonistic classes comprising class society. A classless (communist) human culture, the creation of *all* members of communist humanity, will evolve only when, on the basis of the existing highly developed productive forces and their communist organization on a world scale, a single world communist society will have emerged. Then alone every member of that society will have developed a truly *human* consciousness, a *human* emotion. In tribal communist society, collective emotion was restricted to the members of the tribe. Members of other tribes were strangers or enemies. In various class societies which succeeded it, the emotion of solidarity which the individual experienced was restricted to the members of the class to which he belonged. In the future communist society which can and will exist only on a world scale, this emotion, unlike in the case of the tribe, will be extended to the entire humanity, to all its members. The individual will feel fraternal feeling for all members of the human species. Then alone the individual's emotion will not be class emotion but truly human emotion. His consciousness will be fully socialized.

7

CAPITALIST WORLD: ITS GENERAL CRISIS

I

NATIONS comprising the capitalist world are at present living through a most profound crisis. The crisis had commenced long ago but, with every stage of its persistence, it has deepened, become aggravated and more devastating.

The crisis is not local or national but world scale, universal. Its depth, extent and ravages may vary from nation to nation, country to country, but its all-pervading presence is an indisputable fact. All nations of the capitalist world are writhing in the agony of the crisis to a greater or less extent. The existing economic, political and social structures of the majority of these nations are in a state of acute disequilibrium, are exhibiting tendencies of disintegration and even collapse. Even the U.S.A. economically the most prosperous and therefore socially and politically the least unstable country in the capitalist world, is confronted with the dark perspective of an economic crisis and the resultant sharpening of economic and political class warfare. Some of its economists and politicians have already made such a gloomy prognosis. When even the most flourishing capitalism is threatened with such a catastrophe what hope is there for weaker capitalist countries which are already experiencing the convulsive shocks of the crisis?

The almost universal character of the crisis demonstrates that all nations are living an inter-dependent social and eco-

* Published in *The New Prospective*, January, 1948.

conomic existence, that national isolation no longer exists in actual life, that national problems are increasingly acquiring an international character and that decisive events in one country have repercussions in other countries and affect the life of the peoples of those countries.

The national capitalist crisis is thus an integral part of the world capitalist crisis. The crisis of the national system is a part of the crisis of the world system.

The crisis further is not restricted to one sphere of social life. It has invaded all spheres, economic, political, social, cultural, moral, psychological and philosophical. In the economic field, in spite of the amazing achievements of science and technology and the unparalleled development of productive forces and productive power of mankind, we are witnessing today the paradoxical spectacle of an overwhelming section of capitalist nations suffering from deprivation of minimum necessities of life. This contradiction, which already existed in the capitalist world even long before the outbreak of the Second World War, has been staggeringly accentuated by that war. Entire nations of the world today are struggling in the throes of famine conditions, are experiencing acute shortage of food, clothing and other primary prerequisites of life.

Further, while the level of the material life of millions is sinking progressively in spite of the phenomenal development of the material productive forces of society, while their impoverishment and decline in purchasing power are growing at a geometrical tempo, the wealth of a small number of capitalist magnates, who monopolize the means of production in every capitalist country, is increasing at a fabulous rate. The contrast in the economic conditions of the classes is sharpening.

The economic structures of a majority of the backward capitalist countries are showing signs of crisis and even collapse, in spite of the fact that both the needs of the people for products of industry and agriculture as well as the productive forces to satisfy those needs, have developed to an extent unprecedented in history. The best economists of the capitalist class, which owns all means of production and directs production, are engaged in evolving economic strategies and programmes to stabilize the system but they are disconcerted when they find that the very carrying through of every economic strategy and

the programme based on that strategy only further aggravates the crisis.

Each such programme aims at solving the crisis by transferring the economic burdens to the masses and the middle classes which only reduces their purchasing power and intensifies their economic misery.

It is clear that the entire economic system of capitalism is in a state of irremediable crisis.

The world capitalist crisis, which began roughly at the beginning of the present century (when capitalism made a decisive entry from the progressive first phase into the reactionary declining second phase, the phase of imperialism) and of which the First World War was the first world scale catastrophic manifestation, has invaded the political field also. The entire present epoch, dominated by the general crisis of the world capitalist system of which Indian capitalism is an integral part, is crowded with frequently erupting wars, local, national and world scale. Large-scale holocausts of humans in increasingly recurring wars, big and small, have become an integral part of the history of contemporary humanity, an almost permanent and not episodic feature of its existence.

The crisis in the political field is manifested also in the increased liquidation of democratic regimes in a number of countries, in the increased suppression of democratic liberties of citizens. The ruling capitalist class, in the conditions of acute economic crisis and sharpened class struggle, finds it difficult to maintain its rule by democratic methods and increasingly resorts to fascist methods. The crisis finds a political expression also in the form of the intensification of the basic political antagonisms of the capitalist world system, those between nation and nation, class and class, the entire capitalist world headed to-day by Anglo-American Imperialism and the Soviet Union.

The entire capitalist world is convulsed with political upheavals and military conflicts.

The crisis has assailed other spheres of social life too. It has spread to the field of social relations, psychology, art, culture, philosophy, even natural sciences. This is because all human living is organic and a profound crisis, when it overtakes it at a given stage in the historical development of society in which and through which humanity lives, envelops not only one

field of social existence but all fields.

In the field of morals, too, a crisis is rampant. Old moral conceptions and ethical criteria do not satisfy increasingly larger and larger number of men. New, more rational and historically higher socialist ethical norms have not been vividly comprehended as yet. This is leading to increasing moral nihilism, crass scepticism and cynicism in the moral behaviour among men. The whole political and social crisis raging with devastating fury in the contemporary capitalist world accentuates this tendency of moral disintegration. The problem "What constitutes morality" is a subject of controversy among leading sociologists today.

There is also a crisis in the sphere of ideology and culture in general. Old world conceptions, old social theories, old political doctrines, old views regarding the motif, themes and even techniques of artistic creation, old methodologies and approaches to problems of the natural and the social worlds as also of the world of thought, are being shattered, and new, more correct and historically higher, are not still vividly comprehended. Anarchy prevails in the field of ideology and culture too. In the final analysis, anarchy in the field of ideology and culture is the reflection of the anarchy raging in the sphere of economic and social life of man. As Professor Levy remarks :

When, therefore, economic instability sets in, the ideology of that social phase moves from unconscious acceptance to conscious criticism. Just as soon as the categories of social life begin themselves to shift, as in the present, so also, therefore, will a movement of a similar nature be reflected in the inner structure of theoretical science. A crisis in Society will reflect itself indeed in a crisis of ideology, and in a series of crises in diverse branches of science and art. All theories become the subject of fundamental criticism..... A deep-seated social crisis involves in its turn a corresponding unsettlement in every developed branch of science.¹

Thus the economic and social crisis has penetrated the sphere of ideology, of different natural sciences, art and philosophy. The crisis in ideology manifests itself in the political

1 Levy, Prof., in Caudwell Christopher, *Introduction to Crisis in Physics*.

field in the debacle of the bourgeois democracy, in the revival of the cult of the Superman, the Prophet, in the undemocratic conception of "the One Leader" as the saviour of the nation, even humanity; in the unscientific and reactionary doctrines such as the Superior Race theory (propagated by Nazi ideologues) and others. It manifests itself, in the field of theoretical science, in the form of retrogression to a religio-mystical view of the world by such scientists as Eddington, Jeans, and others when they deny causality as the principle governing the world and, further, when they declare that world to be non-material.

The world crisis is the product of the development of the productive forces of society, both in the field of economy and culture. These growths demand new socio-economic relations (socialism) and new theoretical outlooks (in philosophy, dialectical materialism). Christopher Caudwell portrays the crisis thus :

To-day, all bourgeois culture struggles in the throes of its final crisis. On the one hand the increase of organization in the factories; on the other hand the increase of competition for private profit between the factories. On the one hand an unparalleled development of productive forces; on the other hand a system of economy continually generating crises which result in a restriction of production. On the one hand an increase in international communication, unity of consciousness and interweaving of production; on the other hand an increasing nationalism and enmity. On the one hand a growing desire for peace; on the other hand an increasing preparation for war. Abroad idle capital wildly searching for profit; at home idle hands vainly searching for work. At one end of society the creation of a diminishing number of plutocrats with an income, power and purchasing capacity beyond the dreams of earlier society; at the other end the growth of an army without possessions, without work, without hope to a degree unknown to any previous civilization. On the one hand an efflorescence of the sciences and the arts in a new universe of technique; on the other hand their separation into spheres whose disintegration and contradiction reduces knowledge to chaos and men to spiritual despair.²

2 Caudwell, Christopher, *Illusion And Reality*, p. 307.

The world crisis has projected a multitude of problems affecting all spheres of human life, economic, political, social, moral, cultural, and philosophical. A successful solution of this host of countless problems is the prerequisite for tiding over the crisis which, if not overcome, would lead to its economic, social, moral, psychological and cultural retrogression and even its extinction through wars, starvation, epidemics etc. A historically correct solution of these problems will result in the emergence of a higher system of material and cultural life for the people, socialism.

The crisis is the crisis of the bourgeois social system itself. It can therefore be solved only by replacing that system by another and historically higher system, to-day socialism, since the material premise for the creation of a world socialist society of humanity has already matured in the form of the highly-developed productive forces of modern society.

The bourgeoisie of course cannot dissolve bourgeois society. To expect it to do so would be utopian. The bourgeoisie, in fact, has been in command in every capitalist country but by the very logic of its class position, it has produced the present crisis and chaos. Both the bourgeois mode of production and the bourgeoisie have outlived their historical usefulness and constitute a hindrance to further social progress.

It is the working class in alliance with other exploited classes, which feel the increasing pressure of the declining capitalist system, that will usher in socialism.

In fact, imperialist bourgeoisie is engaged at present in making preparations all over the world for a third world war as a reactionary solution of the crisis. The problem of preventing such a war is the urgent task before humanity to-day. The victory of the world socialist movement alone can prevent this war.

II

THE crisis of the contemporary Indian capitalist society is a part of the crisis of the world capitalist society. It is the product not only of the action of indigenous forces of the Indian society but also of the impact of the world forces. The Second World War, which has considerably influenced the life and fate

of the Indian people, was not an Indian event, but a world event. India, even to-day, remains organically linked to the rest of the world and feels the repercussions of the events in the rest of the world.

However, though every nation is affected by what takes place in the rest of the world, though the crisis it is faced with is a part of the world crisis, it is confronted with problems which arise out of its own historical development. The contemporary Indian society is also in a state of crisis, a part of the world crisis, and a host of problems, economic, social, political and cultural, emerging from the crisis demand solution. The reactionary social classes in the country are formulating and propagating reactionary solutions of these problems, which though it may benefit these classes, would bring increased misery to the exploited and historically progressive social classes and, further, would retard the economic and cultural progress of the Indian society itself. It is the task of the Marxists, the intellectual representatives of the progressive social class, the working class, to advance historically progressive solutions of these problems.

The crisis of the Indian society presents a number of problems. There is the problem of the economic development of the country, of the development of the productive forces of industry and agriculture. Is this development possible on the basis of a capitalist mode of production or can it be achieved only on the basis of social ownership of means of production? Can the limitless poverty, material and cultural, of the Indian masses be liquidated under the aegis of a capitalist social system? Further, what class must be in power to accomplish a historically progressive socialist transformation of the Indian society?

There are many other problems demanding solution, the problem of nationalities, communalism, mass scale untouchability, the reactionary and unhistorical caste institution of the Hindu society, the emancipation of women from bondage imposed by inherited feudal traditions and institutions as well as by the conditions of decadent bourgeois society, mass illiteracy, development of a scientific, rationalist culture, and others.

These problems have to be further visualized and focussed in their inter-connection and inter-dependence. As we men-

tioned before, all social life is organic and its various aspects interrelated. An eclectic isolation of a problem and an attempt to solve it as an independent problem, would be acting against this vital fact and would only result in the miscarriage of the endeavour.

Theoretical understanding of a problem is the precondition for its successful practical solution. The comprehension of the correct interrelation of various factors which constitute the totality of social life is indispensable if a correct solution of a problem of a particular sphere of social life is to be achieved.

Such comprehension presupposes the knowledge of the objective law of development of the Indian society which, in spite of its national peculiarities, is governed by the same law which governs all human society. The Indian society has also an economic base and changes in the economic base bring about changes in the social, political and cultural life processes of the Indian people. The Indian society is also class-stratified and therefore generates class struggle between classes with diametrically opposite interests which give movement to the Indian society also. The Indian bourgeoisie like any bourgeoisie chases a higher rate of profit and is determined to preserve the capitalist ownership of the means of production, just as the Indian proletariat struggles for increased wage and develops urges to fight for a socialist society. In India also, there are rampant religious and other reactionary ideologies which are the ideological weapons of reactionary classes for the defence of their mundane material interests as also there has been spreading the scientific ideology of Marxism which would serve historically the most progressive class of modern society, the working class, as the theoretical weapon to scientifically organize the supreme struggle for socialism.

Programmes of economic, social and cultural reconstruction of the society on a historically higher level should be based on the recognition of the objective law of social development and a proper estimate of the stage of development of society at a given moment.

Otherwise social thought becomes torn from real life, programmes based on such thought become utopian and action launched to implement these programmes becomes resultless.

India is a happy hunting ground of obscurantist reactionary

and unscientific ideologies, social, political and philosophical, mainly inherited from its medieval past. It has not even a minimum intelligentsia trained in modern scientific thought. Even some of the outstanding intellectuals subscribe to and purvey to the people crude conceptions which prevailed in the culturally dark phases of its past history.

The problems arising out of the present crisis of the Indian society are most complex in character, colossal in magnitude and profound in depth. This is due to the fact that the normal development of the Indian society was impeded by British imperialism resulting in the survival of elements of medieval society within the newly developed capitalist society, and further because the Indian bourgeoisie, which is in command to-day, due to the historical situation in which it is placed and due to its class position, is incapable of carrying out a progressive resolution of the problems of the social crisis.

The fate of the Indian society and the future of the Indian people depend on whether a correct i.e. the Marxist socialist solution of these problems is achieved or not.

8

THE MARXIST THEORY OF THE STATE

ACCORDING to the Marxist theory of the state, the state has not always existed in history. There were societies in which the institution of the state did not exist. The state emerged in history only when private property in means of production came to be established with the result that the society became split up into classes, the class which owned these means of production and other sections of society which did not own these means and which were consequently exploited by the class that owned them.

The state became necessary for the economically dominant class to protect the mode of production based on private property and the resultant exploitation of the rest of society by that class. Primitive tribal society was communistic i.e. there did not exist private ownership of means of production and, therefore, classes or class antagonisms. Consequently primitive tribal society was a stateless society. It defended itself against hostile tribes by the "self-acting armed organization" (Engels) of all the members of the tribe and not by the armed forces of a state which did not then exist in absence of the historico-economic condition for its emergence viz. private property and resultant division of society in classes with irreconcilably antagonistic interests.

Thus, according to Marxism, the state is the apparatus of class coercion, the weapon of the property-owning class to perpetuate its property rights and exploitation of other non-owning

* A lecture delivered before the Marxist Study Circle, 1947.

value-producing toiling classes of society on the basis of those property rights. The state always embodied the class dictatorship of the economically dominant class.

There have emerged three types of class society in history, viz. slave, feudal, and capitalist. In slave society, the slave-owners, who owned the means of production including the persons of toiling slaves, formed the economically dominant class. The state embodied the dictatorship of the slave-owners over the rest of society.

In feudal society, the nobility, which owned the means of production (land being the primary means) and had semi-personal control over the toiling serfs, was the economically dominant class and the state embodied the dictatorship of the feudal nobility over the serfs, artisans, and other strata of society. In the contemporary capitalist society (which still persists in a large part of the world) the capitalists who own modern means of production such as factories, mines, railways, and other constitute the economically dominant class and the state embodies the *de facto* class domination of the capitalist class over all non-capitalistic sections of society. As Engels observes,

The state is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from the outside; just as little is it 'the reality of the moral idea', 'the image and reality of Reason' as Hegel asserted. Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, may not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society becomes necessary, whose purpose is to moderate the conflict..... And this power arising out of society, but placing itself above it, is the State.¹

According to the Marxist theory of the state, the state did not and could not represent the interests of both the owning and non-owning classes since these two were exploiting and

¹ Engels, F., *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, (*A Handbook of Marxism*), p. 328.

exploited classes. The interests of these classes were diametrically opposite, irreconcilably opposite, antagonistic. While the wealth of society was produced by the exploited toiling classes which did not own the means of production, a lion's share of this wealth was appropriated by the exploiting class which owned the means of production but did not participate in actual production. If the exploited classes challenged the property rights of the owners or resisted exploitation carried on by them on the basis of the property rights, the class state of the owning, exploiting class suppressed their resistance. The state functioned as the weapon of class coercion.

The class state of the exploiting class assumed different forms according to the varying needs of that class and the specific nature of the given class society. Nevertheless, whatever the form, e.g. theocratic, monarchic, democratic, republican or other, it always embodied the class domination of the exploiting class over the exploited classes.

The Athenian Republic in ancient Greece was the class state of the Greek slave-owners embodying their dictatorship over the toiling slaves. It was democratic in form but democratic rights were restricted to the slave-owners only. The republican as well as the monarchic state of ancient Rome was the class state of the Roman slave-owners and embodied their dictatorship over the slaves and other toiling strata of the Roman society as well as conquered peoples. In contemporary capitalist society, the class states of the French and the American bourgeoisie are republican in form while the class state of the British bourgeoisie is monarchic in form. All these state structures, despite this, embody the *de facto* class dictatorship of the respective bourgeoisie of those countries, only disguised in democratic forms. The Constitutions of those countries guarantee capitalist property rights and the states created in conformity with those Constitutions protect those rights. According to Marxism this is the decisive proof of the capitalist class character of those states. As Engels remarks,

As the State arose out of the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it, at the same time, arose in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the State of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which by virtue thereof becomes also the dominant class politically, and thus acquires

new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. Thus the ancient State was above all the slave owners' State for holding down the slaves, as the feudal State was the organ of the nobles for holding down the peasantry, bondmen and serfs, and the modern representative State is the instrument of the exploitation of wage labour by capital.²

Since the bourgeoisie controls the means of life i.e. holds economic power and further owns such weapons of moulding public opinion as the press, the cinema, the radio, the stage, universities and others, it wins, even in countries where universal suffrage prevails, majorities at parliamentary elections which express its interests in parliaments. However, when, as a result of the decline of capitalism, the bourgeoisie cannot offer living standards to the exploited masses, when consequently the class struggle sharpens unfolding the perspective of a parliamentary capture of state power by the masses, the bourgeoisie withdraws democracy, rescinds civil liberties, and reconstructs its state apparatus on an undisguised dictatorial basis. This is what happened in Italy in 1921 and in Germany in 1933. The bourgeoisie of those countries destroyed democracy and ruled by fascist methods i.e. by open undemocratic dictatorial methods. "Democracy is sacred to the bourgeoisie but private property is still more sacred" and when, therefore, the choice has to be inexorably made between the two, the bourgeoisie, in conformity with the biological law of survival governing the practice of every living organism, makes it in favour of private property—the very condition of its class existence—and sacrifices democracy.

According to the Marxist theory of the state, the non-fascist bourgeois state based on civil liberties and parliamentary institutions represents as much the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the rest of society as the fascist bourgeois state based on the suppression of civil liberties and the resultant castration of parliamentary institutions by permitting only one party, the fascist party of the bourgeoisie, to have legal existence. Both the fascist and democratic bourgeois states serve the basic interest of the bourgeoisie viz. the protection of the right of the bourgeoisie to the ownership of means of production

² *ibid.*, p. 330.

and the exploitation of the toiling strata of society on the basis of that ownership. Both of them function to perpetuate capitalist society based on class division. Both represent the class rule of the bourgeoisie. The only difference lies in the fact that the democratic bourgeois state is a class domination disguised behind democratic forms while the fascist bourgeois state is a class domination undisguised, open and terroristic. Both forms of state serve the bourgeoisie, one in the prosperous phase, the other in the phase of crisis. It must, however, be noted that the democratic freedoms provided by the democratic bourgeois state are extremely valuable for organizing the socialist struggle of the working class and should be defended against the onslaught of reactionary fascist forces.

The rise of new classes is bound up in history with the rise of new modes of production which emerge at certain nodal points in the development of productive forces of society. The nature of the productive forces determines the nature of the social relations of production. For instance, the nature of the productive forces of slave society gave rise to the slave economy and the classes of slaves and slave owners. Thus on the basis of the hand-mill a feudal society with the class of barons in command emerges while on that of the steam-mill a capitalist society with the class of capitalists in command is historically generated (Marx.)

It was through the revolutionary action of a new class, which developed within the old society and represented new productive forces, that the old society, the old ruling class, and its state were replaced by a new society based on a new mode of production, with a new ruling class and a new type of state which embodied the exclusive class rule of the new victorious class over the rest of the new society. For instance, with the development of new productive forces within the feudal society, the class of the bourgeoisie matured within it which organized its bourgeois democratic revolution, triumphed over the feudal nobility, overthrew feudalism, and recreated society on a new capitalist basis. It created its own class state, the modern bourgeois state, to establish, consolidate, and extend capitalist society (economy, culture) based on the capitalist property relations.

The productive forces (the most dynamic force in social

evolution) continued to develop in the capitalist society within the framework of capitalist social relations of production. These forces, at a certain stage of their development in the phase of imperialism, acquired a supranational character. It is during the capitalist epoch that a single world economy came into existence and the division of labour became international. Further, the present general (structural) crisis of the world capitalist economy, which prevents the full utilizing of the already developed productive forces of human society except during the period of war and subsequently as today in relatively peace time on the basis of expansion of armament industries for war preparations, decisively proves that these productive forces have come into collision both with the capitalist property relations and national frontiers. Moreover, the socialization of labour and the concentration of means of production in the hands of powerful trusts, combines, and syndicates have reached a stage when a socialist organization of the productive forces has become possible and also indispensable. Both the national state and capitalist production relations, "from being forms of development of the productive forces have become shackles on their further free development." (Marx). Capitalism has thus lost its historical usefulness, its creative power, power to develop productive forces which represent the heavy artillery of the human species to conduct an effective biological struggle for survival and development against Nature. The progressive development of the productive forces is the historico-economic prerequisite also for the increasing integration of ununited human groups, for the increasing elevation of human standards of life, for greater humanization of social relations, for the growing emergence of a truly human culture. The only fetter on the full consummation of this development exists in the form of capitalist property relations today.

According to the Marxist view, the proletariat being the living part of modern productive forces leads the struggle of all oppressed and exploited social classes against the historically outgrown capitalist system. As the bourgeoisie organized a bourgeois democratic revolution against feudalism, liberated the new productive forces from the shackles of feudalism, and finally developed and consolidated a full-fledged capitalist society based on capitalist production relations appropriate to

the nature and level of development of the productive forces of its time, the proletariat, the historical antithesis of capitalism, is today engaged in organizing a socialist revolution which would liberate the productive forces of contemporary human society and establish a world socialist society on the basis of a world socialist economy. Just as the bourgeoisie, the bearer of the new capitalist mode of production, came in clash with the forces (economic, political, ideological) of feudalism such as serfdom and feudal monopoly, the feudal class state, and the feudal ideology, the proletariat, the bearer of the socialist mode of production, comes into collision with the forces (economic, political, ideological) of capitalism such as capitalist property relations, the capitalist state (fascist or democratic), and capitalist ideology (both bourgeois materialist and idealist). Just as the bourgeoisie after its victory created its own class state which embodied its class domination, the victorious proletariat will create (has already created in Russia, China and some other countries though *with bureaucratic deformity*) its own class state which will embody its own class rule.

The proletarian state has a number of features which distinguish it from all previous class states.

First, the proletarian state embodies the class rule of an exploited class (the proletariat) over an exploiting class (the bourgeoisie) in contrast to previous states which embodied the class rule of the exploiting classes (the slave owners, the feudal nobility, the bourgeoisie) over the exploited, toiling, wealth-producing classes.³

Secondly, all previous states had for their basic objective the preservation of a class structure of society (slave, feudal, or

3 It must be noted that the proletarian state is or should be "widest possible democracy for all working population" (Lenin). In the Soviet Union, due to historical reasons, a bureaucratic caste emerged and in the Stalin era, proletarian socialist democracy was completely suppressed. Even at present, reforms conceded by Khrushchev still remain within the matrix of a bureaucratic regime. The bureaucracy, however, is weakening. The bureaucratic deformity is only an episodic phenomenon, only a historical accident, a product primarily of the earlier backwardness of the Russian society. Both the internal and international situation is developing at present to the disadvantage of the bureaucracy.

capitalist society). The proletarian state, on the other hand, has for its objective the establishment of a socialist society based on the social ownership of the extant means of production and the resultant liquidation of the class structure of society.

Thirdly, previous states, since they had for their aim the perpetuation of a given class society and hence the perpetuation of classes, thereby also perpetuated themselves. The proletarian state on the contrary, having for its aim the elimination of classes by liquidating private property in means of production, creates the pre-requisite for its own disappearance since the institution of the state itself historically arose as the product of class stratification of society and resultant irreconcilable class antagonisms. When, therefore, there are no classes, there are no class antagonisms, and hence there is no state. Thus the proletarian state is the last type of the class state which, in contrast to previous class states, adopts and implements progressively the programme of socialism which leads to the elimination of classes and hence also of itself. In proportion that non-class socialist society is built up, in that proportion the proletarian state dies. Finally, when complete socialist society is built up (on a planetary scale) and when there exist no classes, the proletarian state begins to wither away since there is no class over which it can exercise its class rule. "The government by persons" is increasingly replaced by "the administration of things." As Engels states,

The State, therefore, has not existed from all eternity. There had been societies..... which had no conception of the State and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the State became a necessity owing to that cleavage. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but is becoming a positive hindrance to production. They will disappear as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the State will inevitably disappear. The society that organized production anew on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will put the whole State machine..... in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning wheel

and the bronze axe.⁴

Thus the proletarian state, based on an alliance of the proletariat and non-proletarian toiling strata of society such as the poor toiling peasantry, impoverished petty-bourgeoisie and others, is the widest possible democracy for the overwhelming majority of society who are toilers. According to the Marxist theory, the dictatorship should be exercised only against the exploiting bourgeoisie to suppress the attempt of the latter to regain its lost power. The proletarian state should signify however democracy for the toiling masses. Every state has these two aspects. It is a dictatorship against the other class while a democracy so far as the members of that class are concerned. When, for instance, the bourgeois state imprisons a member of the bourgeoisie for an offence, it is only *disciplining* that member of the class in the interests of that class as a whole. But when the same bourgeois state suppresses a workers' strike, it is *coercing* the workers in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Further, all previous states deceived the toiling people by claiming that they represented the common interests of all classes constituting society. Since there are no common interests of all classes in class society based on private ownership of means of production and resultant exploitation of a class by a class, no state can represent the interests of all classes. The proletarian state frankly and truthfully declares itself as the representative of the interests of the proletariat and non-proletarian exploited strata of society and as aiming at the liquidation of the class privileges of the exploiting bourgeoisie viz. capitalist property rights. And when the non-class communist society is elaborated, the state will not exist since the state is historically only the offspring of class-stratified society. The state itself being a product of the class structure of society, with the disappearance of classes it too disappears. Thus a democratic state representing common interests of all people does not materialize in historical evolution since when common interests emerge, there is no necessity for the survival and persistence of the institution of the state which is essentially an apparatus of class coercion and cannot survive the vanishing of classes. Democracy will fuse into the life processes of the fu-

4 *ibid.*, p. 332.

ture classless stateless communist society.

Since the proletarian state is, in relation to the proletariat, democracy, every member of the proletariat has equal democratic political rights. All members and groups of that class, who stand by the principle of and support the proletarian state as a lever for fighting bourgeois counter-revolution and for the construction of socialism, should have equal and perfect freedom to propagate their views *as to how* to defend the workers' state and construct socialism. Though the proletariat has common class interests, there can be, due to the operation of the law of uneven development of individual proletarians, different views among them on these matters. Further, though the practical programme of the proletarian state will be the programme agreed upon by the majority of the class, minority groups and individual proletarians must be allowed to propagate their respective programmes among the people. They must have perfect freedom and facilities to form groups and political parties. The argument advanced by Stalinist theoreticians that, since the proletariat is a class with basic common interests, there can be only one party of the proletariat, is invalid and fraught with limitless danger to socialist democracy. Though there are basic common interests of the class, there can be divergent view-points regarding how to serve those interests. If this freedom is not conceded, the party in power would consciously or unconsciously arrogate to itself a monopoly of proletarian class intelligence, will and wisdom, and impose its own will on the proletariat. It would imply the violation of socialist democracy and the installing of the dictatorship of one party over the entire proletariat. It would imply dictatorship against the bourgeoisie as also against the proletariat. It is true that the proletarian state machinery will be operated by the government formed by the proletarian party which commands the majority support of the proletariat. Minorities should, however, be permitted the freedom to form parties and propagate alternative programmes of how to best defend the workers' state against bourgeois counter-revolution and how to build a socialist society. *It is obvious that all parties should be permitted which subscribe to the concept of the workers' state as the lever of achieving the objective of classless communist society.*

According to the Marxist view, it is possible for the proleta-

riat of a country to secure power with the support of the non-proletarian toiling masses as a result of a fortuitous combination of favourable circumstances as happened in Czarist Russia at the end of the First World War. It is, however, not possible for the proletarian state of that country to establish a *genuine* socialist society within that country alone. Socialism cannot be built in a single country. The theory of "socialism in a single country" is the Stalinist perversion of Marxism-Leninism. This is due to the fact that the modern productive forces, which constitute the material premise for socialism, are supra-national in character. Any programme of socialism in one country, as Trotsky observed, comes in collision with the supra-national character of the productive forces, the international division of labour, and the world wide character of the existing human economy. The task of the proletarian state in a country where the proletariat is victorious is to take steps towards the socialist transformation of society in that country, without however harbouring the illusion that, independent of the rest of the world, it can create an isolated socialist society. It must further rely on the international class struggle as its *principal* support to prevent a united capitalist attack on itself.

Only when proletarian states have emerged in a number of countries including those which are economically highly advanced (Britain, France, the U.S.A.), then the condition for successful construction of real socialist society (not merely its material premise of social ownership of means of production) will have been created. But this consummation of socialism will be on a world scale, not in a single country, since, in the latter case, such a programme comes in collision with the international division of labour. Socialism cannot be created in a single country in the true sense of socialism. Finally, when the proletarian struggle succeeds on a world scale resulting in the establishment of the union of proletarian states of all countries, this union will successfully build a world wide socialist society on the basis of the highly developed productive forces of the modern epoch which have a world character.

Socialist revolution, which when victorious on a planetary scale, leads to the establishment of the world workers' state and the ultimate creation of classless, stateless world communist society, is the culmination of the long struggle of the exploited

classes in history, in all bygone epochs, against class exploitation. There were, in the past, successful revolutions of the masses against the exploiting classes but the victory culminated only in installing into power a new exploiting class in place of the old. "Exploiters were changed but exploitation continued". Private property in means of production, the genetic cause of class stratification of society and resultant class exploitation, persisted. Only the old form of property was replaced by another. Slave owners and the slave form of private property were replaced by feudal nobility and the feudal form of private property. The latter subsequently were superseded by the bourgeoisie and the capitalist form of private property. Though the masses led by a revolutionary (though exploiting) class made a successful revolution against the old reactionary ruling class, they were cheated of the fruits of victory by a new propertied class. The overthrow of the feudal nobility was succeeded by the establishment of the bourgeoisie as the new exploiting (at that time historically progressive) and hence the ruling class in all anti-feudal mass revolutions.

The historical conditions for the emancipation of the toiling and exploited class from all forms of exploitation did not evolve till the arrival of capitalist society. Historically, it was capitalism which developed the productive forces of society to a degree required for the construction of a socialist economy and a socialist society in general. It simultaneously generated a class, the proletariat, which, by its peculiar role in production as well as by its psychological structure due to that role, could become the grave-digger (as Marx declared) not only of the capitalist class society but of all class society i.e. could become the architect of the classless socialist society. In historical evolution, the productive forces of man reached at a certain point a level of development when they could generate capitalist society composed of a particular type of two antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the logical fighting out of whose class struggle could result into the establishment of the proletarian state embodying the political victory of the latter over the former. Further, the proletariat operating the modern productive forces which have a decisive social character (machinery requires collective operation) could emancipate itself only by liquidating all private property in means of pro-

duction and class society based on private property. Capitalism was the historically determined type of society which evolved in history on the basis of progressive development of productive forces and which *alone* could create the objective and subjective preconditions for the creation of a world wide socialist society embracing all humanity. The objective premise created by it was the development of productive forces to a level necessary for the creation of a world socialist economy. The subjective social force created by it was the proletariat (the spiritual agent of the socialist transformation of society as Marx observed). The ideological prerequisite was Marxism, the ideology of the proletariat which developed in the process of the proletarian class struggle, which was the further historical development of all previous scientific culture, and which could help the proletariat to forge effective strategies and tactics for capturing state power and use it for the progressive transformation of capitalist society into world wide communist society.

However the exploited classes had always put up struggles, 'now hidden, now open', against their exploiters in all previous class societies, slave and feudal. The proletariat was the last in the series of the exploited classes which emerged in history. The struggles of Spartacus and his fellow-slaves against the Roman slave-owners, of the feudal serfs against the barons and of the modern proletariat against their capitalist masters, constitute one single struggle of the wealth-producing toiling but exploited classes against exploitation. This long drawn out historical struggle of the exploited classes culminates in the contemporary epoch in the triumph of the proletariat, the last struggle, in historical sequence, of these exploited classes.

The proletariat cannot win political power and cannot build a socialist society without being armed with the scientific theory of social development (Historical Materialism) derived out of a scientific philosophy (Dialectical Materialism, the philosophy of Marxism). Marxism was the supreme generalization of all scientific knowledge of man inherited from the past. Since economic evolution and ideological evolution of society are interconnected, the emergence of Marxism, the development of productive forces to a historically necessary level, the appearance of the unique class of the proletariat, all these three conditions necessary for the political victory of the exploited class and the

resultant triumphant establishment of classless communist world society based on plenty matured as a result of the dialectic of history, only within capitalist society and their emergence almost synchronized.

Socialist revolution is the last and, for the first time, a successful struggle of an exploited class, having as its tradition in the heroic but unsuccessful struggles of the slaves, plebians and serfs in past history to end exploitation of man by man. The modern proletariat drew inspiration from those valiant but abortive struggles of the exploited classes of the past societies in its own struggle against capitalism.

The emergence of the proletarian state is a historically determined event which occurs at a particular moment in historical evolution. It is the culmination of the long drawn out process of social development. It is unique in the sense that it is the first and the final state of an exploited class. It is unique in the sense that it is the state of a specific type of an exploited class (the proletariat) which can emancipate itself *only* by liquidating the very class structure of society, by destroying the very socio-economic conditions from which classes arise. It is the builder of a world wide communist existence of entire humanity. It is the weapon of the proletariat to suppress any attempt of the exploiting but now overthrown bourgeoisie to regain power. In proportion that capitalist and other forms of private property are abolished, classes bound up with those property forms vanish till a stage is reached when classless communist society emerges. Since in such a society there are no classes, the proletarian state has no coercive function to perform. It withers away. Humanity thereafter lives on a world scale an integrated classless stateless social existence.

The communist society will not only be classless, but also will be based on plenty due to the maximum utilization of the gigantic productive forces which capitalism has created (automation, electrical and atomic energy) and which will further develop under the auspices of the workers' state. Social ownership will make universal planning and resultant amazing advance of productive forces possible.

With the emergence of plenty, struggle between men over products disappears. The principle of "To everyone according to his need" governs the domain of the distribution of products

in the classless stateless communist society (Marx). Other characteristics of this society are, as Marx in his Critique of Gotha Programme mentions : (1) work will be the necessity of life instead of the necessity for life; (2) the antithesis of manual and intellectual work will disappear resulting in the multi-sided development of the individual and his personality. As Trotsky observes in his "Literature and Revolution", an average man of that society will be of the stature of Aristotle or Marx.

As Marx remarks, this higher phase of communism will be preceded by a lower socialist phase in which, though private property and hence classes and class exploitation will have been abolished still, due to insufficient level of productive forces, plenty will not have emerged. The principle governing the domain of the distribution of products, during this phase, will be that of "To each according to his labour". Since scarcity will still exist, the proletarian state will still persist though not as an organ of class coercion because there will be no classes in society. Thus, society during this phase will be classless but not stateless. But the workers' state will begin to wither away as, due to the geometrically advancing productive forces, conditions of plenty will come into existence, and finally the classless, stateless world communist society will be established.⁵

5 Refer : *Lenin, The State and Revolution.*

9

PARLIAMENTARISM, REFORMIST AND REVOLUTIONARY

IN a capitalist country like India, where bourgeois democracy exists and parliamentary institutions function, it is vitally necessary for Marxists to have a scientific understanding of the role of the parliament and the specific place of the parliamentary form of struggle from the standpoint of the working class struggle for political power. Without such an understanding, Marxists are liable to lapse into a two-fold error: (1) the sectarian error of boycottism, or (2) the parliamentary form of struggle considered as the basic form of proletarian class struggle and the parliament as the assured means of capturing power.

There are three basic means by which the bourgeoisie maintains its class domination over the toiling people:

- (1) The bourgeoisie or its state holds a grip over *THE MEANS OF LIFE* by owning the most important means of production (factories, mines and others). They have thereby the monopoly hold over the means of sustenance of the toiling people. The latter are compelled to sell their labour power to bourgeois owners of the means of production and submit to their exploitation or they would starve.
- (2) The bourgeoisie owns *the means of physical coercion*, viz. the state apparatus. It perennially uses this apparatus to maintain its monopoly hold over the means of production and safeguard its resultant exploitation of the toiling people, if the latter challenges

* Published in *New Perspective*.

these.

- (3) The bourgeoisie owns or through its hold over state power, controls the means of *ideological deception* of the toiling people (the press, the radio, the stage, the cinema, universities etc.). Through the functioning of these means, it imbues the latter with ideas and emotions which would reconcile them to the capitalist exploitative system.

It inevitably follows from this grim fact that for their economic and spiritual liberation, the toiling people, under the leadership of the proletariat, the historical antithesis of the bourgeoisie, must secure state power. *Then alone* they can take over the means of production from the hands of the bourgeoisie and build the socialist economy. *Then alone* they can also create their own truly human and humane socialist culture. *This Is Why The Political Struggle Is The Highest Form of Class Struggle.*

Among the socialists who have the above objective, two conceptions of the road to the achievement of political power prevail: one, the social democratic and the other, the Marxist-Leninist.

According to the first view, the working class leading the toiling people should focus principally on the parliamentary form of class struggle with the aim of capturing a majority in the parliament. The party of the working class should surely develop extra-parliamentary forms of class struggle (economic and political strike actions, demonstrations and others) but *The Latter Struggles Should be Subordinated to the Parliamentary Form of Struggle for Winning Electoral Victories.*

The whole political *motif* of mass struggle should be to strengthen the parliamentary form of struggle through which the toiling people would win political power. Once, having achieved a majority in the parliament, they will have captured political power. The parliament dominated by the representatives of the working class can triumphantly enact legislation abolishing all capitalist private property and vesting it in society. A socialist parliament will thus abolish capitalism and establish socialism.

The Social-Democrats, therefore, essentially concentrate on the parliamentary form of struggle to which they subordinate

all other forms of proletarian class struggle. They further hold the view that the workers' government based on a parliamentary majority can abolish capitalism and establish socialism.

The Marxist-Leninist conception of the capture of political power by the working class is diametrically opposed to this.

It is, the Marxist-Leninists observe, well-nigh impossible to capture a majority in the parliament. This is because the bourgeoisie owns wealth and, therefore, has the power of patronage, corruption, economic coercion. They also control the means of propaganda like the radio, the press, etc.

Further, the Constitutions of capitalist countries (pre-Nazi Germany for instance) invariably provide for arbitrary powers for the Executive to suppress or suspend democratic liberties of the people, such as those of banning political parties and dissolving democratic governments in "emergency" situations. They include the President's right even to suspend the Constitution. These arbitrary powers are additional to the powers of detention without trial, prohibition of meetings and demonstrations, and others which the Executive is armed with even in normal times.

Thus if in a crisis of colossal magnitude, the discontent of the people reaches such a climax that the perspective of the parliament being captured by Marxist socialists securing a majority at the election is unfolded, the bourgeoisie in power can forestall such a capture by suppressing democratic liberties and establishing its open Fascist dictatorship. This transition from the democratic form to the Fascist form of the bourgeois class rule was brought about *constitutionally* in Germany. Hitler, the Fascist arm of German finance capital, came to power with the aid of the powers provided to the Executive (Hindenburg) by the bourgeois democratic Weimer Republic. All opposition parties including the bourgeois Liberal were banned, civil-liberties were suppressed, and one party rule was installed constitutionally. The parliament was reduced to an empty shell in the absence of the existence of democratic liberties and opposition parties. The democratic Weimer Republic was replaced by fascist dictatorship. Bourgeois democratic leaders were replaced by bourgeois fascist leaders.

Such is the lesson of history, the law of life. When the bourgeoisie is confronted with the perspective of the capture of

political power by the proletariat by parliamentary democratic means, it dissolves democracy and the democratic parliament. "Democracy is sacred but private property is still more sacred to the bourgeoisie." This is what happened in Germany and Italy, where the bourgeoisie resorted to Fascism as the method of retaining state power in a situation of grave crisis.¹

Hence, it *inexorably* follows that the working class should take note of such an emergency situation. The bourgeoisie itself will (to save capitalism) abolish the democratic parliament when the danger of such capture, that of a sweeping victory by the genuine Marxist working class party at the polls, is imminent. The road of extra-parliamentary mass struggle remains the only road for the working class to capture political power in *such a situation*. *The bourgeoisie itself bars the parliamentary democratic road to the achievement of power by the working class by itself liquidating parliamentary democracy*, as happened in all fascist countries (Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, contemporary Pakistan).

From what has been indicated above, an incorrect inference may be drawn that since it is not possible for the working class to win political power through the parliament, elections should be boycotted.

This is a grave error. Though the democratic parliament will not itself exist as a means of securing political power by the working class, since the bourgeoisie itself will almost certainly destroy it in an emergency situation, till it exists it is a very valuable platform for accelerating the extra-parliamentary mass struggle. Briefly, the parliament has a three-fold use for the working class :

First, the Marxist members of the parliament can expose the political, economic and other policies and strategies of the bourgeoisie, domestic as well as foreign, on the floor of the parliament. They can, for instance, analyse the various Bills and show how they are devised to advance the interests of the bourgeoisie (taxation policy, aid to monopolies, also various Bills to limit the freedom of strike and other civil liberties of the people). Their speeches, since they are made on the floor

1 Refer : Engels, F., *The Origin of Family, Private Property and the State*, also Lenin, *The State and Revolution*.

of the parliament, will be publicized throughout the country and will be read by millions of people. In the absence of a powerful socialist press under capitalism, this opportunity of propaganda for the exposure of the various policies of the bourgeoisie from the parliamentary rostrum has unique value.

Secondly, the Parliament has utility also for *extorting from the unwilling bourgeois government* reforms such as the legal restriction of the working day, living wage, unfettered freedom to strike, the right of workers to form their economic (trade unions), political (working class Parties) and cultural (working class Educational Leagues) organizations, maternity benefit and others.

Here it is vital to bear in mind that these reforms *can be extorted only* if (a) the bourgeoisie has economic ability to concede them without affecting the minimum rate of profit, the driving motive of capitalist production, and, (b) if the demands for them made by the Marxist members on the floor of the parliament are backed by the sanction of mass struggle outside. Reforms gained by means of the parliamentary form of struggle are only the byproduct of the extra-parliamentary class struggle outside the parliament (propaganda, demonstrations, strikes, etc.).

The bourgeois government concedes reforms, not because of the arguments however eloquently advanced by socialist members in the parliament but under the pressure of mass movement mobilized outside in support of these demands.

And thirdly, the parliament is also an effective platform for propagating the ideology and programme of the Marxist party. In parliament, *the genuine socialist solution* of the social problems can be advanced and contraposed to that projected by the representatives of the bourgeoisie.

From its rostrum the entire class structure of the capitalist society can be laid bare, the Marxist world outlook can be transmitted in the process of the analysis of problems under discussion and Marxist solutions of these problems can also be offered.

This three-fold use of the parliament helps to accelerate the development of the extra-parliamentary movement outside.

Lenin called this revolutionary parliamentarism distinguishing it from reformist parliamentarism of the Social Democrats

who went to the parliament hoping to secure a majority in it and then to enact socialist legislation with a view to abolish capitalism. In contrast, the Marxists went to the parliament without any such illusion. They went there first to expose the political and other strategies and policies of the bourgeoisie, secondly to secure reforms for the toiling people when capitalism still has ability to concede those reforms, and thirdly to broadcast their own Marxist socialist ideology, programmes and policies.

The fundamental distinction between the Social Democratic and the Marxist conceptions of the parliamentary form of struggle lies in this : *The Social Democrats Develop but Subordinate the Mass Struggle to the Parliamentary Form of Struggle, While the Marxists Subordinate the Parliamentary Form of Struggle to the Mass Struggle.*

This difference is profound. This signifies divergent political theories of the state held by these two schools of thought and through the resultant divergence of views regarding the entire road to the goal of the capture of political power by the working class.

In conformity with this Marxist conception of the nature and the role of the parliament, the Marxists should scrupulously guard themselves, in their propaganda, against strengthening the illusion rampant among the masses that legislatures can be the assured means of winning political power. The masses suffer from this illusion but the Marxists should warn them in advance that even if they are in the majority, power cannot be achieved through these organs. The bourgeoisie in such a situation will disperse the democratic parliament and government and install its fascist form of class rule. Marxist socialists must warn the masses in advance against such an emergency and prepare for such a situation. As stated before, the bourgeoisie itself, in the critical situation, will abolish democracy and the democratic parliament. *It will thereby block the democratic road to political power by the working people, a road which becomes non-existent when democracy is non-existent* as happened in Nazi Germany. The bourgeoisie will prohibit even its bourgeois democratic class parties and discard its bourgeois democratic leaders.

This distinguishes the very tone and content of the propa-

ganda of the social democratic and the revolutionary Marxist socialist parties. The former strengthens the parliamentary illusion thereby becoming the tail of the masses expressing the political and ideological backwardness of the masses. The latter endeavour to disperse that illusion and, by going to the legislature, take the masses through the experience of disillusionment regarding the parliamentary means to secure political power.

Bourgeois democracy with its parliaments and elections is the most formidable safety-valve devised by the bourgeoisie to divert the class struggle into harmless channels, to decoy the toiling masses into an eternal chase after the mirage of parliamentary capture of power. When class struggle reaches a climax and the working class sweeps or is likely to sweep the poll, the bourgeoisie blows up the parliament and rules by fascist methods. It dismisses its own democratic leaders, dissolves its own democratic government (the democratic Weimer Republic in pre-Nazi Germany). However to boycott the parliament would be to hand over the masses to the political influence of the bourgeoisie. Revolutionary socialists need to go to the parliament and function in the parliament in the spirit of the concept and methods of revolutionary parliamentarism as outlined by Lenin. The bourgeoisie has invented the parliament, among other reasons, to bamboozle the masses. The Marxist socialists should use it to expose its role and as a platform for the propaganda of their programmes and policies. *They should, in words of Shakespeare, hoist the engineer with his own petard.*

It must be also noted that the parliamentary contest always provides a classic opportunity for a most extensive propaganda campaign to revolutionary socialists for propagating their genuine and distinct socialist programme and policies in sharp contrast to those of other parties, and for utilizing one of the rare opportunities of educating the widest sections of the masses in an adequate understanding of the correct road to their emancipation so that when parliamentary democracy is abolished and fascist dictatorship is installed by the bourgeoisie, they may not be taken unawares.

There is no free choice for the working class to choose the road to the securing of political power. The behaviour of the bourgeoisie will determine its behaviour. But the lesson of



history is that the bourgeoisie itself deprives the working class of the parliamentary democratic road to power by destroying bourgeois democracy, thereby constraining the working class to take to the road of the extra-parliamentary mass struggle to achieve political power.

In such a historical situation there does not arise the problem as to what road to take since only one road exists, the road of extra-parliamentary struggle.

II

On India

INTRODUCTION

SECTION II is an aggregate of articles by the author on diverse Indian problems. Most of these articles were published in different magazines. The article "Role of the Muslim League in Indian Politics" was published in the January and February Numbers of "The New Perspective" in 1948. The article attempts to locate the historical causes of the genesis of Muslim communalism and the resultant growth of Hindu communalism in India during the British period. It tries to show why the Indian National Congress did not succeed in uprooting communalism and what could and can be *even today* the only effective method to counteract this reactionary force.

Articles "Materialism and the Indian Bourgeoisie" and "Some Peculiarities of the Indian Bourgeoisie" deal with the specific characteristics of this class as it historically developed. The first article attempts to explain the reasons why the Indian bourgeoisie never developed or accepted, in fact rejected and recoiled from Rationalist and Materialist philosophies and even have always been engaged in reviving old religio-mystical and idealistic philosophies of pre-modern India. The second article deals with some specific behaviour patterns of the Indian bourgeoisie in the economic and political fields determined by the historical situation in which it was placed.

In the article "Prohibition", the author has traced the *social* roots of alcoholism and the futility of the legislative enactment to liquidate the evil. "Brazen Deception" is a critique of the slogan "The Socialist Pattern of Society" adopted by the Congress which, according to the author, is only disguised state capitalism.

The article "Marxism and the Tactic of United Front" lays down the correct Marxist approach for a Marxist Socialist Party in relation to the multiclass united front formed for realizing common democratic demands such as the national liberation, the linguistic state and others.

In "Basic Task Before the Indian Marxists" the author has stressed the historical necessity of a genuine Marxist political party in India to provide a scientific leadership to the growing socialist mass movement.

"Aaram Haram Hai" is a critique of Pandit Nehru's exhortation to the Indian people to work still harder when, in reality, they are overworked or unemployed due to the inability of the existing capitalist state and society to provide them work. "Earn While You Learn" is a critique of the ideal of an earning student propagated by the national leaders. In fact, the economic compulsion which impels students to take up jobs is a form of oppression they are subjected to under the present capitalist social system.

"Students' Indiscipline" represents an attempt to probe deeper into that problem and suggests the programme of a well organized students' movement to redress the grievances of the students.

"Materialism and the Indian Bourgeoisie" was published in 4th International, 14, 1961-1962. "Some Peculiarities of the Indian Bourgeoisie" appeared in the March number of "The New Perspective" in 1948. "Marxism and the Tactic of United Front" and "Basic Task Confronting Indian Marxists" were published in May-June Number (1957) of "The New Perspective", a new magazine bearing the same name as the older one and "Prohibition, A Marxist Critique" in its August Number (1957). "Brazen Deception" appeared in "The Call", New Delhi.

10

MATERIALISM AND THE INDIAN BOURGEOISIE

I

ONE of the very significant facts about the modern Indian society is the extremely slow rate at which rationalist ideas and scientific materialist culture are spreading even among the educated strata of the people. In spite of the fact that rationalism and materialism, both as philosophies and movements, came into existence about two centuries ago in Europe, India, which has already evolved a modern bourgeois society and has organic political, economic, and cultural contacts with the European countries, continues to remain almost an invulnerable fortress of religio-mystical and obscurantist ideologies inherited from her medieval feudal past. It is true that even in the European countries, rationalism and materialism are minority philosophico-ideological currents since the capitalist ruling class is afraid of and consequently sabotages the spread of rationalist and materialist ideas among the masses whom it exploits lest their spread among these masses may expose the irrational and unhistorical nature of the capitalist social structure in its present stage of decline and thereby accentuate their will to overthrow it. It is also true that the European bourgeoisie extensively utilizes the press, the radio, the school, the church, and other levers of moulding the views of the exploited classes, to inoculate them with religious and non-religious irrational conceptions and emotions such as would narcotise their growing will to challenge the social system which engenders increasing material and cul-

* Published in *4th International*, 14, Winter—1961-1962.

tural poverty for them and reconcile them to their class slavery under capitalism. Even during the period of anti-feudal bourgeois democratic revolutions when the European bourgeoisie, a historically progressive social class at that time, was engaged in a historic battle against the outmoded feudal social system, and was evolving, through its ideologues, rationalist and materialist conceptions of Nature and Society as ideological weapons to combat medieval superstition which hallowed feudalism—even during that rising ascending phase of capitalism, the European bourgeoisie felt a class fear of the exploited masses and recognized the necessity of maintaining religion as “the opium of the people”. This class need of the bourgeoisie became articulate through Voltaire, when even that audacious critic of medieval religion observed, “If there is no God, it is necessary to invent Him for the masses”.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that in European countries, the bourgeois intelligentsia (Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and others in England; Holbach, Helvetious and others in France) *did* evolve anti-religious, anti-idealist and materialist philosophies (though suffering from adulteration of elements of idealism). These philosophies have constituted a permanent and integral part of modern European culture. Further, on the basis of the increased knowledge of the natural world through the advance of natural sciences and of the social world through both historical research as well as the generalization of the practice of class struggle in the contemporary capitalist society, Marx and Engels, outstanding ideological leaders of the proletariat, enriched, deepened and made scientific, the materialist philosophy evolved by their bourgeois predecessors, the materialism of the eighteenth century Europe. Marx and Engels evolved the philosophy of dialectical materialism, which is the synthesis and generalization into a world outlook of all scientific knowledge, achieved by humanity through practice, of the natural, social and mental worlds during its existence *hitherto*.

II

IN India, though a bourgeois society, a bourgeoisie and a bourgeois intelligentsia emerged and developed, no strong bourgeois rationalist or materialist philosophical movement, even as a minority philosophical current, has grown. An over-

whelming proportion of the Indian intelligentsia is immune from any "contamination" of the materialist or even rationalist ideas. The Indian intelligentsia in the mass subscribes to the religio-mystical philosophy inherited from the pre-modern past India. Incredible as it may seem, a section of it has even live faith in pseudo-sciences as palmistry and astrology.

Almost all outstanding bourgeois intellectuals, who work in the field of politics, economics, sociology, philosophy, or natural sciences, are idealists, god-believing. Very few among them have succeeded in liberating themselves from the ancient superstition of the God-idea or have built up a healthy scientific materialist world outlook.

However, though bourgeois materialism has not struck its roots in the soil of the Indian society, dialectical (proletarian) materialism has been steadily spreading among those intellectuals who have accepted Marxism and are identified with the camp of the proletarian struggle for the establishment of a socialist society. Thus, not the bourgeois but proletarian intelligentsia is historically determined to lead the struggle against all medieval superstition and religio-mystical philosophies which are rampant in contemporary India. Just as, in the material sphere, the Indian bourgeoisie repudiates the task of liquidating feudalism and imperialism but seeks compromise with the latter, in the philosophico-cultural sphere, the bourgeois intelligentsia has repudiated the task of combating and extinguishing unscientific and socially reactionary philosophies inherited from the pre-capitalist feudal past, and has even endeavoured to regalanize those philosophies (Tilak, Gandhi, Aurobindo, J. C. Bose and others). It becomes the historical task, in the sphere of culture, of Marxists or the proletarian intelligentsia to campaign against those reactionary philosophies of the early pre-capitalist epoch.

III

THE non-emergence of organized powerful rationalist and materialist philosophical movements in India is due to a variety of historical reasons. We will enumerate the chief among these.

First, India, till recently, was directly under British domination. The Indian people felt a natural and healthy hostility against this domination. This hostility, however, instead of be-

ing restricted to the economic and political domination by a foreign nation, was wrongly extended to whatever pertained to the foreigner. An antagonistic attitude was taken not only towards the foreign rule but also towards the culture of the foreign ruler. Now, the rationalist and materialist culture originated in Europe as a cultural weapon of the European bourgeoisie in its struggle against feudalism. It was created by the intellectual vanguard of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois rationalist and materialist culture (bourgeois because it considered the bourgeois social system as ideal and immutable, and further, moved within the categories of bourgeois conceptions of the physical and social worlds) was historically a higher culture, higher than the historically preceding feudal culture. This was the specific contribution of the progressive West European bourgeoisie of the ascending phase of capitalism to the cultural advance of humanity.

The bourgeois leaders of the Indian nationalist movement like Tilak, B. C. Pal, Gandhi and others, however, misidentified and confounded the domination of the country by a bourgeois foreign nation like the British with the bourgeois culture of the latter which was historically higher than the inherited feudal Indian culture. They not only condemned 'western' domination but also 'western' culture which had, within it, valuable scientific elements. They crusaded not only against the foreign rule but also against the superior culture of the foreigners.

This hostility to the foreign rule and the resultant uncritical aversion to the rationalist and materialist western culture felt by the Indian intelligentsia, nourished on the preachings of Tilak, Pal, Gandhi and others, prompted a good section of it to idealize the backward culture of pre-modern India. It dreamt of a modified revival of ancient Indian culture, its twentieth century edition. This recoil from the rationalist and materialist culture of the West, because it was evolved by a nation which had enslaved and dominated the Indian people, was one of the main reasons why this historically higher culture did not rapidly spread among the patriotic Indian intelligentsia, why even the educated classes remained impervious to its appeal, why the Indian nationalist, instead of assimilating that culture and using it as a weapon against the reactionary ideological inheritance in the form of a mass of mind-deadening superstitions

and religious mysticism, actually revelled in day dreams of resurrecting the culture of India's hoary past. He became a national chauvinist in the cultural field declaring that the Indian people, armed with the inherited spiritual culture (the religio-mystical culture), the product of their backward feudal phase of existence, will be the cultural leader of contemporary humanity.

National slavery under a western power instigated the patriotic Indian intelligentsia to idealize the backward culture of India's feudal past and made it disorient from the historically higher modern bourgeois culture of the west. The Indian intelligentsia, mainly bourgeois in bulk, apart from class reason, recoiled also from Marxian materialism which, though it was critical of the bourgeois western culture, had, however, its genesis in the European social soil.

The second principal reason why, in spite of the development of a capitalist economy and a bourgeois society (basically bourgeois in spite of some feudal admixtures) in India, bourgeois rationalist and materialist philosophies did not spread among the Indian bourgeoisie or the bourgeois intelligentsia, was the historical weakness of the bourgeoisie and its resultant fear of a socialist revolution of the proletariat which might endanger the existence of the bourgeois social system.

The English and the French bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia, the pioneer of rationalist and materialist philosophies, developed during the epoch of rising capitalism. In England, Bacon, Locke and Hobbes were the principal architects of the materialist philosophy which, though it suffered from idealistic errors, was in essence materialist. In France, Holbach, Helvetious, Diderot and others were the heroic pioneers of the rationalist and materialist thought. The new philosophy was the new world outlook of the rising bourgeois society and was the ideological weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie for its victory over feudalism and for its own further development.

In France, the pioneers of the new rationalist and materialist philosophies were the ideological inspirers of the titanic rational (historically speaking) social phenomenon known as the French Revolution which blasted all reactionary feudal social and political institutions and freed the mind of the French

people from the Catholic Christian superstition. The new philosophy was supported by the socially and economically powerful class of society viz. the rising bourgeoisie (the class of enterprising merchants and manufacturers). This class found in rationalism a strong weapon to fight the Christian Church which enslaved the human mind in the prison of irrational social conception such as the Divine Right of Kings, the eternal validity of the decadent feudal system which stifled the expansion of trade and manufacture, the sacrosanct character of the privileges of the feudal nobles and which, above all, tried to strangle the enterprising and inquiring impulses of man to explore the world and reach a scientific understanding of that world so necessary for the advance of bourgeois trade and industry. The bourgeoisie needed, for the expansion of its trade and manufacture, the development of natural sciences (use for navigation, improvement of technology etc.), the increase of scientific knowledge of the world, the liberation of the people from irrational taboos which feudal religion imposed on them. The bourgeoisie adopted rationalism, even materialism, as its powerful ideological artillery to storm the heights of superstition which the Church spread among the people to make them accept the existing feudal social system.

Thus, the rising French bourgeoisie, in its own interest, countenanced rationalist and materialist philosophies which the bourgeois intelligentsia evolved and used them as ideological class weapons against the feudal society and the feudal religion. They needed the growth of natural sciences for the improvement of transport and technology so vital to the expansion of trade and manufacture. Feudal society based on a stationary agrarian mode of production obstructed the development of natural sciences and even persecuted all scientific endeavour. Since the advance of natural sciences demanded a materialist approach to the world, the French bourgeoisie adopted rationalism and materialism as its philosophico-ideological weapon to combat the religio-idealistic philosophy of the official feudal society.

Further, the social and political superstructure of the feudal society subserved the class interests of the feudal nobility. This superstructure obstructed the free expansion of the new productive forces (trade and manufacture). The French bourgeoisie, therefore, supported also bourgeois rationalist ideas

evolved by its intelligentsia to expose, (exposed within the limits of bourgeois criticism) the irrational character of the feudal social and political institutions based on such principles as birth, divine origin of kingship, sacrosanct character of the autocratic feudal state and others.

Thus Europe became the birth place of powerful rationalist and materialist philosophies in the bourgeois phase of social development.

The bourgeoisie, however, was also an exploiting class exploiting the working masses on the basis of the class ownership of the modern means of production. As the bourgeois society after supplanting the feudal society further developed, the class antagonism between the exploiting bourgeoisie and the exploited proletariat (the social manifestation of the basic contradiction of the capitalist economy viz. between the social character of production and individual appropriation) came into greater and greater relief, and the class struggle between the two fundamental classes of bourgeois society, with some zigzags, increasingly sharpened.

The ruling bourgeoisie now needed crude religion as well as refined idealistic philosophy to chloroform the spirit of discontent growing among the working masses. The proletariat was beginning to subject the capitalist social system also to rationalist criticism. It was feeling not merely class inequalities (rampant in the feudal society) but also all class distinctions as irrational. It was challenging not only feudal property but also bourgeois property. The proletariat, through its intellectual vanguard, was formulating a proletarian rationalist and materialist class criticism of the bourgeois society as the bourgeoisie, through its intellectual vanguard, had formulated in the past a bourgeois rationalist and materialist criticism of the feudal society.

With the growing danger of the socialist working class movement to the capitalist social system, the European bourgeoisie began to retreat from rationalism and materialism, became pious, church-going and "God-believing", and increasingly strengthened and supported religious and non-religious idealistic philosophies. As Engels remarks :

The workmen of France and Germany had become rebellious
They were thoroughly infected with socialism..... Nothing

remained to the French and German bourgeoisie as a last resource but to silently drop their free thought. one by one scoffers turned pious in outward behaviour, spoke with respect of the Church, The French and the German bourgeoisie had come to grief with materialism. Religion must be kept alive for the people that was the only and the last means to save society (bourgeois) from utter ruin.¹

After its entry into the declining phase of capitalism (imperialism) when the working class movement has assumed formidable proportions* and the socialist danger to capitalism has been accentuated, the European bourgeoisie has become still more religious and idealistic in philosophy. While a very small proportion of the bourgeois intelligentsia is ideologically *declassed* and has gravitated to the camp of the most advanced type of materialism viz. (Marxist) dialectical materialism, its great section has moved away to idealism and mysticism. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that the European bourgeoisie, impelled by its class interest, *did*, in the earlier phase of its existence, play a historically progressive cultural role when it developed rationalist ideas and a materialist (though mechanistic) world outlook.

IV

THE Indian bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia have, however, no glorious materialist tradition in philosophy. From the very inception of their existence, they have held and propagated religious or non-religious idealistic views.

The political leaders of the Indian bourgeoisie like Tilak, Gandhi, and others or its philosophical representatives like Aurobindo, Pal, Radhakrishnan, and others have been staunch antimaterialists in philosophy. They have subscribed to such unscientific conceptions as God, intuition, "Inner Voice", and others.

We have previously mentioned one of the principal reasons for this disorientation from materialism of the Indian bourgeois intelligentsia viz. its error of confounding the domination of India by a western nation with the materialist culture which emerged in the West.

1 Engels, F., *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, pp. xxxvi-ii.

We will enumerate other principal reasons for this anti-materialist recoil.

Materialist philosophy emerged as the generalization of the knowledge of the physical world acquired through the growth of natural sciences. Natural sciences themselves developed rapidly in Europe under the impetus given by the needs of trade and technology on which the new bourgeois economy was based and expanding.

In India, though a capitalist economy developed, the productive forces on which it was based (industrial technology, modern transport, and others) were not the product of the endeavour of indigenous scientists or technologists. It was not the bourgeois intelligentsia of India who evolved modern natural sciences or invented modern technology. It was the bourgeois intelligentsia of modern Europe which accomplished this.

The Indian bourgeoisie only transplanted the engineering and scientific knowledge as well as technology (machinery etc.) from Europe where they originated. It created a capitalist industry and economy in India on the basis of the creative achievements of the European bourgeoisie.

Due to this historical reason also, bourgeois materialism did not originate in India. The other and by far the most significant reason why modern materialist philosophy neither emerged in India nor was it accepted by the Indian bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia was the historical position of the Indian bourgeoisie in the period during which it was born and developed.

As we mentioned previously, even the European bourgeoisie which had a materialist tradition retreated from materialism as soon as the socialist danger to the capitalist social system was unfolded. In India, such danger to capitalism has existed from the very first phase of its existence.

Due to the low development of the productive forces of the Indian society (their normal development obstructed by capitalist Britain) and, further, due to the exploitation of the Indian masses by both foreign and Indian capital as also by Zamindars, money-lenders, and others, these masses have always lived in conditions of abysmal poverty. The democratic and socialist danger to the capitalist-landlord system was, consequently, perennial and grave in India from the very early phase of capi-

talist development.

The Indian bourgeoisie has, therefore, consciously or unconsciously, *felt the basic need of maintaining religion as a spiritual prop of the capitalist system from the very beginning.* It dared not adopt materialism as a philosophical ideological weapon in its limited struggles against imperialism or native feudalism during any phase of its existence.

The political and philosophical leaders of the Indian bourgeoisie have, therefore, been consistently anti-materialist. The whole socio-economic capitalist-landlord structure is so exploitative that it cannot stand even minimum rational inquiry. Religion becomes more than ever necessary to reconcile the masses to it. The leaders need not, of course, be conscious of the class *motif* behind their religious and idealistic world outlooks. They may really believe in those unscientific philosophies impelled, in the final analysis, by the exigencies of class survival (the basic interest of a class), by the constant threat of a socialist revolution.

It is, therefore, that materialism is spreading only among the socialist intelligentsia which represents the historical interests of the *working class* and participates in the latter's struggle to replace the capitalist-landlord system with socialism.

The Indian bourgeoisie and its intelligentsia are inveterate antagonists of materialism. The bourgeoisie finances liberally all programmes of religious revival and resuscitation of India's spiritual culture though adapting it to the needs of the bourgeoisie.

In Europe, in the initial phases, the bourgeoisie financially aided the spread of rationalist and materialist ideas. In India, it finances anti-materialist and anti-rationalist movements. This is one of the reasons why these movements advance at a slow tempo in India.

The bourgeois intelligentsia of India is denied the glorious role of being the pioneer or the protagonist of scientific materialist philosophical ideas and the organizer of mass movements against religious superstition. It lacks a vital intellectual indignation at the whole complex of superstitious practices which form the normal life of an Indian. It, in fact, in social life, generally adapts itself to these.

The European bourgeoisie, though an exploiting class, due to historical circumstances, advanced human culture by helping

the materialist campaign against religion and idealistic philosophy. The Indian bourgeoisie, due to different historical circumstances in which it has lived, has conserved these unscientific ideologies.

It is the historical privilege of Marxist proletarian materialists to achieve a cultural renaissance in our country. The whole phase of bourgeois materialist development will be skipped over in the field of culture. From the preponderatingly obscurantist and religio-mystical feudal philosophy a leap will be taken to the philosophy of dialectical materialism.

11

SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE INDIAN BOURGEOISIE

I

THERE are certain peculiar features of the development and position of the Indian national bourgeoisie. We will enumerate the principal among these.

The arrival of the Indian national bourgeoisie was a belated one in the epoch of world capitalism. It appreciably grew only by the end of the nineteenth and during the first decades of the twentieth century, long after other peoples like the British, the French; and others had embarked on the capitalist stage of development, built up powerful capitalist economies, established formidable large scale modern machine-based industries, organized all-powerful banks, and appropriated a great proportion of the world trade, world sources of raw materials and even world territory as areas of economic exploitation. In fact, the Indian bourgeoisie appreciably grew only during and after the First World War (1914-1918), when world capitalism had advanced considerably along the road of imperialist decline. Lenin portrays the basic features of imperialism thus: monopolies had emerged in all spheres of the capitalist economy; banking capital had fused with industrial capital and been transformed into finance capital resulting in the domination of vital and even whole sectors of the national and world economy by a few formidable banks; export of capital from metropolitan centres to colonies had commenced; all available world market and world territory were divided up among a few powerful

* From a lecture delivered before the Marxist Study Circle 1947.

capitalist nations. The historical consequence of this imperialist maturing of capitalism was the most ferocious struggle among rival national capitalisms for the redivision of the already partitioned world market and world territory, a market which was only increasingly contracting. This shrinkage of market was the result of the proletarianization and the pauperization of the small producers, peasant proprietors, even of the small and medium sized bourgeoisie economically ruined as a result of the unequal competition with capitalist monopolies, the growth of technological and other forms of unemployment among the workers, the reduction of the purchasing power of the proletariat due to the wage offensive inevitable because of the ever sharpening competition among the capitalists to lower the cost of production, and others. The physical limits of the terrestrial globe gave no scope for the extension of the market or the zone of capital investment.

All fundamental contradictions and resultant social antagonisms of the world capitalist system were accentuated during the epoch of imperialism or the epoch of the decay of capitalism as a world system. All the productive forces developed by capitalism now developed at a *retarded* rate. The capitalist mode of production obstructs today the free development of these forces. Even the existing productive forces cannot be operated to the fullest extent except on the basis of a war economy i.e. either for the preparation for a war during peace time or for carrying on an actual war. This was mainly due to the sharpening disparity between the purchasing power of the world population and the productive power of the capitalist economy. Imperialism implies a general i.e. *structural* crisis of capitalism, the crisis of the very system itself. Within the framework of this organic *structural* crisis, *cyclical* crisis (crisis of overproduction), which were implicit in the dialectical development of the capitalist mode of production itself and which broke out about every ten years during its pre-imperialist phase, now became more frequent, recurred at shorter intervals, and became more and more acute. Due to its structural crisis, the cyclical crisis of world capitalist economy, which broke out in 1929 and enveloped steadily the entire world capitalist economy before it ended in 1934, only relaxed into depression which however was not followed by a boom period. By 1937 the menace of another

cyclical crisis appeared.

This decisively indicated that the productive forces had already reached a stage of development when they come into a head on collision with the capitalist mode of production with the capitalist property relations. The increased social character of productive forces and production conflicted with the capitalist private ownership of the means of production and demanded a socialist mode of production i.e. the social ownership of these means and their resultant planned operation.

The three principal social antagonisms of the world capitalist system viz. class struggle between the capitalists and the proletariat of the metropolitan countries, the conflict between the dominant capitalist nations and their enslaved colonial subject nations, and the conflict between the capitalist nations themselves, which already existed during the first i.e. pre-imperialist phase of capitalist development, sharpened during the imperialist epoch. The stage was set for formidable socialist movements, mighty colonial national liberation mass struggles and imperialist world wars.

As Lenin wrote :

Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. The result of these tendencies is reaction all along the line, whatever the political system, and extreme intensification of antagonisms in this domain also.¹ -

It was during the imperialist epoch when capitalism entered its period of decline, its twilight, that the Indian bourgeoisie grew appreciably. Indian capitalism is thus not a rising capitalism, young, vigorous and world-conquering, like the British, French and others of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. It is rather a weak part of a moribund and decrepit world capitalism. It has no colonies or colonial superprofits. It can hardly compete with the already established powerful trustified and technically superior industries, commercial enterprises and banking institutions of the dominant capitalist nations.

¹ Lenin, *Imperialism*, p. 109.

II

THE political subjection of the country by a foreign capitalist nation further handicapped the Indian bourgeoisie. While the bourgeois national states of Britain, France, and other countries assisted, economically, politically and militarily, the national bourgeoisie of those lands, the foreign British state, which ruled India in the interests of British capitalism, did not help the free economic expansion of the Indian economy and even put obstacles in its way. It did not permit free unfettered industrial development, did not grant protection to rising native industries, did not permit the development of heavy industries so vital to the growth and independence of a national economy, pursued a currency and credit policy generally to the advantage of British capitalism of which it was the political watchdog. The basic policy of the British Government in India was to keep India as an economic colony of Britain, as its food and raw material producing base, as a market for British industrial products, and as a sphere of capital investment. Whatever industrial development it permitted was under the control and stranglehold of British finance capital and was therefore distorted and insufficient.

III

THERE were other handicaps also for the Indian bourgeoisie. The destruction of imperialism and feudal and semi-feudal land relations was the precondition for its expansion, to some extent, within the limits of possibilities available during the imperialist epoch. By a historical irony, however, the Indian bourgeoisie was prevented from fulfilling these democratic tasks — the tasks of the *real* national liberation from imperialist exploitation as well as the liquidation of feudal and semi-feudal land relations due to the historical situation in which it was placed.

IV

THERE were two main economic reasons why the Indian bourgeoisie could not take an uncompromisingly belligerent attitude to imperialist capitalism and Indian landed interests. Being economically weak it was dependent on imperialist capital and could not break its subservience to it. Regarding landed inte-

rests, a portion of the capital of the Indian bourgeoisie itself was invested in land since, due to the imperialist obstruction to the free industrial expansion of Indian capital, the bourgeoisie found it more profitable to invest a part of its capital in land and thus developed interest in land ownership.

Also a portion of the wealth of big Indian Zamindars was invested in Indian industries.

This economic interlocking of imperialist capital, Indian capital, and Indian landed interests was the *economic* reason for the compromising attitude of the Indian bourgeoisie. This is the key to the understanding of the reason for the reluctance of the Congress governments to carry through a programme of thoroughgoing liquidation of Zamindari as also of the recent Indo-British economic deals (Tata-Imperial Chemical, Birla-Nuffield, Walchand Hirachand-Chrysler and others) under which, the decisive technical and financial control of British or American capital is retained.

V

THERE is a deep historical political reason also why the Indian national bourgeoisie has, throughout its existence, exhibited comprising tendencies.

The Indian development has been governed by "the law of combined development". This is due to the conquest of India by a foreign capitalist power which prevented India's normal development. India is the theatre of capitalist developmental processes with artificially conserved feudal admixtures. The modern aeroplane and the locomotive coexist with the preponderatingly present bullock cart. Capitalist monopolies—the highest forms of capitalist economic organization—coexist with remnants of artisan industry. While agriculture produces for Indian and world markets, its technical basis is the pre-capitalist plough and social relations of production largely feudal or semi-feudal (tenancy under semi-feudal Zamindari as well as absentee landlordism; remnants of serfdom etc.). These incompatibilities have created an acute socio-historical situation.

The establishment of modern industries has created a modern proletariat in India, concentrated, organized, and made compact and disciplined by the very capitalist organization of industry. The colonial proletariat, unlike its counterpart in

metropolitan countries, is intensely exploited both by the imperialist and native bourgeoisie. This exploitation provides the economic genetic cause of its militancy *from the very beginning*. The colonial proletariat, though culturally backward, becomes more militant, due to its miserable conditions of life and labour, than the more cultured proletariat of the metropolitan countries which is imbued with reformist illusions and empire-mindedness due to the tolerable standards of life which imperialist capitalism is able to give it for some time from its colonial superprofits.

The Indian bourgeoisie was confronted with a modern militant proletariat, and a peasantry highly discontented due to the intense imperialist-capitalist-feudal exploitation.

On the one hand, the objective economic conflict of interests between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie brought the latter into political opposition to the former and made it the architect of the nationalist movement. On the other hand, there was the danger of the growth of a socialist workers' movement in alliance with a peasant struggle, which would challenge not only the feudal-imperialist bloc but also native capitalism as well. Such a perspective made the national bourgeoisie averse, even hostile to a *revolutionary* mass nationalist movement.

Marx's characterization of the German bourgeoisie, historically situated in a more or less similar situation, as "grumbling at those, above and trembling at those below", was true also of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The national bourgeois leadership of the Congress played a progressive role when it organized nationalist mass struggles against imperialism. It, however, opposed revolutionary methods of struggle. It used these movements as a weapon of pressure politics for its own class advantage.

It opposed all class actions of the proletariat and the peasantry on the basis of their own class demands. It propagated the revival of *charkha*, an unscientific reactionary utopian solution of the peasant misery. Such propaganda only resulted in diverting the peasant masses from *the road* of class struggle, of struggle against the system of landlordism, moneylending and merchant capital, the *real* cause of their poverty.

In the struggle against imperialism, it exhorted the people

to remain passive though the enemy was using limitless terror against the people.

The Indian bourgeoisie created a genius in Gandhi. Gandhism met the double need of that class; one, to annex all political mass discontent in the country, transform it into mass struggles and use those struggles against imperialism to extort concessions for itself; the other, to prevent those mass struggles from developing into *revolutionary* mass struggles (assuming the form of class struggles) which would prove a danger not only to imperialism but also to Indian vested interests.

VI

THE Indian bourgeoisie emerged financially stronger from the Second World War. The cessation of imports during the war, since the war economies of imperialist nations were switched on to war needs, gave a momentum to Indian industrial production.

British imperialism, however, did not permit free unshackled development of Indian industries even during the war period. It jettisoned their growth lest they might prove serious rivals of British industries after the end of the war. Any appreciable development of Indian heavy industries would have led to the lifting of the Indian economy to the plane of a free economy. Britain did not obviously wish such a consummation. It would have implied the end of the subordination of the Indian economy to the British economy. It, therefore, severely limited their expansion during war time.

The increased economic strength of Indian capitalism, further, was not based on a corresponding industrial development. The economic gains of the Indian bourgeoisie took mainly the shape of money accumulation instead of extensively developed industries in the country.

In addition, a good portion of the economic gains of India during the war period took the form of sterling balances which were in the grip of Britain.

Still the Indian bourgeoisie, on the whole, increased its economic strength during the war in contrast to the British bourgeoisie which as a whole emerged weaker. This gave the Indian bourgeoisie greater bargaining power while striking eco-

conomic deals of concluding political settlements with British imperialism after the war.

British imperialism, which emerged weakened during the Second World War, economically as well as politically, was constrained to concede state independence to India in the political field on the basis of the vivisection of India into two states viz. Pakistan and the Indian Union.

National independence achieved by the Indian people now split up into two peoples, those of the Indian Union and the preponderatingly Muslim-populated Pakistan, was the product of a compromise reached between the communal Muslim League representing the interests of the Muslim feudal-bourgeois classes, the bourgeois Indian National Congress, and British Imperialism.

All these three parties were mortally afraid of the revolutionary mass struggles (workers' political strikes, mutinies in the imperialist armed forces e.g. the revolts in the R.I.N., in the Air Force and others) which were developing in the country and further threatened to develop on a nationwide scale. They hurried to consummate the compromise.

VII

NATIONAL independence conceded to a subject nation to be real, demands the liberation of the colonial economy from the strangulating grip of the imperialist economy.

The essential core of imperialism is *economic*. All its political conquests and dominations as well as military controls are only means to safeguard its predatory *economic* operations. These means are not invariably or necessarily needed by imperialism as the example of the U.S.A. imperialism has demonstrated. This most powerful imperialism in the world directly owns very little territory outside the U.S.A. over the vast globe. Still, extensive areas of the world—China, Greece, Latin America and others—are in its direct economic and therefore indirect and invisible political and strategic grip. American imperialism is most live in those areas retarding the free economic and cultural development of the societies of those countries. (Lenin remarked that imperialism is reactionary all along the line, both in its own country as well as in those in which it operates). It is not dead or non-existent in those countries simply because national "sovereign" states exist there. These

“sovereign” states in other countries are only *nominally* sovereign, are in fact pseudo-sovereign, are also levers of American imperialism within those countries to safeguard and expand its economic exploitation of their peoples. These countries are economic colonies of the U.S.A. imperialism which uses the governments of these countries for its imperialist ends. It achieves this by exerting pressure on the native bourgeoisie which is economically subservient to it and which, further, fears its own masses whom, in partnership with foreign imperialism, it exploits. The native bourgeoisie does not dare to mobilize the colonial masses to fight the pressure of imperialism lest they might challenge the native bourgeoisie also.

Thus, imperialism can exist even without owning an inch of the territory of a foreign country, or without any direct rule over it.

The death of imperialism would imply the end of its economic exploitation of a country. The death of British imperialism in India would signify the end of the economic exploitation of India by British capitalism. It would, therefore, imply the taking over by the Indian nation of British capital operating in India, that of British owned plantations, factories, chemical industries, banks, shipping, etc.

VIII

INDIAN capitalism is not a young, vigorous, rising capitalism like the English, French, and others of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Those capitalisms had before them entire continents to be transformed into markets for their industrial goods, into sources of raw materials for their industries and, later, into areas of capital investment. The industries and general productive forces of those countries could develop *only because* markets and economic territory could be extended.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the whole world was partitioned among a few giant capitalist powers. The struggle among capitalist groups was thereafter only for the purpose of the repartitioning of the already partitioned world and therefore became accentuated.

Indian capitalism developed during this later phase in the history of capitalism.

It cannot successfully compete with powerful, technically

superior, trustified, capitalist enterprises of colossal capitalist giants like the U.S.A., Britain and others and conquer an appreciable external market.

Further because of economic and political class reasons the Indian bourgeoisie cannot accomplish a real agrarian revolution which, by improving the economic position of the agrarian masses, can create a substantial internal market.

Even the programmes of the abolition of zamindari formulated by the state governments of the Indian Union suffer from loopholes for sections of the landlords to survive or for transforming these landlords through liberal compensation into bond holders of the state which will be a financial burden on the people of the Indian Union, the overwhelming majority of whom are peasant masses.

Further, the growth of absentee non-zamindar capitalist landlords is progressing at a rapid rate.

The complete removal of the intolerable burden of agrarian debt has not also been undertaken.

Indian capitalism has thus no prospect of appreciable external or internal markets, the vital condition for its growth.

In fact, Indian capitalism is not a young, vigorous, rising capitalism but a weak part of the world capitalist system which has already entered its phase of decline, the imperialist phase. It has no rosy future before it, a future of expansion and conquest.

Indian capitalism can maintain itself only by means of protection (which would result in contracting the home market since the level of prices will be raised by that device), by state subsidies (additional burden on the people reducing their buying power), by cheapening the cost of production through direct or indirect drives against wages etc.

Its economic weakness compels Indian capitalism to lean on foreign capital which, due to its superior economic strength, would more or less dictate to the former conditions for economic aid it gives. These conditions take the form of a good share of profit accruing to foreign capital and the technical control of the enterprises in the hand of foreign capital which uses this control to retard the free, rapid and symmetrical development of Indian industries.

The belated arrival of Indian capitalism in the history of

capitalism rules out the possibility of a prosperous future for it. It has emerged during the period when other capitalisms of monstrous magnitude already exist and against which it cannot succeed in the struggle for market. It can make a meagre advance most painfully.

Also only prosperous and expanding capitalisms have economic ability to give tolerable standards to a section of the working masses out of the superprofits derived out of their monopoly control of their respective zones of the world economic territory. That is why the British, the U.S.A. and other capitalisms could give high wages to the upper strata of their working classes and middle class employees.

But even these capitalisms, during the present period of the decline of the world capitalist system, find it difficult to maintain their standards at the same level. That is why even the homelands of these capitalisms are theatres of mounting strike struggles of the proletariat and middle class employees of capitalism. The tempo is slow because these capitalisms have not still exhausted their economic resources and world sources of profit.

But Indian capitalism which possesses no colonies, has no appreciable share of the world market, at the very outset, lacks the economic wherewithal to give a living wage to its workers. By its very economic position, the Indian capitalist class becomes the most inhuman exploiter of its workers, most corrupt and unscrupulous in the domains of production, trade, and financial operations. It, as a whole, lacks even the bourgeois culture, the culture of its own class (business integrity etc.) which the capitalist classes of Britain, the U.S.A. etc. developed in the prosperous phase of their career and which, too, is beginning to disintegrate in the present phase of their decline.

That is why black-marketing, unscrupulous profiteering, most scandalous manipulations of account books, and other features are rampant on an extensive scale in India and have become a veritable perennial plague in the economic life of the Indian nation.

Since rapid and extensive industrial expansion is a prerequisite to relieve the crisis of the agrarian economy (overpressure on agriculture) and since such industrial expansion is not possible on a capitalist basis, the prospect for the Indian agri-

cultural economy as well as for the economic conditions of the agrarian masses, too, is not bright. Agrarian transformation (the abolition of zamindari, the liquidation of debts) alone does not suffice for the purpose.

Neither the productive forces of the Indian society, its industry (light as well as heavy) and agriculture, can appreciably develop nor the conditions of the working class and the peasant masses can tangibly improve within the framework of the existing capitalist economic structure. The structure has to be scrapped to accomplish both these.

IX

THE class struggle between the workers and the capitalists in Britain, the U.S.A. and other countries softened because the capitalist classes of those countries had superprofits derived from the exploitation of the world economic territory at their disposal which gave them economic strength to meet partially the demands of their working class. With the shrinkage of these superprofits, the class struggle even in those countries has been sharpening. Due to a temporary shortage of goods and the resultant sharp ascent of their prices in the period after the end of the Second World War, the purchasing power of the workers even of those countries had declined giving rise to a series of strike struggles.

The crisis of the shortage of goods, a peculiar product of the Second World War due to an unparalleled devastation of agriculture and industry, will be replaced, in course of time, by the crisis of overproduction, since the disparity between the productive power of the world capitalist economy and the purchasing power of the population of the capitalist world has been staggeringly accentuated during the war years and cannot be overcome. During this phase, too, the class struggle, due to the growth of unemployment and wage cuts demanded by the competitive struggle among capitalists, will continue to be aggravated and reach unprecedented heights even in the powerful capitalist countries.

In India, due to the weakness of Indian capitalism, there is no economic basis for the inauguration and the implementing of a programme of living standards for the working population. The capitalist system cannot bear the strain.

A perspective of the continuous, intensive and extensive growth of the movements of the workers and the middle class employees as well as of big peasant movements, is consequently unfolded.

These movements will have a historically progressive character since their objective would be a democratic and a socialist transformation of the Indian economy, the ending of the feudal, capitalist and other obstacles to the free development of the productive forces of the Indian society, the creation of a planned and harmonious socialist economy of the Indian people as an integral part of the world socialist economy leading to the growth of a prosperous socialist economic and cultural existence for the Indian people.

These movements will gather momentum since they arise out of historic necessity, out of the needs of development of the material life of the Indian society (its economic evolution), and the increasing economic suffering of the people.

We can predict that the historical tendency will be in the direction of the growth and expansion of these movements. These movements are the subjective expression of the needs of development of the Indian society also.

These movements constitute the creative force in the contemporary Indian society. Their development and success alone can guarantee a prosperous economic and cultural future for the Indian people. These movements, of historic necessity, will culminate in the shifting of political power to the working class in alliance with the toiling peasantry and the resultant democratic and, on the basis of the victory of the socialist movements in other parts of the world, complete socialist transformation of the Indian society.

X

UNDER these historical circumstances, any rapid and harmonious development of the Indian industries on a *capitalist* basis or of the productive forces of the Indian agricultural economy *resting on the present land relations* is not possible.

The Indian bourgeoisie does not command extensive markets. It possesses no colonies, the source of superprofits. It has also no large internal market at its disposal.

The Indian bourgeoisie, therefore, lacks the economic means

to make economic concessions to the Indian proletariat or to its middle class employees. To maintain its competitive power against more powerful capitalist world rivals, it has to exploit its workers and employees, from its very inception, more intensely through low wages and salary levels, long working day etc.

Thus, there is no economic basis for bourgeois reformism in the economic field in India. The weak position of Indian capitalism makes it impossible for the Indian bourgeoisie to give living standards to the Indian workers, to provide dole to the unemployed victims of the capitalist system, to enact advanced social legislation.

The bourgeois leaders of the Congress are animated by a sincere desire to improve their material and cultural conditions but being bourgeois in outlook they are unable to recognize that it is not possible to achieve this within the framework of the contemporary capitalist system as it exists in India.

An appreciable increase of national wealth even on the basis of the working of a capitalist economic system is the indispensable prerequisite for elevating the material and resultant cultural standards of the masses even within the capitalist system. The national wealth of India cannot appreciably increase on the basis of the capitalist and agrarian systems prevailing in India and in to-day's historical situation.

As a result of the lack of understanding of the dialectic of the capitalist economy (which alone can help to comprehend the present historical *debacle* of the capitalist system, its out-lived progressive character and creative energies) due to class inhibition, the bourgeois leaders call upon the workers to collaborate with the employers to increase national wealth (which is not possible at present on the basis of a capitalist productive system) and thereafter "equitably" distribute it among the workers and employers.

The call of the bourgeois leaders for economic sacrifices from the workers can only lead to the safeguarding of the profits of the capitalists and buttress the historically outmoded capitalist economic system which does not provide room, in its present historical phase, for the free development of productive forces.

It is the crisis not of the "national" economy (which as such

does not exist) but of the national capitalist economy.

The vast resources of the country, actual and potential, can guarantee rapid development of the productive forces of the Indian society, unparalleled increase in national wealth. But the indispensable prerequisite for such a consummation is a Planned Economy, which to be a real Planned Economy must be based on the social ownership of all means of production, sources of raw materials etc.

XI

THE same cause viz. the absence of the economic basis which prevents the implementing of bourgeois reformism in the economic field explains why there exists no perspective of the implementing of a full fledged bourgeois democracy also in India. Political reform and economic reform are interlinked.

Democracy is a luxury which a prosperous capitalism can afford only. Such a capitalism has economic ability to give tolerable standards of life to its workers, who consequently are reconciled to their fundamental servitude under capitalism. A prosperous bourgeoisie can, therefore, afford to extend to them (though even these, in history, have been extorted from it by the working class by means of struggle) such democratic liberties as *unfettered* rights of trade union combination, strike and picketing; freedom of press, platform and assembly; and others. These rights constitute what is termed "bourgeois democracy", i.e. freedoms under the conditions of the bourgeois society.

The weak bourgeoisie cannot afford to grant *full* democratic liberties to the masses in absence of economic reforms. Amidst conditions of increasing economic suffering, there is a perennial urge for them (spurred on by the urge to live) to launch struggles. The weak capitalist class cannot buy up these struggles with reforms since it has no economic strength, no superprofits from colonial exploitation, to do so. Since the struggles arise out of the mere need of survival, they assume big proportions. The socialist political movement of the workers gathers strength. The bourgeoisie, which in the conditions of a sharpened inter-capitalist competitive economic struggle, needs to impose additional burdens on the masses, increasingly deprives the masses of democratic liberties which are the means by which the proletariat organizes and educates itself on class

lines and develops its trade union and political movements. It increasingly withdraws *unconditional* right of trade union organization and unabridged right of the workers to strike. The civil liberties, so far as the masses are concerned, are increasingly withdrawn.

12

INDIAN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD

THOUGH the Materialist Conception of History or the general law of social development formulated by Marx is valid and has been substantially verified by the history of development of all societies in all epochs and in all parts of the world, there are individual features which constitute the peculiarities of development of every separate society. This is due to the fact that the geographical and other premises within which a given society takes roots and develops, the nature and interaction of the elements of its internal social milieu, the nature of the historically preceding society from which that society has evolved and, further, its interaction with other societies with which it comes into contact are peculiar to each society. This law of uneven development due to uneven conditions of development invests the historical development of each society with a peculiar character. It must, however, be noted that these peculiarities in development do not invalidate the fact that basically the development of any society is governed by the universally valid general law of all social development enunciated by Marx as the Materialist Conception of History.

We will investigate into the peculiar features of the Indian social development during the British period and enumerate the most important among these features.

Contemporary Indian society is a capitalist society and historically evolved from the pre-British Indian feudal society as a result of the British conquest of India and the impact of the

* From a Paper read before the Marxist Study Circle in 1947.

social, political, economic, and other forces of the outside world and particularly of the British society on India.

Pre-British feudal Indian society had peculiar features distinguishing itself from feudal societies of the West European countries. It did not rest on the institution of manor and did not know the class of barons (feudal nobility). It was based on the self-sufficient village as a unit with *de facto* possession of land by the village community. The village autarchy was based on this common possession of land *plus* the unity of agriculture and industry. Indian feudalism was thus distinct from European feudalism.

Capitalist transformation of the Indian feudal economy followed a different path of development from that of the European feudal economy. While in European countries, an indigenous capitalist class, which developed within the feudal society, overthrew feudalism in those countries, in India it was a foreign capitalist power which overthrew feudalism and established a capitalist economy. However, British capitalism, for political and military strategic reasons, did not liquidate Indian feudal states but perpetuated them as its political support. Further, by obstructing free industrialization of the country, it perpetuated remnants of feudal economy and the feudal class relations within the basic capitalist economic system developing in the country. However, unlike in China, where also feudal remnants in economy and class relations survived but no foreign power *directly* ruled over her, in India the state power was directly concentrated in the hands of a foreign capitalist power. The Indian state was only a colonial extension and a part of the British capitalist state.

The peculiarity of the industrial development in India which occurred during the British period lies in the fact that it was the byproduct of the conditions which Britain created in the country for its own political, economic, and strategic requirements. In Britain, the development of the modern transport system followed the growth of industrial development as a means to accelerate it. In India, in contrast, Britain first laid down modern roads and railways to serve her economic and strategic interests. As Marx prophesied, once the railways were constructed and workshops established to fabricate spare parts and their other needs, the subsequent emergence of Indian in-

dustries was inevitable. Unlike in Britain, industrial development followed the establishment of the modern transport system in India.

Another peculiarity of Indian social development is reflected in the fact that capitalist development took place unevenly in various provinces and among different communities comprising the pre-British feudal society. This was due to the fact that the different parts of the country came under the British sway at different times and, at the outset, particular communities like the Hindus, which had been in the past engaged in feudal trade and banking, first took to modern capitalist trade, industry, and banking. This had significant socio-political consequences. The Muslim community projected a bourgeoisie and an intelligentsia only so late as at the beginning of the twentieth century. By that time, the Hindu bourgeoisie and intelligentsia had already captured a substantial portion of trade, industry, banking, and administrative posts. The weak Muslim bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, in their competitive struggle with their Hindu rivals, whipped up communalism of the Muslim population with a view to use it for serving their sectional interests. This led to the emergence of the factors of communalism and the resultant Hindu-Muslim conflict in the arena of Indian politics.

Similarly, with the development of capitalism in various provinces, a process uneven and at intervals, the class of bourgeoisie grew in these provinces. These provincial bourgeoisie instigated inter-provincial animosities among their respective populations with a view to serving their own interests in the competitive struggle against their provincial rivals.

This disruptive process of the growth of anti-national communalism and inter-provincial antagonisms was paralleled by the growth of the healthy nationality awakening among linguistic groups which developed a powerful urge for living a common economic and cultural life and hence organized struggles against the pattern of existing multilingual provinces. In Britain, France, and other European countries the political unification of the people embodied in the establishment of the modern centralized national state was the culmination of the process of the economic unification of the people through the capitalist economic transformation of the country. In India, however, it was after a foreign centralized state was established, that the

capitalist transformation of the country appreciably started and, that too, unevenly and at intervals among different regions of the country. In proportion as capitalism developed in these regions, nationality feeling developed among their multilingual populations. The linguistic groups felt the pressure of the foreign power on their free economic and cultural development. They, therefore, developed urges and mobilized struggles for the reconstruction of existing multilingual provinces on the linguistic basis.

This process had two aspects; one directed against foreign rule and therefore an index of the growth of national consciousness and the other a positive urge to fully live and develop as nationalities. This fact unfolded the perspective of the future state structure of a free India as a federal instead of a classical unitary state.

India was a colonial adjunct of British imperialism. Its economic and political structure were subjected to the needs of British imperialism. Further, such feudal and semi-feudal phenomena as the feudal states, semi-feudal landlordism as also semi-serfdom in some parts existed in the country. In brief, the principal tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution such as the establishment of national independence, liquidation of feudalism and carrying through of a thoroughgoing agrarian revolution had to be accomplished in the country. An anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, and agrarian revolution had to be accomplished.

These tasks were fulfilled in England, France, and other European countries by the bourgeoisie who summoned other classes of the feudal society suffering under it to revolt against the feudal state. But, in India, the bourgeoisie, due to its economic dependence on British imperialism, due to its own interests in land ownership, and above all due to its fear of the masses which, if organized for anti-imperialist revolution, might menace native capitalism as well, remained anti-revolutionary from its very birth. It is true that the Indian National Congress, the classical party of the Indian bourgeoisie, leading the nationalist movement *did* organize mass struggles with the slogan of national independence. Its leader, Gandhi, however, restricted these struggles to non-revolutionary forms, paralysing them at the very moment when they showed the tendency of

revolutionary development. Gandhism was the classical technique of the Indian bourgeoisie to utilize mass struggles as a pressure weapon for its own class interests as also for preventing those struggles from assuming revolutionary forms which would threaten not only British imperialism but also native capitalism.

Another specific feature of Indian social development consisted in the survival and persistence of the caste structure of the social organization of the Hindus who constitute the overwhelming majority of the total population. The caste system has been inherited from the pre-capitalist past of India, it being the social organization corresponding to the pre-capitalist feudal economy. While in other countries such feudal social organizations were almost delivered a death blow after the transformation of the feudal economy into the capitalist economy with the resultant disappearance of the old division of labour and the emergence of new mobile classes based on capitalist economy, in India the caste system is still vital and plays a decisive role in spite of the capitalist economic transformation. It has worked as a powerful obstacle to the national unity of the Indian people and the class unity of the toiling masses, has sapped their initiative, has made the people including even the educated class adapt themselves (from birth) to the feudal form of irrationalities and social injustices and has retarded social and cultural advance.

Another characteristic of Indian social development lay in the fact that since the Indian bourgeoisie did not develop in the process of any anti-feudal struggle but under the conditions of the domination of a foreign bourgeoisie, it did not organize any decisive philosophical and other cultural struggle against pre-British feudal ideologies. Since the modern bourgeois culture created by the European bourgeoisie which combated feudal obscurantist and religio-mystical philosophy was the culture of the foreign bourgeois ruler, the intellectual advance-guard of bourgeois nationalism such as Pal, Tilak, Aurobindo, Gandhi, and others unconsciously recoiled from it and made even reactionary attempts to rehabilitate the pre-capitalist feudal and pre-feudal Indian ideologies of the pre-British period. While supporting the expansion of industrialization on a capitalist basis in the country, it rejected the culture associated with the

rise of Western capitalism in its struggle against feudalism. It erroneously identified the domination of India by the Western (foreign) bourgeoisie with the latter's culture which was historically an advance over and higher than the feudal culture. It hurt the national pride of the Indian intelligentsia to accept materialist and rationalist philosophies of the European bourgeoisie. As a cultural counterblast, it glorified with deep pride the reactionary religio-mystical culture of the pre-British feudal and even pre-feudal India. Being mainly Hindu in social origin, the political and ideological leaders of the Indian nationalist movement (Pal, Aurobindo, Tilak, Gandhi) even sometimes clothed the secular political movement of the entire Indian nation in the garb of the religio-mystical philosophy of ancient Hinduism.

The Indian bourgeoisie though developing a capitalist economy and building a bourgeois society fed, as its cultural diet on the world outlook of a feudal period. This contradiction was due to the fact that it had developed under the conditions of subjection to a *foreign* bourgeois power. The growing class struggles of the masses threatening their class interests further accentuated their recoil from rationalist and materialist philosophies. Gandhi, the outstanding leader of the Indian bourgeoisie, invoked Ram Raj and God and resorted to prayer, Inner Voice and other feudal conceptions and devices of a feudal phase of social existence. This mystified politics, paralysed the revolutionary initiative of the masses, and even often resulted in the disruption of the unity of the national liberation struggle of the Indian people who were comprised of various communities (the Muslims and others) subscribing to different religions.

Another peculiarity of Indian social development lies in the fact that since the Indian bourgeoisie was consistently anti-revolutionary and since the proletariat, the alternative leader of anti-imperialist struggle, had not developed sufficient political, organizational, and ideological strength, the petty-bourgeoisie which came under the influence of the anti-revolutionary national bourgeoisie remained in the mass non-revolutionary. Even the terrorist movement which was organized by the revolutionary wing of the petty-bourgeoisie on the whole sailed under the banner of Goddess Kali, a Hindu deity.

The intelligentsia and the educated middle class exert a

powerful ideological influence over the mind of the masses. They themselves are socially and ideologically aligned to the bourgeoisie, hence become the purveyors of the bourgeois ideology among the masses. Excepting a small section, these groups during the British period, disseminated the religio-mystical ideology of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie among the Indian masses. This only confused the masses, gave them a false perspective of the conception and methods of their liberation, reconciled them to their native exploiters, retarded the growth of revolutionary consciousness among them and prevented the revolutionary development of the anti-imperialist mass struggle in the interest of the compromising bourgeoisie.

Another peculiar feature of Indian social development during the British period consisted in the fact that the economic structure exhibited a pattern which was far more variegated than that of even any colonial country. Capitalist monopolies in the domains of industry, trade, and banking existed side by side with forms of agriculture which were both technically and economically primitive. These monopolies existed on the background of a collapsing agrarian economy and a starving agrarian population. Further, the class of feudal princes was economically interlocked with the monopolist bourgeoisie. The feudal princes were capitalists. The bourgeoisie had landed interests. The combined exploitation of the toiling masses by foreign imperialist and native capitalist and feudal exploiters made the life of the masses intolerable.

13

ROLE OF MUSLIM LEAGUE IN INDIAN POLITICS

PART I

I

MUSLIM communalism and the Muslim League which is its political organizational expression have exerted, for last many decades, increasingly strong though disastrous influence on the political life of the Indian people. They have played the role of disruptors of the historically progressive anti-imperialist national liberation struggle of the Indian people as also of the democratic and socialist movements of the Indian masses, the workers and the peasants, for their liberation from the imperialist-feudal-landlord-capitalist system. They have been also mainly responsible for the political partition of the country (on communal lines) resulting in the destruction of the political unity of the Indian people and the disruption of their national economy. The bourgeois leadership of the non-communal Indian National Congress has agreed to this partitioning and hence shares the blame for being a party (however unwilling and prompted by good intention) to this act of political and economic vandalism.

Further, Muslim communalism has led to the galvanizing of Hindu and Sikh communalism. It has also helped a number of Hindu and Sikh chieftains to parade in the role of "saviours of Hinduism", to kindle successfully communal sentiment among their Hindu subjects, to mobilize them for anti-Muslim crusade and thereby disrupt the democratic anti-feudal movements of the peoples of their states for freedom.

* Published in *New Perspective*, January and February, 1948.

The partition of the country on communal lines, the establishment of a separate communal Pakistan State, a political atmosphere surcharged with communal animosities, an environment convulsed with communal warfare, have also led to the increased disintegration of the healthy national and class consciousness of tens of thousands of workers, peasants, and middle class elements who happen to spring from the Hindu community. Unable to withstand the impact of communal political developments on their consciousness and provoked by aggressive Muslim communalism, they are increasingly losing their national and class emotions and developing a reactionary communal outlook.

The process of the psychological and ideological degeneration among larger and larger sections of the Indian people has been taking place at a rapid rate. Extensive zones of the country have been transformed into battle-grounds of brutal communal warfare. All progressive movements, social, political, economic, or cultural, have been stifled or retarded. The anticlimax has been reached.

The demand of the Muslim League, backed up by mass support of the Indian Muslims, for the establishment of the communal Pakistan State gave British imperialism a plausible pretext to vivisect the country and thereby also divide the Indian people both politically and economically. British imperialism had always used the Muslim League as a weapon in its *divide and rule* strategy during the period of its domination over India. By creating a political partition of the country, *by elevating communalism to the plane of inter-state struggle*, it hopes to play the role of a perennial arbiter between the two states, use one against the other, and establish its influence over both.

Thus political Muslim communalism has played a very sinister role in the arena of Indian politics.

Programmes and methods have been suggested to combat and counteract communalism, both of the Muslim and Hindu variety, which is corroding the vitals of the Indian society, threatening to destroy it in a belligerent war of communities. These programmes and methods are based on the complete ignorance of the socio-genetic causes, the historico-economic roots, of communalism in general and of Muslim communalism in particular. Hence their general failure to liquidate commu-

nalism and communal warfare.

Various theories have been advanced to explain the emergence of political Muslim communalism, its rise and mass grip over the Indian Muslims. Some brand Jinnah as the arch-culprit who, by means of diabolical cunning, successfully injected the poison of communalism in the minds of the Indian Muslims. Others declare that the Muslim religion has something immanent in it to transform its adherents into communal fanatics. Still others consider British imperialism as the architect of political Muslim communalism, so that it could divide the Indian people into hostile groups and thereby maintain its grip over India in the past.

These are superficial, unscientific explanations of the rise of Muslim communalism. There are deep historico-economic reasons for its growth.

Mere demagoguery and diplomacy of a leader cannot bring into existence a mass movement. Mere religious appeal cannot mobilize a mass movement of millions unless there existed, as a prerequisite, a social and economic situation for that appeal to fructify. Even the most astute imperialism cannot manufacture communalism within a subject nation unless there is a social basis within it.

Political organizations and mass movements do not come into being and muster mass support at the whim even of an outstanding individual. Behind them, there are profound social forces at work.

Unless this fact is recognized, unless the rise of political Muslim communalism is traced to its socio-historical roots, it is not possible to discover the correct method which alone can combat it successfully.

Mere patriotic, nationalist, and humanitarian appeals cannot succeed in liquidating communalism in the consciousness of millions of humans. During last few decades, thousands of such appeals have been made from the press and the platform. Scores of films have been prepared and exhibited with a view to building up a non-communal consciousness and ideology among the mass of the people. Still, during this very period, political Muslim communalism did not abate but even spread to larger and larger sections of the Muslim population.

Only a Marxist analysis can aid us to discover the main-

springs of such a social phenomenon as communalism.

Marxist analysis penetrates through and tears the religio-communal mask from all communal movements and lays bare the naked material interests of certain socio-economic groups, which, for their sectional interests, instigate, organize, and exploit such movements investing them with the false aura of religion or basing them on the myth of the identity of the interests of all members of the community.

Marxist analysis also reveals that only under certain historical circumstances the communal propaganda of vested interests meets with success among the people.

Only when we are able to trace the socio-genetic causes of the rise and growth of Muslim communalism, it is possible to discover an effective programme to combat it and isolate the Muslim League from the Muslim masses.

We will now proceed to investigate into the socio-genetic causes of the rise of political Muslim communalism, evaluate its rôle in the political life of the Indian people, and try to indicate the appropriate method to counteract it.

II

THE principal social force which Britain utilized in the later stages of its rule over India was political Muslim communalism which it contraposed to the bourgeois nationalism represented by the Indian National Congress.

Since political Muslim communalism and the Muslim League, the political organization of the vested interests within the Muslim community (the professional classes, the commercial bourgeoisie with industrial aspirations backed up by landlords), occupy a very important place in the new political set-up which has emerged under the Mountbatten Settlement Plan, we will briefly survey the genetic causes of their rise and evaluate their basic rôle in Indian politics.

III

DUE to numerous historical reasons, a professional class and a bourgeoisie developed within the Muslim community long after they crystallized within the Hindu community. They were the Hindus who first imbibed the western education introduced by Britain in India. They were also the first commu-

nity to take to modern trade, industry and banking. Thus a bourgeoisie and a professional class of educated Indians first sprang from within the Hindu community. As W. C. Smith remarks :

In Bengal, Bombay and Madras, the three port areas, the centres from which British commerce and culture radiated, the bourgeoisie developed sooner, naturally; and consequently sooner reached the stage of independence. Now it so happens that those areas are predominantly Hindu (at least in their middle and upper classes; Bengal has masses of Muslims, but they are peasants and hence unaffected).¹

Under the conditions of the British rule which adversely affected Indian commercial interests, obstructed the free development of Indian industries, and made a monopoly of all higher posts and jobs in the state apparatus for the Britishers, the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia, predominantly Hindu, were the first social strata to become politically conscious and develop a nationalist consciousness. They became the founders of the first national political organization, the Indian National Congress, as also the pioneers of the Indian nationalist movement. They became the architects of the *non-communal* bourgeois nationalist movement which, while playing the progressive role of increasingly imbuing the Indian people with the spirit of nationalism and subsequently taking the form of big non-communal nationalist mass struggles (the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience Movements), remained, in all stages, the weapon of the Indian bourgeoisie and professional classes *as a whole* to serve their own interests. It is true that sometimes, as in the case of Tilak, Pal and Aurobindo Ghose, the bourgeois nationalism of the Congress was dressed in the garb of the religio-mystical ideology of Hinduism, the ideology of pre-capitalist Indian feudal society. It is also true that sometimes even Gandhi tries to derive ideological sanctions for some of the principles and practices of bourgeois nationalism (nationalism, democracy, etc.) from ancient Hinduism. But this is only an attempt at a bourgeois nationalist reinterpretation of Hinduism in the ideological field giving a bourgeois nationalist content to feudal Hinduism. Tilak, Pal,

1 Smith, W. C., *Modern Islam in India*, p. 22.

Ghose, and Gandhi were in reality fighting for the consolidation of a bourgeois (capitalist) society in India.

Non-communal bourgeois nationalism has always been the political ideology of the Indian National Congress and the nation-wide movements it organized, in *refreshing contrast* to the political communalism of the Muslim League.

It is important to note that though the Indian National Congress, due to the nature of its leadership, organizational structure, ideologies, programmes, policies and methods of struggle adopted in different phases, was the weapon of the national bourgeoisie to serve its own class interest, it was also the principal medium of the expression of the anti-imperialist national-liberation urge of the politically awakened Indian people, the main focal point of the political discontent of all classes of the Indian society except the pro-British feudal princes and semi-feudal zamindars and, further, the chief organizer and leader of all nationalist struggles which took place during the period of the British rule in India.

To correctly evaluate its role, this two-fold aspect of the Congress must be vividly kept before the mind.

IV

IN pursuance of its strategy of balancing different social forces against one another, Britain utilized the political communalism of the Muslim League to maintain its strangehold over India.

We will briefly survey the historico-genetic reasons for the rise of political Muslim communalism and the pro-imperialist, anti-national and anti-democratic role played by the Muslim League in the Indian nationalist movement.

When by the end of the nineteenth century, a professional class and an extremely weak bourgeoisie, with its capital mainly engaged in commerce and agrarian production, crystallized within the Muslim community, the Hindu bourgeoisie and the Hindu educated middle class, which had evolved much earlier, had already seized a very large share of commerce, industry, banking, and jobs and posts in the economic and administrative machineries of the country. Due to their intrinsically weak economic and resultant weak political position, the incipient Muslim bourgeoisie and the professional classes (backed by the Muslim feudalists), in their struggle against their powerful Hindu rivals

and the Congress which represented the interests of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, reinforced their weak strength by a strategic mobilization of the Muslim middle classes and, subsequently, of the politically awakened Muslim masses through communal appeal, with a view to serving their specific group interests.

As R. P. Dutt remarks :

In order to understand the background of this development it is necessary to recognize the seeds of social-economic rivalry which affect, not the Hindu and Muslim masses, but the rising middle class. The growth of trade, commerce and education had begun much earlier in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, that is, in the Hindu-majority areas, than in the Muslim areas of the North... Hence with the rise of the Indian bourgeoisie, conditions of sectional rivalry existed which could easily assume a communal guise. The great landlords who formed the main basis of the Muslim upper class, viewing with displeasure the advance of the trading and industrial bourgeoisie, regarded that advance as "Hindu" — the menace of the "Hindu Bania" etc. In the rising middle class a basis for communal antagonism existed in the conflict between rival trading groups, with the greater backwardness of the Muslim sections; in the competition for administrative posts, based on educational qualifications, where the Muslims found themselves at a disadvantage
.....²

K. B. Krishna takes the same view when he remarks :

1. There is a struggle between the professional classes of different faiths and communities. The Moslem, Sikh..... Untouchable professional classes are unequal educationally, politically and economically compared with the Hindu professional classes..... The struggle has taken the name of the problem of communal electorates.
2. This struggle is spread also to the commercial, industrial, and the shop-keeping trading classes of different faiths and communities.³

The bloc of Muslim vested interests could, with increasing success, organize this communal manoeuvre since the Congress

² Dutt, R. P., *India Today*, p. 425.

³ Krishna, K. B., *The Problem of Minorities*, p. 296.

basically struggled in the interests of the national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia which, because of a series of historical accidents, were predominantly Hindu in social composition.

The Muslim leaders could successfully, though incorrectly, interpret to the Muslim masses the exploitation they were subjected to by the Hindu capitalists, zamindars, merchants and money-lenders as *communal*. They misdescribed the exploitation of a section of the Indian masses who happened to be Muslim by a section (however predominant though it be) of the Indian exploiters who happened to be Hindu, as *communal*, though, in reality, it had *an economic and class character*. Due to the absence of a strong Marxist working class party in the country, the weakness of trade union and peasant organizations and movements, and the low level of the growth of political and general class consciousness of the Muslim masses, the latter became easy victims of the communal propaganda of the bourgeois and feudal Muslim leaders.

The mobilization of political Muslim communalism by the Muslim feudalists and bourgeoisie to fight the non-communal nationalism of the Congress bourgeoisie, largely Hindu, suited *the divide and rule* strategy of British imperialism. The nationalist movement led by the bourgeois Congress was acquiring a broader and broader social basis and militancy. Though the nationalist movement, under the bourgeois Congress leadership, was deliberately eschewing revolutionary methods of struggle and restricting itself to pressure tactics like the Boycott agitation and, subsequently under Gandhi's leadership, to non-revolutionary and limited mass struggle and, further, *actually* pressing the crying demands of the Indian bourgeoisie and the wealthy intelligentsia and *not* of the Indian masses, British imperialism recognized the *pressure value* of such non-revolutionary, even anti-revolutionary, struggles of the Indian bourgeoisie to improve its bargaining power in any compromise which may be concluded between itself and the Indian bourgeoisie.

To weaken this bargaining power of the Indian bourgeoisie which the Indian National Congress built up by organizing pressure movements like the Boycott campaign, and Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience and other movements, British imperialism organized the counter-manoeuvre of lending support to and fostering the growth and the strength of political Muslim

communalism of the League which had, for its objective, best possible gain to the Muslim vested interests in compromises which may, at various stages in the development of the nationalist movement, be struck between British imperialism and the Indian vested interests. In fact, the very formation of the Muslim League in 1906 was backed by Lord Minto, at that time the Viceroy of India. He also assured the founders of the League, who as a deputation waited on him, that the British government would make provision for the specific interests of the Muslim community in any new constitutional scheme it would devise for the governance of India. It was in pursuance of this strategy that the British government injected, accentuated, and expanded the communal principle in different constitutional machineries it evolved in India at various crucial stages. The Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909, the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, the Government of India Act of 1935, and the Cabinet Mission scheme of 1946 were based mainly on the principle of the communal division of the Indian people.

By this strategic manoeuvre, British imperialism was achieving results advantageous to the continuation of its domination over India. Let us enumerate the principal among these. First, this helped it to conciliate the new social force, the politically awakening Muslim upper classes which did not stand for the end of the British rule but for reformist concessions for themselves. Separate communal electorates, the system of special representation and weightage, a specific percentage of posts and jobs guaranteed to the Muslim professional classes in administrative services, and others were devised to satisfy the upper strata of the Muslim population which had grown politically conscious and articulate. The limited anti-British sentiment of the politically awakened Muslims was also thereby skilfully transformed into communal rivalry between the Hindus and the Muslims for seats in legislatures, for posts and jobs in the administrative machinery. The introduction of the communal principle in the constitutional machinery of the country helped to perpetuate and exacerbate communal feelings among the people and thereby retarded the growth of national consciousness and national unity among them and the emergence and development of a united nationalist movement of the entire Indian people. It tended to keep alive and strengthen separate

communal consciousnesses and weaken and obscure national consciousness among the Indian people. It thwarted the emergence and the growth of an Indian consciousness and fostered and fed separate and antagonistic Hindu and Muslim consciousnesses among them.

The introduction of the communal principle in the constitutional machinery of the country by Britain as an integral part of the working out of her general strategy of divide and rule, thus operated as an antinational disruptive force. British imperialism, with consummate skill, utilized political Muslim communalism to prevent the growth of the national consciousness and unity among the Indian people and their united struggle for national liberation from foreign domination.

This was the antinational aspect of the role of political Muslim communalism.

It had a second aspect also, the undemocratic aspect. On the ground that the Muslim community was economically and culturally backward, the Muslim League demanded – and the British government conceded – special rights for the Muslims (in fact, for the Muslim upper classes who alone could benefit thereby) such as reservation of seats in legislatures, specific percentage of posts in the administrative machinery and others. This demand militated against and infringed the very principle of democracy.

The democratic principle of the equality of all citizens and groups comprising a people was trampled upon by the conceding of a special advantage to a group. It is true that the elimination of all artificial obstacles put in the way of groups or individuals by undemocratic social, political, economic and other institutions, is a prerequisite of democratic advance. However, any artificial advantage given to them, on a religio-communal or any other ground, only distorts and stifles all democratic advance.

This was the anti-democratic aspect of the role of political Muslim communalism.

There was a third aspect of its role also

Political Muslim communalism, by introducing the communal principle in Indian politics, not only weakened national consciousness, national unity and the united national struggle of the Indian people for freedom, but also retarded the growth of class consciousness and class movements of the Indian masses

jointly exploited by British imperialists as well as Indian capitalists, zamindars, merchants and moneylenders, Hindu as well as Muslim. The non-communal bourgeois nationalism of the Indian National Congress, by creating the illusion of the harmony of interests of the workers and the capitalists, the tenants and the landlords, it is true, retarded the growth of class struggle of the Indian masses against foreign and Indian vested interests. It is also true that it thereby handed them over as unresisting tools to their economic exploitation and, further, made them political pawns in the national reformist politics of the Indian bourgeoisie. But far worse than this, the League communalism attempted to split the masses on vertical communal lines and set the Hindu workers against the Muslim workers, the Hindu peasants against the Muslim peasants, to the benefit of the respective Hindu or Muslim capitalists and landlords. Such an unreal differentiation of the masses in communal camps, where they united with their respective Hindu or Muslim bourgeois or landlord coreligionists and served the interests of the latter in their struggles against the rival bourgeoisie and landlords of the other community, *in the final analysis*, prevented the unity of the Hindu and Muslim masses. Thereby it protected both Hindu and Muslim bourgeoisie and zamindars from the united struggle of the Indian masses against their exploiters of both denominations.

For instance in Bihar, with a view to weakening the united struggle of the Hindu and Muslim peasants against Zamindari in that province, which was growing and constraining the Congress government to adopt certain anti-Zamindari measures, the Hindu zamindars accentuated and utilized the anti-Muslim feeling which gripped the Hindu kisans as a result of the Muslim atrocities against the Hindus in Calcutta and the Noakhali district. They instigated them to organize a large scale attack on the Muslim peasants, their very comrades in struggle against Zamindari, Hindu as well as Muslim. While these Hindu zamindars allied with Muslim zamindars and presented a united front to the government in defence of their predatory Zamindari rights, they split the ranks of the peasants on communal lines, instigating the Hindu section against the Muslim section. In Noakhali where the population was composed of a preponderant mass of Muslim peasants and a tiny fraction of mostly Hindu zamindars

and moneylenders, a group of League reactionaries transformed the healthy economic discontent of the poverty-stricken Muslim peasantry into a fanatical communal frenzy which diverted them from a joint movement (in alliance with the Hindu peasantry for the abolition of Zamindari and the cancellation of debts) to an orgy of loot, arson, rape, forced conversions and murders of the Hindus. The Muslim peasants lost their class outlook, ceased to feel themselves as a battalion of the Indian peasantry, and became communal fanatics filled with insane hatred for all Hindus whether workers, peasants or zamindars.

Communalism of both Hindu and Muslim variety, by obstructing and disrupting the growth of class consciousness, class unity, and united class movements of the masses against their imperialist, feudal and capitalist masters, Hindu, Muslim or of other denomination, only helped to stabilize the imperialist-feudal-capitalist-landlord social structure. By splitting the nation on communal lines, it obstructed the united national struggle for independence. By splitting the masses into communal camps, it hindered the growth of the united class movements of the masses and thereby perpetuated class exploitation. By the disruptive role it played in national and class movements, which had a historically progressive significance and which, when victorious, would culminate into national independence and democratic and socialist liberation of the Indian masses, communalism, in the final analysis, benefited foreign imperialists and Indian capitalists, feudalists, and landlords of all communities by perpetuating the existing economic structure of society resting on a feudal and capitalist basis.

To sum up : The roles played by political Muslim communalism were thus multifold. First and primarily, it served as the weapon of the Muslim bourgeoisie and the Muslim intelligentsia in alliance with sections of the Muslim feudalists, which were in social and economic *liaison* with the Muslim bourgeoisie, in their struggle against their stronger rivals, the Hindu bourgeoisie and the Hindu intelligentsia, for jobs, posts, trading interests and share in any administrative or political power which British imperialism might concede in any compromise concluded between it and the Indian vested interests. The League for that end, stirred up communalism among the Muslim masses and transformed their political and economic discontent,

which spontaneously grew as a result of their exploitation under the extant feudal-imperialist-capitalist system, into communal frenzy to the advantage of the Muslim upper classes.

Secondly, by its disruptive communal activity which obstructed the growth of the national unity and the united national movement of the Indian people for freedom from the foreign yoke, the League objectively subserved the interests of British imperialism. In its anxiety to secure gains for the Muslim upper classes it looked to British imperialism, even became its conscious tool. Britain used it as a counterbalancing force against the Indian National Congress to weaken the pressure of the Congress bourgeoisie on itself. Thus the League vested interests played a pro-imperialist role unlike the Congress. Though opposed to the revolutionary development of the nationalist mass movement, the Congress under its bourgeois leadership *did play a national reformist oppositional role in as much as it mobilized the Indian people on a national basis, instilled national consciousness among them and organized mass struggles against imperialism.*

It is true that both the League and the Congress basically reflected and served the interests of the upper sections of the Indian society, the former as the political weapon of the feudal and bourgeois strata of the Muslim community and the latter as that of the Indian bourgeoisie *as a whole*. It is also true that both were openly and frankly anti-revolutionary. The difference between them, however, lay in the fact that the League representing the weaker group of Indian vested interests had a reactionary communal social basis and was throughout pro-imperialist in its political practice while the Congress, representing the interests of the powerful national bourgeoisie *as a whole*, had a secular character and a national basis. Also, as the organizer of national reformist oppositional mass movement against imperialism, the Congress objectively played a limited progressive role.

Finally, by dividing the Indian masses on communal lines and by injecting communal consciousness in the Muslim masses, the League played the role of the disrupter of their growing unity and united class movements for their freedom from *all* exploitation, imperialist as well as indigenous. Here the League objectively served the basic interests not only of the Muslim

capitalists and zamindars but also of the imperialist capitalists as well as of all Indian capitalists and zamindars, Hindu, Muslim and others.

The Congress bourgeoisie retarded the growth of class consciousness among the Indian workers and of their independent class movement by preaching to the masses such fraudulent bourgeois theories as the harmony of class interests of the workers and the capitalists, the supremacy of *mythical* all-national supraclass interests to which the workers must sacrifice their class interests, capitalist "trusteeship" of their property, "Capitalists are fathers and workers are children" (Gandhi) and others. The Congress, however, recognized the class structure and the class division of modern capitalist society and stood for the formation of separate class organizations of the workers (irrespective of communal differences), at least in the economic field, such as non-communal trade unions. It is true that it declared that such trade unions should be the instruments of class collaboration of the workers with the capitalists. It is further true that, due to the basic opposition of the class interests of the workers and those of the capitalists (which is not invented by socialists but arises out of the capitalist economic system itself), such trade unions only diverted the working class from the road of irreconcilable class struggle which alone could (through socialism) liquidate their wage slavery under capitalism as well as achieve improvement in their conditions within the system of capitalism itself. The diverting of the workers to the road of class collaboration and class conciliation by the bourgeois Congress led by Gandhi could only perpetuate the class structure of the Indian society and benefit the Indian capitalists even in the day to day struggles between the capitalists and the workers.

Nevertheless, the Congress bourgeoisie *did* stand for the mobilization and organization of the workers in their separate class organizations, at least in the economic sphere. Similarly, it withdrew its initial opposition to the formation of the kisan sabhas, the corresponding economic organizations of peasants of all denominations.

The League vested interests, on the contrary, by attempting to divide the masses on communal lines, tried to prevent the formation of the *very* organization of all workers or tenants on

class lines, whether on the principle of class collaboration or class struggle. Since their basic strategic aim was the mobilization of communal forces, the League leadership could not recognize classes but religious communities as basic units of the Indian society. Hence their persistent effort to form separate unions of the Muslim workers, the Muslim tenants, the Muslim salaried employees on one hand and to establish Muslim Chambers of Commerce and other organizations of the Muslim bourgeoisie *on the communal principle* on the other.

The League feudal-bourgeois bloc, thus, in the historical situation in which it was placed, *found it necessary and useful* to adopt and utilize the religio-communal ideology of the feudal epoch to serve its interests. In contrast, the Congress bourgeoisie used, to serve its class interests (its leaders such as Gandhi *sincerely* believe in them), the modern bourgeois theories of class collaboration and social reformism. However, even the openly class collaborationist trade union fostered by Gandhi, like the Majur Mahajan of Ahmedabad textile workers, is based on the *recognition* of the fact that the existing capitalist society is comprised basically of economic classes and not religious communities.

Bourgeois Gandhism, with its social theories like the essential harmony of class interests, the capitalist trusteeship of their property, class collaboration, the transcendence of supra-class national interests over class interests and others, became the dominant ideology of the non-communal Congress bourgeoisie.

Communalism culminating into the grotesque theory that the Indian Muslims are a nation and that religious communities and not classes *are the fundamental* units of the Indian society became the ideology of the feudal-bourgeois strata of the Muslim community represented by the League.

Both these ideologies were openly anti-revolutionary. Both were opposed to a revolutionary mass struggle since such a struggle would not only have been a danger to imperialism but also to all Indian vested interests, those represented by the League as well as by the Congress.

PART II

I

AS DEPICTED in the previous section, political Muslim communalism worked as a most reactionary force in the sphere of Indian politics. It tended to disrupt the unity of the Indian people in the anti-imperialist national liberation struggle. It also retarded the growing class unity of the Indian proletariat in its struggle for bread and socialism against both foreign and Indian capitalists. It also obstructed the united movement of the toiling peasantry, tenants, and land labourers against their exploiters, viz. British imperialism and its state in India, Indian zamindars, rapacious money-lenders and merchants.

Communal division determined by private faiths of individuals obscures the vital and *real* division of contemporary society into nations and classes. There are no common political and economic interests of all Hindus and all Muslims. Both Hindu and Muslim communities are divided into two sections, exploiters and exploited.

The basic interests of the Hindu capitalists, landlords, merchants, and money-lenders on one hand, and of the Hindu workers, peasants, tenants, land labourers, clerks, teachers and other categories of manual or mental workers on the other, are diametrically and irreconcilably opposite. The same is true of their counterparts in the Muslim community. No amount of propaganda of identity of the interests of all Hindus or all Muslims by the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League can annihilate this objective truth.

Do the Hindu or Muslim capitalists and landlords abstain from exploiting their respective Hindu or Muslim workers and tenants on the ground of ties of communal solidarity? Or rather, do both of them not unite, on the basis of their common class interests, against the masses, both Hindu and Muslim, when the latter organize movements to end their exploitation at their hands?

What common interests can exist between the Hindu capitalist who resides at Walkeshwar in a magnificent bungalow and the Hindu worker who, like the Muslim worker, lives in a slum at Parel? What common interests can unite the Hindu prince or a zamindar, who lives in a palatial building, banquets on the

choicest viands, and the Hindu peasant or tenant who, like their Muslim counterparts, are ceaselessly engaged in a mere animal struggle for survival, are subject to common exploitation at the hands of the Hindu Rajas or the Muslim Nabobs ?

Communal division of contemporary society is *unreal*, does not correspond to its *real* division into antagonistic classes. It only disrupts the growing unity of the masses emerging from their objectively existing common economic and resultant common political interests.

Vested interests divide the masses on communal lines to prevent their united movement against the social system under which they are exploited. Different sections of vested interests also utilize the masses of their own community, in their sectional struggles among themselves, as pawns to serve their own interests.

II

THERE IS *only one effective method and one only* to combat and liquidate communalism, both of the Muslim and the Hindu species. Muslim and Hindu communal organizations and leaderships can be effectively isolated from Muslim and Hindu masses and middle classes whom they inject with false communal consciousness and sentiments and utilize as pawns for serving the interests of exploiting classes (Muslim and Hindu) *only in one way*.

Communal movements secure a mass basis only because communal propaganda successfully transforms the healthy, natural, and spontaneous economic and political discontent of the masses born of their economic and political suffering under the existing social system into communal sentiment. Under the pressure of communal propaganda, the *masses are unable to locate the real causes of their exploitation, oppression, and suffering and imagine a fictitious communal source of their origin*. Thus, for instance, the Muslim tenant is prompted by the League propagandist to interpret the Hindu community as the author of his economic misery and not the landlord system as the cause of this misery simply because the landlord, by accident, happens to be a Hindu.

The first step in the campaign to combat and liquidate communalism among the masses is to ceaselessly explain to them

that a community does not exploit another community but in the contemporary Indian society, due to its class structure, classes exploit classes. The class is composed of elements of both communities. It is not the Hindus that exploit the Muslims but the capitalists, both Hindu and Muslim, that exploit the workers, both Hindu and Muslim. It is the landlords, both Hindu and Muslim, that exploit tenants, both Hindu and Muslim, and so on.

The interests of all exploited classes, all toilers, are identical. This identity of economic interests constitutes the material basis for their unity.

Further, the unity of the masses is forged in united movements to achieve a common aim and serve common interests. Continuous exploitation under the feudal-capitalist-landlord system is the perennial reason for the uninterrupted struggle of the masses to resist and free themselves from that exploitation. It is in such united movements that class consciousness of the exploited classes is born and their class organizations such as trade unions, kisan sabhas, political parties, forged.

Thus, common consciousness is the product of common struggle for common aims and interests. In history, social consciousness of man originated in the united struggle of human beings against Nature, in the process of economic production collectively carried on. National consciousness was the offspring of the united struggle of the Indian people for national liberation. In proportion that the united struggles of the masses, Hindu as well as Muslim, for achieving their *common real interests* such as the living wage in the case of the workers both Hindu and Muslim; for the liquidation of the zamindari and the debt burden in the case of tenants and peasants, both Hindu and Muslim; for an adequate salary scale in the case of middle class employees, both Hindu and Muslim; deepen-and broaden, communal consciousness will weaken and finally disappear among the masses and the middle classes, sections of which are at present contaminated by Hindu and Muslim communalism.

Only united movements for common aims can forge unity and create a common consciousness among the masses. Mere propaganda of unity cannot lead to that unity.

The material interests of the exploited classes are identical.

Joint struggles based on this identity of material interests and resultant common demands can alone build up their unity. In proportion that such united movements grow, they will cease to feel as Hindus or Muslims and begin increasingly to feel as workers, peasants, etc. Communal consciousness will increasingly be replaced by class consciousness.

Thus *the only effective method* to combat and liquidate communalism is to mobilize the masses, Hindu and Muslim, round a programme of demands reflecting their own common interests, to strengthen their class organizations such as trade unions, Kisan Sabhas, students' unions and others and launch united movements to secure their demands. In proportion that the masses rally round their class organizations and participate in non-communal united class movements, they will build up increasingly strong class consciousness and class unity. Their communal consciousness will disintegrate in proportion that their class consciousness grows as a result of the experience of united class effort.

III

THE BOURGEOIS leaders of the Indian National Congress like Gandhi, Nehru and others are making frantic and strenuous attempts to combat communalism, both of the Muslim and Hindu variety, and re-establish "communal harmony". They themselves have successfully resisted the psychological suggestions of the general communal atmosphere pervading the country and have maintained intact their bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois humanism in contrast to the increasing number of other Congressmen who are unable to withstand the impact of communal developments on their consciousness and whose bourgeois or petty bourgeois nationalism has been steadily disintegrating. Gandhi, Nehru, and other leaders have retained their live hostility to communalism which is an obstacle to the peaceful development of a bourgeois society based on the capitalist mode of production for which they are striving.

It is true that individual capitalists and landlords are employing reactionary communalism as a weapon to disrupt the united workers' and peasants' movement by utilizing the communalism of backward workers and peasants and setting them against one another in a number of places. However, any large

scale development of communal warfare in the country would only disorganise the general economic and social life of the people, plunge the country into chaos and threaten the capitalist society itself with regression or even extinction. The carrying through of any programme (even bourgeois) of economic and social reconstruction is incompatible with the continuation of communal warfare.

Since the movement of the exploited masses still stand at a low level, the national bourgeoisie does not need to-day to employ such medieval weapon as communalism to disorganize those movements. The German bourgeoisie, in the conditions of sharpened class struggle, *did* adopt anti-Semitism to disrupt the struggles of the masses. The Indian bourgeoisie, too, will not feel any qualm of conscience to draw on communalism as a weapon for the purpose of safeguarding its class interests when such a situation develops. Communalism remains the reserve weapon of the Indian bourgeoisie to combat the growth of the social liberation movement of the Indian masses.

But when such a situation arises, the Indian bourgeoisie will have to set aside its present leaders (Gandhi, Nehru and others) who are saturated with the culture and emotion of anti-communal bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois humanism and choose as its leaders politicians who will use, among other weapons, communalism to safeguard the bourgeois social system.

IV

THE methodology of struggle against communalism conceived by the Congress leaders moves within the framework of the bourgeois categories of thought. It is determined also by the historical situation in which the national bourgeoisie is to-day placed. That is why, in spite of their historically progressive and noble desire and effort to liquidate communalism, they are not succeeding or only partially succeed.

The passionate nationalist and humanist appeals of the Congress leaders for communal harmony, even Gandhi's recurring anti-communal fast, a unique weapon in the armoury of bourgeois nationalism, have not freed the atmosphere from communal animosities, have not freed it from the potentialities of brutal large scale communal warfare. This is because communalism is rooted in deep historico-economic causes.

V

As mentioned before, the weak Muslim vested interests (feudal-bourgeois) whipped up communalism of the masses and the middle classes of their community as a weapon to be wielded against their more powerful Hindu rivals who, due to historical circumstances, happened to emerge early from the Hindu community and who first captured key-positions in trade, industry and banking. The logic of their class interests drove the feudal-bourgeois strata of the Muslim community to propagate the myth that the Indian Muslims were a nation, that *all* Muslims have specific identical economic and political interests, and that they must support the programme of the League which, in fact, mirrored the sectional interests of these feudal-bourgeois layers.

The Muslim League leadership succeeded in whipping up communal sentiment among the Muslim population and in mobilizing its support for its programme. We have already enumerated the principal reason why it succeeded in this. Since a comprehension of these reasons is vital for a proper grasp of the contemporary political history of India, we will restate them. In India, due to historical reasons, an overwhelming section of the bourgeoisie developed from among the Hindu community. The League leaders successfully misrepresented to the Muslim masses that the exploitation they were experiencing from the Hindu capitalists, landlords, merchants, and money-lenders, was communal, while it had, in fact, a class character. The Hindu propertied classes exploited the Muslim masses (no more than they did the Hindu masses) *not because they were capitalists, landlords, merchants and money-lenders.*

The second reason why the feudal-bourgeois League succeeded in whipping up communalism of the Muslim masses was due to the fact that the Indian National Congress consistently served the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie and basically protected feudal and landlord interests. Its programme of demands expressed the interests of the Indian capitalist and landlord classes and as such did not appeal to and win the confidence of the Muslim masses. Because of the preponderant Hindu social composition of the Indian propertied classes the League, the Party of the Muslim capitalist and landlords, could successfully decoy the Muslim masses into believing

that the Congress was a communal Hindu organisation *which, in fact, it was not*. The Indian National Congress, in spite of its preponderant Hindu social composition, was *a national secular political organization which basically served the interests and needs of the Indian bourgeoisie as a whole*. Its ideology, organizational structure, programmes and policies were adapted to the requirements of the national bourgeoisie. The Indian National Congress was the classical party of the Indian bourgeoisie *as a whole*.

The League, thus, transformed the healthy class discontent of the exploited Muslim masses into anti-Hindu sentiment.

The third and perhaps the most vital historical negative reason why the League could successfully mobilize the Muslim masses round it was the absence of a strong genuine Marxist working class party in the country; also the absence of powerful trade unions and Kisan sabhas, i.e. of strong mass organizations of the workers and peasants, strong enough to counteract the communal propaganda of the League and rally the masses, Hindu as well as Muslim, through their day to day united movements for common economic and other demands, round them as organizational focal points.

All the attempts of the Congress Leftists, socialists, communists, non-socialist anti-imperialists within the Congress, through Muslim Mass Contact Committees formed in 1937-38, to counteract the League propaganda signally failed since the Muslim masses judged the Congress by its deeds and not by the promises of the Congress Leftists. In fact, these Leftists looked in the eyes of the Muslim masses as emissaries of the bourgeois Congress to decoy them into its fold.

Similarly, the appeal to patriotism, *abstract nationalism*, and undefined national independence made by the non-communal bourgeois Congress leadership, could not have effect on the Muslim masses. Every class translated the slogan of Independence in terms of its own interests; the proletariat in terms not only of freedom from British imperialist exploitation but from Indian capitalist exploitation also i.e. in terms of socialist conditions of existence; the tenants in terms of liquidation of landlordism; and the general mass of toiling peasantry in those of reduction of land tax, liquidation of debts, increased amount of land for cultivation etc. The national bourgeoisie visualized

independence from British imperialism in terms of its monopoly right of exploiting the Indian resources and labour power, thereby excluding foreign capitalists from that right.

The bourgeois policies and programmes of the Congress could not draw under its banner the Muslim masses. And further, the absence of a strong Marxist party of the working class, which would effectively explain to the masses the upper class character both of the Congress and the League (while explaining to them also the refreshingly non-communal character and the limited progressive role of the bourgeois Congress) and their class strategies to serve class ends, and which would further strive to build up a politically independent movement of the working class in alliance with the peasants, made the Muslim masses easy victims of the communal propaganda of the League.

VI

BRITISH imperialism, though it did not create (it is a misconception that it *created* it) political Muslim communalism, however, accentuated and utilized it in pursuance of its *divide et impera* strategy with a view to perpetuating its domination over India. Even when it granted independence to the Indian bourgeoisie after the termination of the Second World War, the political pattern it evolved was based on the communal principle. The Mountbatten Settlement Scheme under which the new political pattern was created did not eliminate communalism but only elevated it to the plane of the inter-state conflict, between the Pakistan State and the non-communal Indian Union. Weak Muslim vested interests which whipped up communalism of the Muslim population and utilized it as a pressure weapon in their struggle against the economically and hence politically and socially more powerful national bourgeoisie now command state power viz. in Pakistan. British imperialism calculated that the economic weakness of the Muslim feudal-bourgeois vested interests would constrain them to lean on it even more servilely than the weak national bourgeoisie of the Indian Union, and that it would be able thereby to establish a firm grip over the Pakistan State to exert pressure on the Indian Union and constrain the latter to adopt policies, internal and international, economic and political, suitable to itself. The

State of Pakistan, economically and politically, Britain calculated, could be used as a loaded pistol against the Indian Union to accentuate the latter's servility to her.

Thus, the political partition of India on communal lines, engineered by British imperialism and accepted by the national bourgeoisie, did not eliminate or extinguish communalism.

VII

BY successfully whipping up communalism of the Muslim population, the Muslim vested interest confronted the non-communal national bourgeoisie (Congress) with the problem of communalism.

Political Muslim communalism, in the process of its functioning, provoked and galvanized Hindu communalism. Feudal and semi-feudal social forces in the country such as a group of Sikh and other Hindu chieftains, landlords, and others have been utilizing resurgent Hindu communalism in the Punjab and other zones, where communal warfare has been the bitterest and most barbarous, to disrupt the united democratic anti-feudal struggles of the peasantry and the general mass of the population whom they exploit.

The national bourgeoisie is thus confronted with the problem of combating not only Muslim but also Hindu communalism. Communal warfare operates as an obstacle to its attempts at implementing the economic and social reconstruction programme which it has envisaged and formulated.

VIII

BUT the methods evolved by the Congress leadership to combat and extinguish communalism move within the framework of the bourgeois conceptions of these leaders, conceptions determined by the historical position in which the national bourgeoisie is placed to-day.

The methods such as patriotic and humanitarian appeals adopted by these leaders and even the heroic fast of Gandhi who incarnates bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois humanism cannot yield appreciable results. They cannot achieve the

objective of liquidating communal animosities, the psychological source of communal warfare.

In fact, the Congress leaders are denied the choice of adopting the *only effective method* of combating communalism *by the very logic of the class interests and the class position of the national bourgeoisie whose interests they represent.*

If the Indian National Congress to-day boldly adopted a programme of thoroughgoing agrarian reform (liquidation of landlordism, intolerable debt burden from which the agrarian masses suffer etc.), of liquidation of feudal states, and of the guaranteed living wage to the workers and decent conditions to the petty-bourgeoisie, millions of workers, peasants and middle class elements, who provide the mass basis both of Muslim and Hindu communal movements, will gravitate to and identify themselves with the Indian National Congress. This will have the effect of isolating the League and the Muslim vested interests from the Muslim masses. Sections of the Hindu masses which, poisoned by communalism, subserve as tools of mainly the Hindu feudal and semi-feudal social forces will also cease to react to communal suggestions.

How could the Muslim communal leaders carry authority with the Muslim workers and peasants when, for instance, the former is guaranteed a living wage and the latter land and liberation from heavy debt burden by the Congress Government of the Indian Union and Congress State Governments? How could the Muslim communal leaders who represent the Muslim vested interests successfully pose before the Muslim masses as the guardian of their interests, when these Congress Governments liberate in *practice* the Muslim masses from the exploitation they are suffering under landlords, money-lenders and capitalists, whether Hindu or Muslim.

The implementing of a programme reflecting the interests of the masses can, *almost with lightning rapidity*, make the masses, both Muslim and Hindu, disorient from communal organizations and movements. They will peremptorily desert communal leaders, develop a non-communal outlook, and enthusiastically rally round the Indian National Congress. The mass basis of communalism, both Hindu and Muslim, will rapidly disintegrate and dissolve. The death knell of communalism will be sounded.

IX

THE Indian National Congress is incapable of adopting such a bold programme of far-reaching reform. This is due to the historical position in which the national bourgeoisie is situated and the resultant class inhibition of the bourgeois leaders.

The national bourgeoisie cannot adopt a programme of genuine thoroughgoing liquidation of landlordism since it is economically interlocked with landed interests. The capitalists have a stake in land and the landlords have invested in industry. A part of the rent of the zamindars constitutes a portion of the basic capital engaged in industry, commerce, and finance.

The national bourgeoisie is also, due to its weak historical position, denied the glorious privilege of sweeping away the states. Princes have also invested in capitalist enterprises and are in part capitalists. The bourgeois leaders want to mend feudal autocracies, not to end them. They are engaged in the work of *rationalizing Indian feudalism* through bourgeois self-government programmes in the states which may meet the requirements of the national bourgeoisie for extended market and better facilities for economic operations in the territory of the states but leave the economic exploitation of the peasantry and petty-bourgeois population of the states untouched.

The limited economic measures regarding debts and other burdens from which the agrarian masses suffer, adopted by the Congress leadership, cannot appreciably alleviate the economic position of the masses. The national bourgeoisie cannot seek a radical solution of the heavy indebtedness of the masses because a part of the money of the bourgeoisie operates as money-lenders' capital in the agrarian area. It cannot concede the living wage to the proletariat since an economically weak bourgeoisie, lacking sufficient external or internal market, can maintain its rate of profit only *at the expense of the workers*. Economic ability to grant tolerable standards to the proletariat is the historical privilege only of a prosperous bourgeoisie which derives huge incomes from the superprofits of colonial exploitation.

Thus, the non-communal national bourgeoisie represented by the Congress cannot adopt *the only programme* which can effectively wean away sections of the masses infected with communalism from communal movements.

If the national bourgeoisie adopted and implemented such a programme, it would be acting contrary to its own vital class interests. It is the experience and the lesson of history that no class acts against its own vital interest.

The national bourgeoisie cannot thus solve effectively the problem of communalism.

Communalism among masses will steadily decline and finally disappear only in proportion that their united movements for improving their conditions grow. It will be in the process of these developing class struggles that their non-communal class unity will be forged and historically progressive non-communal class consciousness will grow. While communalism is an obstacle to the growth of the democratic and socialist movements of the masses, only the emergence and expansion of these democratic and socialist movements can counteract and destroy communalism.

The material conditions of life are increasingly prompting the masses to integrate themselves on the class basis and launch class movements for improving their daily conditions of life and labour as well as for their final socialist freedom. These movements arise from the laws of life itself and cannot be permanently sabotaged or disrupted by such a reactionary force as communalism.

REFORMS DURING THE BRITISH
RULE: THEIR CHARACTER

THE significant feature of the reforms and concessions which British imperialism initiated in accordance with its political strategy to conciliate and counterbalance various social groups in India and to disrupt or end nationalist struggles led by the national bourgeoisie lay in the fact that they were given only to different groups of Indian vested interests. Reforms like the establishment of elected legislatures on the basis of limited franchise, the inclusion of the Indians into the Viceroy's or Governors' Executive Councils, provincial autonomy, the increased Indianization of Services and others in the political sphere, and concessions like bounties, subsidies and protection to Indian industries (however tardily given) in the economic field benefited only the bourgeoisie and upper strata of the Indian society

Likewise, the grant of special electorates and the assignment of a definite number of seats for the Muslim and other minority communities, because of the limited franchise, were political gains only for the feudal and bourgeois elements of those communities, who struggled for seats in the legislatures, posts and jobs in the administrative machinery, places on government committees etc., against their powerful Hindu upper class rivals. The Indian National Congress, while it inscribed independence on its banner and mobilized and led nationalist mass movements, was at every stage prepared for a compromise with imperialism if the latter made concessions to the national bour-

* From a lecture delivered before the Marxist Study Circle in 1949.

geoisie in the political and economic fields. While claiming to fight in the interests of the Indian masses, the Congress pressed *actually* only for the demands of the national bourgeoisie. Gandhi's famous Eleven Points after the Lahore Session of the Congress of 1930, which he defined as the substance of independence and for which, if granted, he was prepared to abandon the projected Civil Disobedience Movement, comprised the principal demands of the Indian bourgeoisie such as tariff autonomy, the Haji Shipping Bill, Ratio favourable to the Indian bourgeoisie and others. The bourgeois Congress leadership never asked imperialism to liquidate feudal states or abolish landlordism. *It did not seriously press for the annulment of peasant debts or the living wage for the workers.*

British imperialism could make concessions *only* to the upper class of the Indian society and not to the Indian masses. This was because the latter were its objects of colonial exploitation and the source of its superprofits. The Indian feudalists and the bourgeoisie were, in fact, the native indigenous partners of Britain in exploitation in relation to the same masses. Every economic concession made by British imperialism to the native bourgeoisie implied that the share of the latter in the total united exploitation of the Indian masses by the foreign and Indian bourgeoisie increased. The surplus value wrung from the masses was redivided to the advantage of the native bourgeoisie.

However, it must be recognized that such economic concessions as removed the obstacle, to some extent, to the industrial development of the Indian society and helped the expansion of the general productive forces of the country, though benefitting primarily the bourgeoisie, had a progressive character. The British capitalist state in India could not make economic concessions, as mentioned above, to the Indian masses since it was only by exploiting the latter that it derived its superprofits. In fact, the history of India during the British rule is the history of more and more intensified economic exploitation of the Indian masses by British imperialism and their increased impoverishment.

British capitalism could make economic concessions to a section of the British proletariat and petty-bourgeoisie only because it derived superprofits largely from the colonies as a result of the exploitation of the colonial masses. Only a pros-

perous capitalism having colonial possessions, and the resultant extensive share of the world market as well as the sources of raw materials and, further, a huge income from capital investments abroad could have economic ability to provide the upper strata of the proletariat of its own country with a tolerable standard of life. These concessions corrupted the metropolitan proletariat, made it an easy victim of imperialist propaganda, imbued it with empire-mindedness, weakened its emotion of international class solidarity and transformed it into a supporter of imperialism and imperialist wars. They also reconciled it to the capitalist system and to its own wage slavery under that system. They kindled reformist illusions among it and a belief in a continuous improvement of its standards under the capitalist system. These illusions persist for a long period even after, due to the increasing contraction of the world market and the fall of income from other foreign sources in the imperialist epoch, the revenue of imperialist capitalism begins to decline and it is compelled steadily to attack the standards of the home proletariat to improve its competitive power in the world market. Old psychology survives long after its economic base is undermined.

This is the state of the British proletariat even to-day.

Marx and Engels had observed the growth of the demoralization of the British proletariat due to the above mentioned reason. For instance Engels remarked :—

... The British working class is actually becoming more and more bourgeois and it seems that this most bourgeois of the nations wants to bring matters to such a pass as to have a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat, *side by side* with the bourgeoisie. Of course this is to some extent justifiable for a nation which is exploiting the whole world.¹

Engels, in this connection, wrote:

You ask me what the English workers think of the colonial policy? the workers enjoy with them the fruits of the British world market and colonial monopoly.²

Lenin comments on this remark of Engels thus :

Here causes and effects are clearly shown.

(1) Exploitation of the whole world by this country;

1 Quoted by Lenin in *Imperialism*, p. 96.

2 Quoted by Lenin in *Imperialism*, p. 97.

- (2) Its monopolistic position in the world market;
- (3) its colonial monopoly.

Effects :

- (1) Bourgeoisification of a part of the British proletariat;
- (2) a part of the proletariat permits itself to be led by people who are bought by the bourgeoisie, or who at least are paid by it.³

He also remarks :

Imperialism, which means the partition of the world and the exploitation not of China alone, which means monopolistically high profits for a handful of very rich countries, creates the economic possibility of corrupting the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters opportunism.⁴

And further,

Obviously, out of such enormous *superprofits* (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their 'own' country) *it is possible to bribe* the labour leaders and an upper stratum of the labour aristocracy⁵

Again,

This stratum of bourgeoisified workers or 'Labour aristocracy' who have become completely petty-bourgeois in their mode of life, in the amounts of their earnings, and in their point of view, serves as the main support of the Second International and, in our days, the principal *social* (not military) *support of the bourgeoisie in the Labour movement*, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, the real carriers of reformism and chauvinism.⁶

To the colonial masses, however, foreign capitalism at no stage could make economic concessions since their exploitation was the source of the super-profits which gave it economic ability to maintain a fair standard of a section of the home proletariat and thereby soften the class struggle and prevent a socialist revolution at home. Colonial super-profits provided also the economic basis for the democratic regime and, civil liberties which flourished in prosperous capitalist countries which owned colonies.

3 *ibid.*, p. 97.

4 *ibid.*, p. 94.

5 *ibid.*, p. 13.

6 *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

Since the home proletariat was given a tolerable existence by the imperialist bourgeoisie due to the superprofits derived from colonies and other income from foreign sources and was thereby narcotized, there was no danger of its making a socialist use of the democratic liberties to end capitalism. Democracy thus is a political luxury which only a prosperous capitalist class could afford. But when due to the loss of colonies, the colonial superprofits begin to fall with the result that the capitalist class of the home country not only cannot maintain the standards of the home proletariat but is even forced to attack these standards due to the exigencies of inter-capitalist competition and when consequently class struggle sharpens and threatens capitalism, the capitalist class begins to liquidate democratic liberties in the home country and increasingly establishes its *open terrorist* dictatorship in the form of Fascism in place of the bourgeois democratic state.

Imperialist capitalism cannot make economic concessions to the colonial masses, can only intensify its ruthless exploitation of these masses when with the decay of the capitalist world economy, the world market for it contracts and inter-capitalist rivalries grow fiercer. It can hence never afford to instal a real democratic regime or extend full-fledged democratic liberties to the colonial people in general, to the colonial masses in particular. The forms of imperialist rule in a colony are therefore invariably dictatorial from the very beginning.

Whatever alliances and compromises Britain made in India, at various stages of its domination, were made with the upper strata of the Indian society who were her fellow-exploiters in relation to the Indian masses. Britain could not ally with or make concessions to the exploited classes such as the workers, the peasants, the tenants etc. or to the poverty stricken petty-bourgeoisie. It could only share the fruits of exploitation with various groups of Indian vested interests, feudal or capitalist. It would strike an agreement with Indian industrialists like Tata and Birla and feudalists like Rajas and Nabobs. The division of the fruits of exploitation is a domestic dispute between different groups of vested interests but all of them would be basically united against the exploited classes.

15

PROHIBITION A SOCIALIST CRITIQUE

EXTENSIVE controversy has been raging in the country over the problem whether Prohibition (prohibiting the practice of drink by state legislation) can succeed in exterminating that pernicious habit or only drive the evil underground and even aggravate it.

A former minister in the Central Cabinet has, recently, categorically expressed the view against the policy of Prohibition. This has unleashed a new controversy over the problem in the Press.

We will attempt a socialist approach to this problem. We will try to trace the social genetic causes of the urge to drink rampant among a section of the people who satisfy it legally or by clandestine methods in the extant capitalist society, why it continues to persist and is never liquidated. The problem needs a scientific sociological analysis for its correct comprehension and solution.

Excessive indulgence in alcoholic drinks has been a target of universal condemnation in all historical epochs and societies. This is natural since such indulgence increasingly undermines health, engenders psychological instability in the subject, often even economically ruins him, and also leads to anti-social consequences.

While the great harm brought about by excessive drink has been non-controversial, there has existed a divergence of opinion among critics regarding the method to be employed for combating and liquidating this pernicious practice.

* Published in *New Perspective*, August, 1957.

One school of thought has advanced the programme of a cultural campaign against drink. Those subscribing to this view suggest that the press, the platform, the school, the cinema, the stage, and other instruments of education and propaganda should be extensively utilized to explain scientifically to the people the great harm resulting from excessive drink, to create in them also an emotional revulsion from it by vivid and artistic portrayal of the baneful effects of that habit. This group is convinced that once the people comprehend the harmful consequences of abnormal drink habit, they would be impervious to the tempting call of god Bacchus.

The programme of this group of crusaders against alcoholic drinks is based on the assumption that a section of the people gravitates to drink only because they are not cognisant of its harmful consequences.

This assumption is a most preposterous assumption. The frightful physical, psychological, and economic consequences of chronic excessive drinking are so tangible, concrete, and obvious that no attention of the victim of the habit needs to be drawn to them. It is not ignorance of the diastrous results of excessive drink but their inability to abstain from reacting to it that sections of the people indulge in it in the modern society. Any one of these addicts can, if called upon, wax eloquent over the multifold catastrophic results of heavy drinking and some of them can evolve reasons and arguments which may even enrich the arsenal of propaganda of their self-chosen emancipators from the harmful habit. The addict is fully conscious of the damage done by excessive drink. He even sometimes mobilizes a determination to relinquish the habit but, in the mass, the addicts cannot give it up.

For ages, drink has been condemned through written and oral propaganda. Still the practice persists. This is because the urge to drink does not spring from any ignorance among the people of the harm wrought by alcohol. The genesis of this urge lies far deeper.

Another group of the arch-foes of god Bacchus recognizes that mere cultural campaign against drink cannot persuade the people to disorient from drink. They stand for penal legislation by the state to uproot the evil.

This is the policy of Prohibition adopted and enforced by

the Congress governments in the some Indian States.

There are a number of implications when a government enacts a law making a particular act of the citizen an offence. We will consider these implications with regard to the law prohibiting drink.

First, Prohibition implies that not the method of persuasion but coercion is adopted to combat what the government considers an evil. It implies the forcible suppression of a particular practice rampant among a section of the people affecting their own individual lives.

Secondly, Prohibition is not directed against the antisocial consequences of drink. Even before the enactment of the Prohibition law, the penal code had provided powers for the government to punish a drunk person who created public nuisance, whose antisocial behaviour ranged from murder and dacoity to a street brawl. But he was punished not because he had taken alcohol which is his private affair and which he had perfect freedom to indulge in. He was punished for the antisocial consequence of his drink. Even if a teetotaller had indulged in a street brawl, he also would have been equally punished.

The law of Prohibition punishes the citizen not for any antisocial consequence of his act of drinking but exclusively for drinking. This implies that the freedom of the individual, irrespective of whether it harms the rest of society, is suppressed. It implies that the state considers its right to interfere with the freedom of the individual even when he does not exercise that freedom to harm others, does not exercise that freedom antisocially. This implies that the state declares it its right to dictate to the citizen how he should mould his private life. If to-morrow the government considers that all amenities above the level of primary animal needs like food and clothing physically undermine and morally corrupt the citizen, it would consider it just to impose by law that concept of life on the citizens.

The individual should not be deprived of any liberty till he exercises it in an antisocial way. All those (including the government) who are aware of the baleful effects of excessive drink and who think that people drink because of their ignorance of those effects have a right to organize a cultural cam-

paign exposing them. However, it would lead to social disaster if a group or a government, however subjectively well-intentioned it be, is permitted to impose its own conception of life on the individual. The individual liberty should be curtailed, crippled, or even extinguished only when it is exercised antisocially by its possessor.

Thus state legislation banning drink is an encroachment on the private life of the individual, the infringement of his individual liberty when even that liberty is not exercised by the individual antisocially.

This creates a precedent for a government, if composed of fanatical holders of specific beliefs, to impose their own way of life on the individual citizen.

When we survey the history of various societies for centuries, we find that neither religious, 'ethical', or other cultural campaigns nor state laws proscribing the consumption of alcohol ever succeeded in suppressing the practice of drink. The extensive cultural campaign against drink organized with tremendous energy and passion by Pussyfoot in the U.S.A. even subsequently reinforced with anti-drink legislation by the U.S. government in recent times in fact proved a dismal failure. The manufacture and consumption of alcoholic drinks were only driven underground.

We will now probe into the basic reason why the drink habit among the people survives and persists in spite of the vociferous propaganda of all social reformers and the coercive measures of the state. Idealist psychologists may thereby perhaps conclude that the drink urge is an integral, immutable part of the non-varying psychic structure of at least a section of humanity. But it is not so.

The urge to drink arises out of the specific conditions of social life in which the individual is placed and lives. The urge has a social genesis.

We will investigate into the basic problem of the scientific diagnosis of the urge to drink. Why does a section of the people feel an irresistible urge to drink?

The fundamental reason why the drink habit has been rampant in the society lies in the fact that the society, as it is at present constituted, engenders unbearable tensions, stresses and strains. The individual unable to bear those pressures

seeks an escape, so that he may temporarily be oblivious of these tensions.

The present society generates poverty, misery, and intolerable conditions of life for the toiling masses who are condemned to live in conditions of semi-starvation, are imprisoned in slums, denied joyous normal family life as well as higher cultural recreations. A section of them gravitates to the dramshop to drown their agony temporarily in a glass of alcoholic drink.

The lower classes drink because of the terrible tensions which they experience due to the brutal exploitation they are subjected to under the capitalist-landlord system and the resultant conditions of material and cultural misery in which they live.

The upper classes — the capitalists, the landlords and other groups of exploiters — drink because they are unproductive, parasitical, and not creative classes of society. The very structure of their consciousness determined by their position in society as exploiters of labour makes it impossible for them to derive joys from higher creative activity. Their life is full of boredom. Some of them seek to relieve that boredom through drink, some through horse-breeding, some in gambling at stock exchange, others in a world trip or other devices.

Thus sections of the lower as well as the upper classes drink because of the conditions engendered by the existing capitalist society.

Also in the capitalist society, as the workers are the victims of exploitation at the hands of the capitalists, the capitalists are the victims of the vicissitudes of the market. Both feel tensions though springing from different species of anxieties.

These tensions arise out of the capitalist organization of society and will continue while that society persists.

Till then, sections of the population will resort to devices of temporary exit from those tensions, such as alcoholic drinks, opium, cocaine, morphia, gambling and others, legally or by clandestine means.

A small section of the people who possesses a high degree of intellectual and emotional sensitiveness recoil from such gross physical means of-escape. Instead, they resort to spiritual means such as mystical, religious philosophies and find escape.

Even for the masses, crude religion has served as a spirit-

ual means of escape from the intolerable pressures of life arising out of the social soil of exploitative class society. Hence Marx branded religion as the opium of the people.

No amount of cultural campaign will succeed in weaning away the victims (in the mass, though individuals may be reclaimed) from the harmful habit. State interdicting of drink will only drive them to devise clandestine means of manufacture and consumption.

Thus the urge to drink has a social-genetic cause. Anti-drink campaign or Prohibition laws will prove ineffective since they pursue a line of symptomatic treatment. The exponents of both these methods are unable to make a social scientific analysis of the causes of the urge to drink among the people. They are therefore not armed with a scientific diagnosis. Hence their prescriptions are utopian and efforts to suppress the drink practice abortive.

Regarding the toiling masses, Bakunin once remarked that there were three solutions of their excruciating misery arising out of their life conditions in the capitalist society. Alcohol and religion are the two imaginary solutions of their misery. Alcohol gives temporary relief to them though at the expense of physiological and psychological health. Religion serves as a perennial anaesthetic, unfolding before the masses visions of plenty to be secured in the fictitious other world after death thereby making them oblivious of or bear meekly the misery in the present real world. Religion even instigates the suffering toiler to imagine that he is the living manifestation of God himself, though, in real life, he is a wage or a salaried slave of the capitalist or a tenant bondsman of the zamindar.

These are, Bakunin remarks, imaginary solutions of the real misery of the masses. The real solution of this misery is the replacement of the present capitalist-landlord social system by a classless socialist society based on the abolition of the exploitation of man by man through a social revolution.¹

A socialist society will not only end exploitation of man by man but, through a planned and maximum utilization of gigantic productive forces of society already developed to-day, will generate plenty and thereby eliminate both material and cultural

1 Refer : Bakunin, *God and the State*.

poverty from which the people are at present suffering.

In such a society alone, tensions which drive people to alcohol and religion would disappear. For, life itself will be so exhilarating that man will not pine for harmful intoxicants, material or spiritual.

Drink habit, prostitution, stock exchange, and other evils are the products of the existing society. They can vanish only when the present society which, being as it is, can only generate poverty, neurosis, tensions of all sorts, is replaced by one which, being as it will be, cannot generate these phenomena. Such a society can only be a socialist society.

16

MARXISM AND THE TACTIC OF THE UNITED FRONT

THE tactic of the united front with specific political parties is the indispensable and historically unavoidable means for the Marxist socialist parties to unfold, develop, and bring to a triumphant conclusion the struggles of the subject peoples and exploited classes for their democratic and socialist liberation. We will endeavour to explain why such a tactic becomes the arch-necessity.

Though subject peoples and exploited classes constantly feel a spontaneous urge for democratic and socialist freedom, they have no comprehension, at the outset, of the correct historical road to that freedom. Consequently, they come under the political and ideological influence of parties other than the one which is armed with a scientific social theory (Marxism) and, hence, has a correct understanding of the route to the objective of freedom.

Since other political parties, in varying degrees, have, in initial stages, hold over sections of the masses, it becomes necessary for the Marxist socialist party to enter into a united front with those parties, both for building up a united struggle of the masses for episodic demands as well as for reaching out to those sections (which follow other parties) and win them over to its own ideology, programme and policies. Not to enter into a united front with other parties which have mass influence, merely because they are reformist or even reactionary, would be a sectarian error on the part of the Marxist socialist party.

* Published in *New Perspective*, May-June, 1957.

Such refusal would result in its isolation from sections of the masses which follow those parties, into handing them over to be misled and even betrayed by the latter. By such refusal to enter the united front, the party would also run the risk of being branded as the disrupter of the unity of the masses necessary for a united struggle to achieve their demands.

The crucial problem, however, is on what conditions the Marxist socialist party should enter into the united front with other parties and how it should function within it. We will restrict our discussion of this problem to the united front with other parties only in democratic (and not socialist) struggles (e.g. the national liberation struggle and the struggle for linguistic states).

In contrast to socialism which is the class objective of the propertyless proletariat, a democratic demand is a progressive multi-class demand and hence requires for its achievement a united front of many classes. Thus for instance, national independence from British imperialism was a multi-class objective since all classes of the Indian society — the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie — except the princes and the zamindars found in imperialist domination an obstacle to their free development and hence they desired to remove it.

Similarly the struggle for linguistic states is a multi-class democratic struggle of many classes including the bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry and others, of a particular region. These classes comprise a social group speaking the same language and living a common life. This multi-class group feels an irresistible urge to be territorially integrated into a distinct single state.

The victory of such democratic struggles demands as its prerequisite the united front of all those classes which comprise the nation or a linguistic group. It must be noted that in the struggle for national liberation, each of the classes comprising the national united front has its own class reason for winning independence and class interpretation of that independence. For instance, to the socialist working class of India national liberation was not an end in itself but only a historically inescapable milestone to the terminus of a socialist India.

Since the ultimate objective of the proletariat is socialism, it subordinates all struggles for democratic demands (national

liberation, linguistic states, and others) to its class objective of socialism. Consequently its party, the Marxist socialist party, too pursues in the united front a line in conformity with the final objective of the class which it represents. While most heroically fighting for the democratic demand, for instance that of the linguistic state, it modulates its propaganda and methods of struggle to realise that immediate democratic demand from the standpoint of the attainment of the ultimate proletarian objective of socialism. In its propaganda on the united front platform, while summoning the entire people to fight for the democratic demand of the linguistic state which, though non-socialist, is a progressive demand, it explains, for propaganda — and only for propaganda purpose to the exploited classes of the region that their final objective is socialism (for instance, a socialist Maharashtra or a socialist Gujarat as integral parts of a socialist India) and that such a multi-class struggle for the immediate democratic demand of the linguistic state does not conflict with the united struggle of the exploited classes of both Gujarat and Maharashtra for socialism, nay, only strengthens it.

It also clarifies that the struggle for the linguistic state does not weaken national unity but only consolidates it by rearranging the unity of the parts of the national community rationally so that all parts (social aggregates speaking different languages comprising the nation) may secure conditions for free self-expression.

The Marxist socialist party does not impose socialism as the objective on the united front comprising many classes all of which except the proletariat alone will be, due to their specific class interests, non-socialist, even anti-socialist (peasant-proprietors, petty-bourgeoisie). The multi-class united front struggles only for the limited but historically progressive democratic demand for the linguistic state.

However, the Marxist socialist party enters into the united front as the representative of a distinct class, distinguishing itself from other class allies. While uniting with those classes, it delimits itself organizationally, politically and ideologically from them. It enters the political combine as a distinct class party of the proletariat with its own distinctive flag, ideology, programme, and methods of struggle for realizing the democratic demand of the linguistic state. It reinforces the bourgeois and

petti-bourgeois methods of struggle of the allies with its own distinctive class methods of struggle.

A Marxist socialist party is exposed to the danger of committing two types of errors while realizing the tactic of the united front in the struggle for a democratic demand. We will explain this more concretely.

The party may forget that the united front is a multi-class front for the limited objective of achieving the democratic demand, for instance that of the linguistic state, and may demand that the front should adopt the objective of socialism.

This would mean the perpetration of a sectarian error resulting in the dissolution of the united front and, therefore, of the united multi-class endeavour for realizing the democratic demand.

Such a sectarian error will harm also the interests of the general socialist movement since the realization of such a democratic task as that of the winning of linguistic states is vital for eliminating inter-provincial animosities which obstruct the achievement of the class unity of the exploited masses of all regions for the united socialist struggle.

The other error, which is more likely and which has been committed by the different socialist parties which entered into a united front with non-socialist parties in the form of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and the Maha Gujerat Parishad, is that of not retaining their distinctive individuality as *socialist* parties even while fighting for the democratic demand of the linguistic state in alliance with non-socialist parties. When these socialist parties entered into the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and the Maha Gujerat Parishad, they did not function within them as *socialist* parties distinguishing themselves from bourgeois and petti-bourgeois parties with whom they had united.

They completely dissolved themselves into the milieu and could hardly be differentiated from the parties of the non-proletarian classes in their propaganda and methods of struggle.

It is true that these parties (for instance the CPI, the PSP, the MKP in the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and the CPI, the PSP and others in the Māha Gujarat Parishad) showed more militancy and greater determination in the movements. Still they could not be qualitatively distinguished from the non-

socialist allies (dissident Congressmen, peasant parties, Hindu Mahasabha) in their propaganda and methods of struggle.

When a socialist party cannot be distinguished from its non-socialist allies even in the struggle for a democratic objective, it plays only the role of the left wing (however militant) of the bourgeois ally. It ceases to be a socialist working class party when it does not sound on the united front platform and in the democratic movement a distinct proletarian class note.

While entering the united front for achieving the democratic demand of the linguistic state, the socialist party should retain its right of its own type of propaganda in support of the linguistic state. As the socialist party of the proletariat it is obligatory for it (unless it wants to become the mere left wing of the regional bourgeoisie) to sound a class note, to clarify that the demand for the linguistic state, is, among other reasons, vital to liquidate inter-provincial animosities and to forge the fraternal unity of the exploited masses of all regions for a united struggle for socialist India.

The socialist party should skilfully link the struggle for the multi-class democratic demand with the ultimate (and only as ultimate) objective of socialism. The non-socialist objective of the united front is multi-class, democratic, historically progressive and, therefore, should be strictly adhered to by the socialist party. However, as a working class party in the political amalgam, it should link its propaganda for the democratic demand of the linguistic state with the ultimate goal of socialism, with the basic common interest of the exploited classes of all regions expressed in that goal.

When the class note is not sounded by the socialist party in its propaganda in the democratic movement, regional consciousness becomes universal providing fertile ground for the regional bourgeoisie to foment inter-provincial hatreds. The class consciousness of the exploited classes of all regions as also their consciousness of the objectively existing unity of their basic interests are obscured and their united multi-regional struggle for socialism depending upon these suffers a retrogression.

Such has been the tragic situation in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Such democratic movements can either retard or accelerate the socialist movement. When the socialist parties dissolve their distinctive working class character in the united

front multi-class milieu, when they restrict their propaganda only to the immediate demand of a linguistic state and not link it with the ultimate goal of socialism, they hand over the exploited classes to the political and ideological influence of the regional bourgeoisie. In the absence of a class note, the exploited masses fall into the grip of the regional consciousness and their fundamental class consciousness weakens. The Gujarati or Maharashtrian worker feels more vividly as a Gujarati or a Maharashtrian and not, what more fundamentally he is, viz. a worker. The class is a more fundamental social aggregate than a regional one, since the interests of the class are monolithic, organic and always objectively one. Those of the classes comprising a multi-class regional social aggregate are, on the other hand, divergent except when they are denied autonomous regional existence.

When the movement for the linguistic state is conducted in the spirit of the bourgeois ideology, when the socialist party which participates in it does not explain to the exploited masses its limited relative significance, does not elucidate it as a step towards the socialist objective, does not link up the immediate democratic demand with the objective of socialism, the party functions merely as the left wing of the bourgeoisie even though it might be leading that struggle.

In the absence of a class note, as we observed above, there is a danger of the growth of exclusive regional consciousness obscuring the class consciousness of the exploited masses of all regions. It is vitally necessary to sound a class note and link the struggle for the democratic demand with the objective of socialism even for maintaining and strengthening the democratic movement. The exploited classes fight more enthusiastically in the democratic struggle when they recognize the democratic struggle as a step towards their socialist class liberation.

The multi-class national liberation movement started by the Indian National Congress could draw the peasant masses into its orbit precisely because its leader, Gandhi, formulated the programme of their immediate demands. A democratic movement cannot be maintained for ever purely on the basis of a political democratic demand. Political power is a means for a class for advancing its own class interest. For a perennial support of the exploited masses, the movement for the linguistic

state must have an economic programme for the masses. Otherwise, the movement will steadily lose its mass support. Even if the enthusiasm of the masses is kept alive by mere political appeal, in the absence of a class note this would only obscure their class consciousness and develop in them purely regional consciousness.

Further, the socialist party should adopt specific proletarian methods of struggle to achieve the democratic demand. Workers' strikes and peasant mass movement should be its specific contribution to the arsenal of the multi-class methods of struggle adopted by the united front for attaining the democratic objective.

A socialist party while participating in the democratic movement subordinates the latter to the interests of the socialist movement. The keeping alive and development of class consciousness of the proletariat and the toiling peasantry is the vital prerequisite for the advance of the socialist movement. To abstain from sounding a class note in the democratic movement is to strengthen regional consciousness at the expense of class consciousness. In the final analysis, it means weakening of the immediate struggle for the linguistic state itself as well as harming the general nationwide struggle for socialism.

Let the bourgeoisie follow the bourgeois ideology while participating in the united front. The proletarian parties should however follow the proletarian ideology not only for making the immediate democratic movement more effective but also in the interest of the socialist movement.

BRAZEN DECEPTION

THE Indian National Congress, the classical party of the Indian bourgeoisie, has been, since its Avadi session, declaring from housetop amidst loud fanfare and trumpeting that it has socialism as its objective and the programme for which it will be working will be the establishment of "a socialist pattern of society" in India.

This sudden and categorical adoption of the goal of socialism by the capitalist Congress, which has tirelessly and with consummate political skill, worked for the last seventy years, under the helmsmanship of the Liberals, the Militant Nationals subsequently Gandhi, and at present Nehru, for the expansion of Indian capitalism and the aggrandizement of the Indian bourgeoisie even while it was organizing national-reformist opposition to British imperialism (the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements), is too self-contradictory to be true.

It would be a miracle if a political party, which has been working with ideal consistency for decades for the capitalist class and which, therefore, is the party of the capitalist class, were to undergo a metamorphosis and be transformed into a party of the propertyless proletariat, i.e. a party working for socialism. Such miracles do not occur in real life. A party which has been initiated and organized by the capitalists can never feel even the feeblest urge — such is the lesson of history and life — to weaken and destroy capitalism. Such mutations are unknown to history.

So when such a capitalist party as the Indian National

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Congress declares sanctimoniously that its future objective and programme are a progressive transformation of a capitalist India into a socialist India, it can only signify that it needs, due to the historical situation in which it finds itself, to put on a disguise. It needs to mask its capitalist objective under a socialist garb. Such a mask becomes necessary under the pressure of historical circumstances (the accentuated crisis of the capitalist economy, aggravation of the material misery of the masses, growing unemployment, mounting discontent of the toiling people expressed in advancing strike struggles and, above all, the resultant mass recognition of and orientation to socialism as the only way out of the crisis). In short, it needs to pose as socialist whereas it is blatantly capitalist.

What are the historical reasons which have constrained the capitalist Congress to masquerade as a socialist organization? For this, a survey of the contemporary Indian and international scene is obviously necessary.

It must, however, be noted first that till its recent adoption the Indian National Congress did not fix socialism as its declared objective. During the Liberal, Militant Nationalist, and Gandhian phases of its existence it candidly stated that it was working for a free prosperous capitalist India.

It is true that during the Gandhian phase a socialist wing developed within the Congress ("The Congress Socialist Party"), but such an alien growth, however, mild pink and not red, could not be accommodated by it and after a brief period of paradoxical existence within the capitalist party, the socialist alien elements were outside that organization.

It was the pressure of the growing socialist working class movement for the last over three decades that forced the Congress to periodically adapt itself to that pressure by increasingly posing as a friend of the working masses while retaining its basic capitalist identity. It was the developing strike struggles of the socialist working class and anti-landlord class struggles of the kisans which prompted astute bourgeois Gandhi to formulate the Karachi Resolution of the Congress embodying some demands of the masses in 1931. After the end of the Second World War, when due to increased economic suffering great mass actions of the workers, the peasants and toiling strata of the urban population swept over the country, the Congress,

under their impact, declared as its objective a capitalist welfare state in India. It must also be remembered that when, during the British period, the Congress formed governments in various provinces (in 1937) they, as governments of the capitalist class, used state violence even against the mass movements which had the limited objective of improving the conditions of the masses within the framework of capitalism and not that of socialism. After independence, the Congress governments, in the states as well as at the centre, have, as is universally known, used force to curb the mass struggles not only for socialism but even for wage increases, against rationalization and for such other limited demands.

And it is as it should be. How can the Congress, the party of Indian capitalism, desert its own class of which it is the conscious all-comprehensive expression? The classic consistency with which the Congress has guarded the basic interests of the Indian bourgeoisie both against foreign imperialism and the Indian masses whom the latter also exploits, is eloquent testimony of its fundamental bourgeois class character.

The pressure of the increasingly deepening and broadening mass movements and the resultant aggravated danger to the very existence of the capitalist system has compelled the Congress to exercise periodically adroit manoeuvres and put on different masks for posing as a party of the masses, according to varying degrees of danger in different historical situations. In the Liberal phase (1885-1905) it stood for *laissez faire* in capitalist India. During the phase of Militant Nationalism it advocated a fighting programme of Swadeshi. During the Gandhian phase, while consistently supporting a programme of capitalist economic development, it adumbrated a programme, and a programme only, for reformist concessions to the masses within the framework of the capitalist system. During the post-War period till its Avadi session, it was the exponent of a welfare capitalist state for India. Now it has been making a spectacular declaration that it stands for the goal of socialism or rather of a nebulous socialist pattern of society which really signifies only a variant of capitalism (state capitalism).

As stated above, the magnitude and the intensity of the anti-capitalist mass movement and the consequent degree of danger to capitalism has determined the nature of the camou-

flage, the physiognomy of the pose, which the Congress has adopted in different situations to deceive the masses. Its latest socialist masquerade can be easily explained by the fact that it is induced by the mounting discontent among the masses in our country at present born of their intolerable economic misery which shows no abatement but threatens to still worsen (the economic burdens of the Second Five-Year Plan and others) *and* the cyclonic spread of socialist ideas among the people. The capitalist Congress desires to steal the thunder from the real socialist parties of the Indian working class and inscribe on its banner the slogan of socialism to deceive the people who are increasingly gravitating to parties of socialism. *It is exactly because the danger of socialism becomes real to capitalism that the party of the capitalist class, by historical irony, itself comes forward posing as the executioner of capitalism and the protagonist of socialism.*

Thus did the Nazi Party in Germany, the party of German monopoly capitalism, while it and the government formed by it suppressed, with a ferocity unheard of in history, the socialist movement, sailed under the banner on which the slogan of socialism was inscribed. While defending monopoly capitalism and shooting down and torturing tens of thousands of fighters for socialism, it itself shouted the slogan of "Down with capitalism". Brazen demagoguery and crass lying reinforced terrorism.

The degree of deception required by the exploiting class to be practised on the people varies directly as the degree of threat to its existence. The socialist camouflage which the capitalist Congress has now put on is the negative measure of and mirrors directly the positive danger to Indian capitalism from the grave mass discontent among the people and their increasing conviction that socialism is the *only* solution of their excruciating misery.

There is also another *international* reason for the most recent political-physiognomical acrobatic executed by the capitalist Congress. After the Second World War, capitalism has been defeated in large zones of the globe such as China, East European countries and Yugoslavia. Though bureaucratic Stalinist regimes in varied degrees have emerged in those lands, capitalist property relations have been appreciably overturned. Thus the correlation of forces of capitalism and socialism on

a global scale has changed in favour of socialism. The pressure of this triumphant advance of the world socialist movement *in however deformed form* also explains why the capitalist Congress has decided to pretend as socialist.

The fraud practised by this party of Truth and Non-violence is obvious. The Congress governments, both at the centre and in the states, are engaged in suppressing daily even economic strikes and other struggles of the toiling sections of the people. They have been elaborating state capitalist economic programmes and aiding private capital to maintain the rate of profit. In fact they are engaged, by means of economic and state measures, in desperately defending moribund capitalism against the rising tide of mass movement and are evolving schemes to consolidate it. Their hands are stained with the blood of heroic working class and kisan fighters. Still the Congress brazenly glorifies itself as the party of socialism.

It is brazen deception of the Indian people.

18

BASIC TASK BEFORE INDIAN MARXISTS

THE Indian Marxists are confronted with numerous, complex, and formidable tasks in the present historical situation. The fate of the Indian people and the direction of development of the Indian society either towards further capitalist decay or its socialist regeneration depend upon the successful resolution of these crucial historical tasks.

The fundamental fact of the Indian society which the Marxists have to keep constantly before their mind is that it *cannot materially, socially, and culturally advance to a higher level except on a socialist basis*. Its higher upward movement in the economic, social, and cultural domains will begin *only after the working class leading all exploited classes has secured political power* and has begun to transform the present increasingly decaying capitalist society into a socialist society.

Due to historical reasons, the Indian bourgeoisie is incapable of resolving the economic, social, and cultural problems of the national crisis. This is precisely because these problems cannot be solved on the basis of capitalism and the bourgeoisie cannot liquidate capitalism since its very existence is bound up with the existence of capitalism. It is making desperate efforts through such devices as Five-Year Plans and Community Projects to stabilize and further develop the national capitalist economy. Some of its own spokesmen, however, admit the failure of these programmes (for instance the Report on Community Projects) either to develop *symmetrically* the national

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economy¹ or improve the conditions of the poverty-stricken strata of the people. These plans and programmes, to the bewilderment of the bourgeois leaders themselves, have only aggravated the poverty of the masses, increased unemployment, accentuated the polarization of classes both in the urban and the rural areas and, as a result, unfolded the perspective of big economic and political mass struggles in the country.

In fact, the struggles have been already breaking out and daily increasing in number and intensity. Workers, peasants, clerks, teachers, railway employees, and other sections of the toiling population are restless and, under the pressure of increasing economic suffering, have been advancing on the road of struggle.

But for the victory of the socialist movement a number of prerequisites are needed. Material misery is one of them. Psychological ferment among the toiling people is another. Spontaneous action of the suffering people at economic and political levels as are rampant in the country today is still one more. But these do not suffice.

The most vital prerequisite which can assure the transformation of these sporadic, uncoordinated, economic and political struggles of the masses into a countrywide socialist movement is a strong, well-knit, and ramified Marxist socialist party headed by a leadership well rooted in the science of Marxism, which has a historical vision, can decode the full import of the significant events breaking out with astounding rapidity both in the Indian and international worlds, and which, on the basis of a scientific understanding of these events, evolve appropriate strategy, tactics, and forms of action to develop the socialist movement in the country.

There are a number of parties which subscribe to the goal

1 It is true that primarily by means of foreign financial aid expansion of the Indian economy has taken place. But this expansion has not a normal character. Unlike in Britain and other West European capitalist countries during the rising phase of capitalism, it is not reflected in the progressive rise of the living standards of the working population. Further it suffers from internal contradictions e.g. that between heavy industries and light industries, industry and agriculture, and others.

of socialism but most of them hardly know the historical road to that goal. This is precisely because most of them are not Marxist parties. Only a Marxist Party guided by the science of Marxism can inject a conscious socialist purpose in the spontaneous movement of the masses and lead it, through stages, to the goal of political power and the subsequent establishment of a socialist society.

The Praja Socialist Party is a congeries of groups with heterogeneous ideologies reflecting the various strata of the upper petty-bourgeoisie and even the lower layer of the bourgeoisie on which it is predominantly based. As the crisis deepens and struggles develop, such a party can only progressively split.

The Socialist Party led by Dr. Lohia, who is engaged in intrepid ideological experimentations of fabricating an amalgam of Marxism and Gandhism (one a proletarian and another a bourgeois ideology!), too, in spite of its launching and leading some mass movements, cannot develop out of these movements a historically formidable socialist movement. The party takes up with equal gravity the peasant programmes with that of the demolition of the statues of hated Britishers. Such a petty-bourgeois party, too, can only disintegrate, one section of it migrating to the camp of the proletariat and joining its authentic Marxist Party. The Communist Party of India (though subscribing to Marxism) has been basically following a class collaborationist line. It has declared its "critical" support and cooperation with the national bourgeoisie to make Five-Year Plans a success. Now that it has formed a Government in Kerala, it will practise its policy of class collaboration at a state level. The communist government in Kerala has already invited monopolist capitalists like Birla and others to invest their capital in Kerala, i.e. extend their field of exploitation to the communist-governed state of Kerala. It must be noted that the Kerala state is not a sovereign state but a subsidiary arm of the sovereign bourgeois state of the Indian Union which the bourgeoisie controls.

Such a party like the CPI, which exhibits anxiety for the development of a capitalist economy in India and promises its co-operation to the Indian bourgeoisie, can hardly be relied upon to organize and develop the struggle for the elimination of capitalism.

Contraposed to these parties, however, there exist in the country a number of *more or less* genuine Marxist Parties and groups, such as the Revolutionary Socialist Party and others. The RSP is by far the biggest among them. These parties and groups have successfully resisted for years the lure and trap of Stalinism. They are based on more or less authentic Marxist ideology and have, in spite of often defective tactics (the Right opportunist errors of the R.S.P.), a correct conception of the general strategy of the socialist movement. Further they have a programme based substantially on a Marxist comprehension of the Indian and the world situation.

When political parties have a common ideology, strategy and programme, their organizational separateness is an impermissible anomaly. The logical integration of all these parties and groups into a single Marxist party is only held up by secondary or irrelevant causes, such as sometimes the party ego and inertia.

The fundamental prerequisite for the growth of a powerful socialist movement in the country, as observed earlier, is the existence of a strong Marxist Party. In the absence of such a party, the bourgeois Congress is still flourishing and strong. Its strength rests mainly on a negative basis, the absence of such a Marxist Party which alone can lead the socialist mass movement, thereby saving the Indian society from further decay and degeneration.

The historical responsibility of the Indian Marxists is colossal. They are confronted with stupendous tasks on the ideological, political, and practical mass struggle fronts. In the ideological domain, they have to defeat the massive attempt of the bourgeoisie to revive and mobilise past reactionary Indian culture (in essence religious) for diverting the masses from the concept and practice of consistent class struggle. They have also to counteract the distorted "Marxism" of the CPI which parades class collaboration as class struggle. They have to spread true Marxism, the indispensable ideological weapon of the development and victory of the socialist movement. In the political sphere all movements of the toiling people, which spontaneously break out under the impact of their material suffering but which remain within the limited *economic* strait-jacket, have to be lifted to a *political* plane and injected with

a conscious socialist purpose.

These tasks can be accomplished only by a Marxist socialist party of the classical type, which is ideologically uncompromising, and which has a correct historical perspective and programme. Any ideological looseness in the present period of complex and fateful historical happenings both in the Indian and international worlds would be disastrous. Flexible tactics (not to be confounded with opportunist tactics) but ideological rigidity are needed for the development of the socialist mass movement.

The objective movement of history is extremely favourable for the steady growth of such a party. The perspective is that of increasing growth of the contradictions and resultant disintegration of the capitalist economy. More and more strata of the people are being disillusioned regarding any hope of resolving their vital problems within the matrix of capitalism, are even taking to the road of struggle. But the movement is still spontaneous, blind. Only a Marxist party can make it conscious and lead it to the socialist goal. Such a party is the fundamental prerequisite of the growth and the victory of the socialist movement today.

Its formation is the supreme task of the Indian Marxists.

19

AARAM HARAM HAI

PANDIT Jawaharlal Nehru, the resourceful and redoubtable architect of a number of heart-catching and scintillating slogans, has recently evolved and broadcast one more slogan viz. "Aaram Haram Hai". He has exhorted the Indian people to gird up their loins and perennially engage themselves in strenuous work, so that India may be transformed into a land of material prosperity and the Indian people liberated from the extant heart-breaking poverty. "All abstinence from work", he declares with a crusader's passion, "is treason against the nation, black treachery against the country."

The passionate call to the Indian people by Pandit Nehru that they should discard laziness and hitch their energies to the wagon of work would inevitably tend to create the impression that our country is peopled by a preponderant number of sluggards who suffer from a chronic urge of recoil from work and live the life of parasites. Does this view correspond to reality?

A socio-economic analysis of the Indian people would reveal that about ninety-seven to ninety-eight per cent of them are engaged in ceaseless and strenuous toil as workers, peasants, land labourers, teachers, clerks, mechanics, engineers, doctors, shop-keepers, pedlars, and numerous other working categories. If anything is striking about them, it is not that they do not work but that they overwork and derive miserable incomes not sufficient even to meet the elementary needs of life. When Nehru addresses his appeal to work to these tens of millions who sweat and starve, it is tantamount to a libel on them, a veritable mockery of their toil.

Surely there is a large population in the country which remains unemployed but their abstinence from work is not

deliberate but only enforced. These millions are callously denied the human right to work by the existing capitalist society and the capitalist state and their daily life, therefore, becomes a constant agonizing search for work.

Thus, the strident call to work eloquently given by Pandit Nehru could not obviously be addressed either to these sweating, overworked millions or to the additional millions who chase but do not secure work. Then whom is his moral patriotic summons exhorted to? The only social groups which survive after these tens of millions, employed and unemployed, constituting ninety-eight per cent of the population, are those of capitalists, landlords, usurers, and other exploiters. It is true that this microscopic minority is not inclined to or is guilty of perpetrating any sort of productive work. How is it then able to successfully evade the necessity to work? What is the genetic reason thereof? It is only because they own the means of production — the basic prerequisite of all production — and hence can live by exploiting the labour of others. If this class of idlers are to be drawn within the orbit of productive labour, they should be expropriated of this ownership, which is the very condition of transforming them from lazy, exploiting, parasitic humans into productive workers. But this signifies genuine socialism, not its counterfeit variant viz. the 'Socialist pattern of society' propagated by the bourgeois Congress.

Pandit Nehru's clarion call to the people for work is thus irrelevant for its overwhelming section who are already overworked or do not secure work in spite of the agonizing search for it and it only proves futile in the case of the minority of property owners. It is talking in air without any context to reality. It is even worse than irrelevant or inane, for, it only — if the trap succeeded — would decoy the actually working population into working more energetically for the exploiters.

20

“EARN WHILE YOU LEARN”

THE “friends” and the “benefactors” of the student community have been, in recent times, propagating with exceptional zeal the ideal of an earning student. The students should not, they declare, be an economic encumbrance on their parents or guardians, especially in the present hard times when the equilibrium of the family budget is in a permanently unstable and precarious state. They should cease to be “economic parasites” which, they remark, the non-earning students are but should pick up the job of a salaried or even a wage worker and meet honestly and bravely the expenses of their maintenance and education.

To rouse the students to such a glorious and honest effort, these honorary counsellors of the students eloquently brandish their finger at the Western countries, especially to the U. S. A., where a large number of students disdain to remain economically dependent on others and make their own livelihood by engaging themselves even in such strenuous work as that of hotel boys or farm labourers. Some of these students, they assert, even rise in their subsequent life to the status of statesmen and millionaires since they are self-reliant from the start, appreciate the dignity of labour, and choose to work even while they study.

The protagonists of this new concept of an ideal student enumerate in glowing terms the advantages of such a life which combines in itself both study and earning. First, the earning student feels the thrill of economic independence which the non-earning student is denied. Secondly, such a life results in the all-sided development of his personality since it signifies the union of academic education with productive labour. Thirdly,

such a student thereby fulfils his obligation as a citizen to the country by participating in its socio-economic life. Hence, he also develops the qualities and the virtues which would help him to be a model citizen after he has completed his education. These are only a few of the golden benefits reaped by a student when he earns while he learns.

We will now critically examine the implications of this counsel.

The universally recognized objective of education is to prepare the young generation for participating in the various activities of society, social, economic, administrative, and others which the old generation carries on at present and which the present young generation will perform when it supersedes the old one. The student phase of life is only a preparatory phase in the life of a member of society during which he assimilates, through education, culture, technical skill and professional knowledge, making him thereby fit to perform efficiently the type of work (within the matrix of the social division of labour which sustains society) which he takes to after he finishes his studies. This education is the prerequisite for a citizen to be able to function effectively in a domain of social life when he is an adult. To exhort students to engage in work and be distracted, while they are studying, would only result in providing inefficient labour, manual or intellectual, to society in future. Students are only potential and future workers. Their task, in the student phase, is *not* to hurry to perform various forms of work which maintain society and which requires professional knowledge and technical skill but to concentrate exclusively on studies which arm them with such knowledge and skill and thus prepare them for future work.

The propagandists of the slogan "Earn while you learn" further bypass the grim fact that large-scale unemployment is already rampant in the country at present. In every domain of social life, even talented people are without jobs. To advise students to seek work would only further aggravate the problem of unemployment. From the plebian world of boot-blacks, *hamals*, and hotel boys to the less plebian world of clerks, typists, and teachers, a fierce competitive struggle is at present raging, intensifying every day. A student securing a job would

only be precluding another candidate from having it. The jobs are few, the demand insatiable.

Further, it must be remembered that in the existing capitalist economic environment all work is slavery. Both wage workers and salaried employees are exploited by the capitalist bosses. They work for the profit of the latter. To advise students to take up jobs by invoking the principles of "the dignity of labour" and "economic independence" is equivalent to advising them to engage themselves in the barbarous competitive struggle in the labour market and to hand them over to capitalist exploitation at a tender age. The student competitors for jobs would swell the supply of labour and thereby only lower the price of labour of a manual worker or a teacher or a typist or a clerk in the labour market, to the advantage of the capitalist purchasers of labour.

Regarding "the dignity of labour", it is a myth under capitalism where all labour is exploited and is slave labour. To preach the concept of the dignity of labour to workers, both wage and salaried, is to blind them to the fact that they are exploited by the capitalists and are only means of profit production. Under capitalism, "the dignity of labour" is the most treacherous pro-capitalist slogan. It is cruel mockery of those who labour under exploitative capitalist conditions.

What, however, shocks one most is the presumptuousness of these "friends" and "benefactors" of students who sidestep the crucial fact that a student who earnestly consecrates himself to his studies can hardly spare time to perform any job, part-time or whole-time. The massive curricula prescribed for the examination need many hours per day to go through them adequately. Text books are sparse and the student has to go in hunt for them. Hardly any time remains after he has efficiently attended to his studies both at home and in school. Besides studies, a student should be expected to gather general knowledge and assimilate existing culture so that he can develop a scientific vision and a correct perspective of the world surrounding him. This would help him, when he has completed his studies, to critically evaluate extant social institutions and contribute to the work of progressive social reconstruction. To advise him to take up a job and earn his livelihood in addition to his studies means only to debar him from assimilating culture

and thus sabotage his intellectual and emotional development and growth of noble idealistic social urges.

Why is the slogan "Earn while you learn" preached with particular emphasis by the defenders of the capitalist *status quo* in the present situation? The economic crisis of the Indian capitalist system (in spite of Five-Year Plans) is deepening at a staggering rate resulting in increasing unemployment and decline of *real* incomes even of those who are employed. With the steady dwindling of the family revenue and the growing cost of education, it is difficult for the family to defray the expenses of the education of the young. Hence the growing inexorable necessity of dispensing with either the education of the young altogether or reinforcing the family resources with the earning of the young who, while studying, may take to remunerative work. This brutal necessity of earning while learning is *idealized* and *glorified* by the preachers of the slogan "Earn while you learn". Instead of pointing their accusing finger to the present capitalist social system which, in crisis, reduces the family income thereby making the education of the young impossible unless they too labour at a tender age even at the expense of studies and be drawn into the inhuman competitive struggle for jobs under capitalism, these defenders of the capitalist social order evolve and extol the ideal of an Earner Student and exhort students to follow it.

21

EPOCH OF IMPERIALISM

IN the present epoch of imperialism, the productive forces of the world capitalist system have come in irreconcilable collision with the capitalist production i.e. property relations. In the pre-imperialist phase of capitalism, the economic crisis brought about between the expanding production and available market was overcome by the extension of market since entire continents were not brought as yet within the operations of capitalism. Surplus capital, too, could be exported to new countries. In the epoch of imperialism, when the whole world was partitioned between principal dominant capitalist powers, such a solution was not possible due to the socio-geographical limits of the terrestrial globe. The available economic territory at the disposal of capitalist countries for exploitation also further contracted due to the emergence of the socialist Soviet Union. The ever developing productive forces of capitalism continue to be stifled by the capitalist property relations. The contradiction between the productive forces and the capitalist property relations has become irreconcilable and can be resolved only through a socialist revolution that is, through the substitution of socialist production relations in place of capitalist production relations. The dialectic unity of form and content viz. of production relations and productive forces has to be established.

With the sharpening of the contradiction between the productive forces and extant capitalist production relations to the explosive point, the social antagonisms born of this contradiction have become explosive. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the national liberation struggles between the colonial peoples and the dominant imperialist nations and inter-imperialist struggles for the re-division of the

already divided world economic territory, also, in the era of imperialist capitalism, became more violent and frequent. The epoch of imperialism has become therefore crowded with global wars, socialist revolutions, and wars of national emancipation. Such is the Leninist analysis of the imperialist epoch.

After the emergence of the Soviet Union, a new social antagonism has emerged viz. that between the shrinking capitalist world and the socialist U.S.S.R.

Since, in the imperialist phase, capitalism became a global system and since productive forces outgrew the shell of capitalist property relations, the world capitalist system became outmoded, unhistorical, unreal and irrational. It should be noted that young capitalisms in backward countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America are not vigorous independent capitalisms of the earlier period such as those of Britain and France, but only weak integral parts of the historically outmoded and declining world capitalist system. Hence the perspective of the necessity of a socialist revolution is unfolded even in such backward countries for the free development of their productive forces.

The epoch of imperialism is therefore fundamentally the epoch of world socialist revolution. While socialist revolutions have been for long on the order of the day in free full-fledged capitalist countries like Britain, France and others, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist national democratic revolutions constituted the first phase of socialist revolutions in backward countries where feudalism in varying degrees persisted and where imperialism directly or indirectly ruled and hampered the growth of the productive forces.

What, however, requires to be noted is that though the immediate tasks before the peoples of backward capitalist countries were anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, the free and rapid economic development of the societies of those countries demanded the growing over of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist national democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. That means the revolution will not be permanent in those countries till the working class wins political power and uses it to solve the uncompleted tasks of the national democratic revolution and starts creating prerequisites for building socialist societies (social ownership of the means of production and others) in those countries as parts of the world socialist

society. It must be noted that socialism cannot be built up in a single country because of the international division of labour in the domain of production and supranational character of the modern productive forces (Trotsky).

Further, according to the Leninist view, corroborated by the experience of the Russian and a number of other revolutions in the present epoch, the bourgeoisie of backward countries, due to its historical position, is incapable of carrying through a *thoroughgoing agrarian and anti-imperialist national democratic revolution*. It cannot accomplish an authentic agrarian revolution (complete elimination of pre-capitalist feudal relations) or liquidate imperialism. Even when the national bourgeoisie is not politically collaborating with imperialism and is oppressed by the latter, it does not consistently fight imperialism but seeks a compromise with it. This is because it is threatened by the growing socialist movement of the proletariat which it has no economic wherewithal to appease by reforms. Hence a far-reaching agrarian revolution and real economic liberation (*real*, implying mainly the expropriation of imperialist capital) from imperialism will be accomplished only by the exploited classes led by the proletariat through the victory of the socialist revolution. This truth has been corroborated by the behaviour of the Chinese and Indian bourgeoisies. In India, the Indian bourgeoisie compromised with imperialism by guaranteeing the perpetuation of the foreign capital in India. The exploited masses of China conquered power and completely liquidated imperialism and started, on the road of building socialism.

Lenin, after a Marxist analysis, formulated the strategic principle of the anti-imperialist revolution for the proletariat in relation to the national bourgeoisie thus: Temporary alliances with the national bourgeoisie are permissible in the anti-imperialist revolution but even where the national bourgeoisie is revolutionary (as the Chinese bourgeoisie till 1927), within the united front formed with it, the political, organizational and ideological independence of the working class led by its Communist Party should be strictly safeguarded. Also, on no account, the class struggle of the proletariat and the exploited peasantry should be suspended or even softened or soft-pedalled to please the bourgeois ally.

STUDENTS' "INDISCIPLINE"

SPORADIC students' strikes and even "rioting" have been breaking out in the country for sometime past in various educational centres such as Banares, Anand, Calcutta, Kerala and others. The programme of demands put forth by the striking and "rioting" students is a mosaic of such diverse items as the abolition of the extortionate school and college fees, normal (not tough) question papers at examinations (Calcutta), the removal of a Vice-Chancellor whom political intrigue had installed in the place of a popular one (Anand), the exemption from the transport fare for students in a particular zone (Kerala) and others. The struggles include prolonged and determined strike actions and sometimes even physical attacks on supervisors at the examinations, and others whom the students considered specially detestable and hence made the target of their fury.

A number of educationists and politicians have commented on this "alarming" situation. The potential architects of "a new progressive and prosperous" India are degenerating into hoodlums, they sadly observe.

Some of them have even prescribed remedies to cure this growing "malignant" malady such as closer association of teachers and students, closer collaboration of teachers and guardians, diversion of the students to sports, harnessing them to the nation-building activity, moral and religious education in schools, and others. A few even have recommended draconic rules prescribing drastic penalties for the strike and other undesirable activities of the student community.

These quack doctors of the malady suffer from atrocious ignorance of the fundamental (genetic) causes of the aggravating restlessness among the students which, in the absence of a proper leadership, finds expression in *spontaneous* struggles with all its undesirable features. The only scientific i.e. correct remedy is to uproot the very causes and conditions which give rise to the deformed forms which the students' movement sometimes assumes.

The behaviour of a social group including the student community is determined by the state of its existing psychology which is primarily built up by its own conditions of life and the general social milieu which surrounds it. Now, the economic position of the middle classes from which the preponderant section of the school and college-going students springs is growing worse. They live in overcrowded rooms, cannot provide themselves with proper nourishing food and other necessities of life. Education, both state and private profiteering, has grown unbearably costly. Text books are in scanty supply or their prices outstrip the buying capacity of the middle class students who, hence, either ration the use of available books among themselves or their names form long queues on the waiting lists of school and public libraries. With their home premises crowded with human sardines, these middle class students have to resort to public parks, libraries, or corridors of colleges for reading purposes. Successful candidates at an examination rush with hectic hurry to the gates of schools and colleges struggling for admission.

This barbarous state of things imposes agonizing tensions and strains on our student community. The struggle for securing the conditions of education is even more exhausting than that of actual study itself.

Further, after travelling through many years of this struggle, when the student reaches the terminus of his studies and secures a degree or a diploma, he is confronted with the almost disconcerting problem of securing a job.

Even when he is carrying on his studies, no exhilarating perspective of even a moderately assured job exists to keep him in buoyant spirits.

The student community further lives in a society which is in a state of acute and organic economic, social, political,

moral and cultural crisis. In the absence of a Marxist analysis which alone can provide a scientific understanding of this protean and profound crisis, they suffer from a feeling of intense bewilderment and stupefaction. The general tendency rampant among them is to drift. The ruling class and its government have been providing a plethora of cultural shows, generally idealizing the historically outlived old Indian culture and authoritarian social values which have hardly anything to do with the existing living social reality and which serve only as an opium to the young generation and a decoy to divert them from thinking over the life and death problems of the existing disintegrating feudal-capitalist Indian society. The present moral climate in the country, poisoned with the universally prevailing corruption and brazen lack of principles from the summit of society to its base, can hardly be called a healthy environment for the young generation.

The present generation of the Indian students is the victim of a semi-chaotic and historically outmoded and disintegrating capitalist society which, in India, is further adulterated with the admixture of reactionary past social institutions (caste etc.), medieval customs and social practices, and obscurantist outlooks sedulously cultivated among the students by bourgeois national leaders through inane cultural shows, reactionary radio music and other means. The intolerable conditions and pressures on their life create variegated psychological moods among the students such as black pessimism, defeatism, frustration and escapism.

The school and college-going student community comprising the sons and daughters of the impoverished middle class of India is the victim of a historically outmoded feudal-capitalist society in a state of disintegration. It is living in the midst of social, cultural and ideological chaos.

The healthy bitter resentment among sections of students against the unbearable conditions of life and education occasionally finds spasmodic expression (in the absence of a scientific leadership) in *spontaneous* strikes and other forms of action which are sometimes marked with elemental fury.

The formation of numerous student organizations, enveloping tens of thousands of students and ultimately amalgamated into a powerful central all-India students' organization, is

the vital need at present. Students' unions should formulate a programme of their specific demands such as lowering of the present almost extortionate school and examination fees, reforming the ponderous and complicated curricula, suppression of corruption and nepotism in the educational institutions (where often admission has a price and marks are commodities), the democratic right of forming students' unions uninterfered with by the authorities, war against profiteering by privately owned schools and colleges, united front of struggle with ill-paid teachers and professors who are as much the victims of the present economic system as the students themselves, the right to participate in politics, and a host of others. They should agitate among the mass of students explaining such a programme and, when necessary, organize strikes and other forms of struggle to extort from unwilling authorities the fulfilment of these demands. *Nothing is given, everything is extorted.*

Mere spontaneous struggles dissipate the strength of the students and at most yield limited results. Students' unions should inculcate their own students' discipline in the movement.

The emancipation of the oppressed is an act of the oppressed themselves. The student community, the victim of the extant social conditions, should build up their own united strength and movement.

An organized students' movement in the country on the basis of their immediate and specific demands will, by overcoming the sporadic unorganized students' actions, which periodically erupt in various centres but which on the whole dissipate the energy of the students, will exert a powerful pressure on the authorities and vested interests (private schools are strongholds of shameless profiteering) to concede the demands of the students. The student community, through the practice of such struggle, will build up its own students' collective discipline, a collective feeling of solidarity within itself, a morale, a social consciousness transcending egocentrism and careerism. It is necessary for the students' unions to trace the basic cause of their suffering to the very character of the existing capitalist social structure. They should organize study circles to earnestly and scientifically investigate into this problem.

There are other oppressed social groups in the country viz. the workers, the peasants, the clerks and other middle class

employees, who also have formed their respective unions and have been launching struggles demanding improved conditions of life and work. The students' movement should ally and unite with the struggles of these sections of society and all groups should reciprocally support these struggles.

Since Indian capitalism is not a rising young vigorous capitalism (like that of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century Britain) but a weak part of the decrepit world capitalism, it has no rosy future before it. As such, its crisis will further deepen resulting in aggravating economic and psychological suffering of the middle and lower strata of the Indian society including the mass of students.

Hence, historically, the struggle of the students for cheap and better education, for democratic freedoms in schools and colleges, and other demands will grow into a struggle for socialism (not to be confused with State Capitalism of the Indian National Congress masquerading as socialism) and will be a part of the general struggle for socialism of the exploited Indian people.

III

On Gandhism

INTRODUCTION

SECTION III is comprised of four statements, three embodying a Marxist evaluation of the ideology of Gandhism and its historical role and the fourth providing a Marxist critique of the Bhoodan and Sampattidan Movements, published by the author on different occasions.

Gandhism has been an extremely complex phenomenon and the author is convinced that only the searchlight of Marxism can illuminate such problems germane to it as its historical genesis, its contradictory role, and its specific capitalist class roots. The author, in his statements, has made an attempt to provide such a Marxist i.e. an objective, scientific understanding of these problems.

“The Hundred Percent Indian” was published by the author in the form of a brochure in 1926. It embodied a Marxist critique of “The Hind Swaraj” published by Gandhi in the first decade of the present century wherein Gandhi launched a crusade against modern machinery, opposed industrialization, rejected modern railways, modern medicine, modern everything. He idealized the pre-modern Indian society and exhorted the Indian people to resuscitate the old society.

Gandhi, subsequently, fundamentally changed his view and supported the industrialization of India. “The Hundred Percent Indian” also represented an endeavour of the author to reinterpret Indian history from the Marxist sociological standpoint, from the standpoint of Historical Materialism. The author tried to explain the fundamental cause of the age-long stationariness of the Indian society.

The author is fully conscious of the stylistic and ideological defects of the brochure. It, however, reflects the particular phase of the evolution of the author himself. Hence, he thought it proper to reproduce the brochure *in the same form* as it was published in 1926.

The second statement in this symposium on Gandhism depicts the process of the transformation of petty-bourgeois Gandhism (when it mirrored the aspirations of the peasant and artisan classes which survived in the modern society to resuscitate the pre-industrial old society and hence warred on modern science and technology) into bourgeois Gandhism when it reflected the interests and aspirations of the Indian bourgeoisie and hence supported capitalist industrialization. The statement tries to lay bare the bourgeois roots and character of Gandhism during this phase of its evolution.

The third article was published when Gandhi was killed by a Hindu communalist. It evaluates Gandhi as an outstanding humanist but as a prisoner of the essentially bourgeois world outlook.

The last statement, published as a pamphlet, is a Marxist critique of the Sampattidan and Bhoodan Movements.

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HUNDRED PER CENT INDIAN PETTY-BOURGEOIS GANDHISM

"It is my deliberate opinion that India is being ground down, not under the English heel but under that of modern civilization."

Civilization is a disease."

"About Railways, I should like to add that man is so made by nature as to require him to restrict his movements as far his hands and feet can take him..... Our difficulties are of our own creation. God set a limit to a man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body: Man immediately proceeded to discover means of overriding the limit.....I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours but, in my conceit, I pretended to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the UniverseAccording to this reasoning, it must be apparent to you that railways are a most dangerous institution.

"Railways accentuate the evil nature of man...Bad men fulfil their evil designs with greater rapidity..... Good travels at a snail's pace. It can, therefore, have little to do with the railways. So the Railways can become a distributing agency for the evil only."

"I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery..."

About the printing press which he uses to carry on his anti-machine propaganda, the Mahatma says:

This is one of those instances which demonstrates that sometimes poison is used to kill poison. This, then, will not be a good point regarding machinery. As it expires, the machinery,

as it were, says to us : 'Beware and avoid me. You will derive no benefit from me, and the benefit that may accrue from printing will avail only those who are infected with the machine craze.' It is necessary to realize that machinery is bad. We shall then be able gradually to do away with it.....If instead of welcoming machinery as a boon, we would look upon it as an evil, it would ultimately go.

To study European medicine is to deepen our slavery.

I believe, the civilization India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world.....India has nothing to learn from anybody else. Our ancestors saw that happiness is largely a mental condition.....We have managed with the same plough as it existed thousands of years ago. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery; but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we should become slaves.....They therefore, after due deliberation, decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than learn from others.

India is not striving to establish 'Gandhi Raj?' 'Gandhi Raj' is an ideal condition in which all the five negatives (No Railways. No Hospitals. No Machinery. No Army. No Navy) will represent a true picture.

These extracts from "Indian Home Rule" also known as "Hind Swaraj" by Mahatma Gandhi, eloquently state the reactionary standpoint and reveal the retrogressive "social" philosophy which it is the purpose of this pamphlet to refute.

The "philosophy" of Gandhism based on religious and metaphysical prejudices, subjective illusions and unhistorical social and economic ideas, work as a brake on the further material and intellectual development of modern India. From the standpoint both of the emancipatory struggle of the Indian people and the higher development of the human society and civilization, Gandhism represents a classic obstacle. And though the influence of Gandhian ideology is steadily waning in cities, among the intellectual circles and industrial workers, its hold over the country outside cities is still formidable. It is, therefore, necessary to carry on intensive propanganda against this

extremely unscientific and anti-progressive social philosophy.

The pamphlet also represents an endeavour to explode all *idealistic* interpretation of Indian and world history and suggests the method of Historical Materialism as the only correct method to comprehend the *basic forces and causes* of all historical development of human society, of the rise and fall of social systems and civilizations, of the progress and decline of specific moral ideas and philosophic concepts. The method of Historical Materialism teaches us that all social, ethical and intellectual evolution of every nation in particular and humanity in general is determined by its economic evolution and that the driving forces of all social evolution, whether in India or Kamaschatka, are *material and not moral or psychic*. This method will hardly win the approval of our "patriotic" historians and "spiritual" philosophers, our Tagores, Aurobindos and the rest, who believe in the 'special genius' of India, in the 'inherent spiritual soul' of the Indian nation. The theory of Historical Materialism emancipates us from this flattering but narcotic belief and by providing us with a correct historical vision, it shows us the way to develop those specific social forces of the nation (modern industries, a well-organized class conscious city working-class, etc.) whose *dynamic* action and creative power alone can help us to achieve political freedom and develop a well-consolidated progressive social existence.

I

To a 100 per cent Indian, the most fanatical critic of modern civilization and the zealous exponent of India's ancient civilization, no spectacle is more abominable, dispiriting and de-spiritualizing than a modern city. There are Indians belonging to the extreme spiritual *cult* whom the mere mention of cities like Bombay or Calcutta would throw into paroxysms of impatient anger. Nay, some of these 'non-violent' people would even forget their immortal and beloved doctrine of 'non-violence' and express an emphatic and heartfelt desire to see those damned cities, those sinister products of Western industrialism, submerged under the sea or destroyed under the devastating action of a violent earthquake shock or a terrific volcanic eruption similar to one which, four years back, desolated two of the most prosperous cities of 'materialistic' Japan.

Of 'materialistic' Japan! Here the serene face of the self-complacent spiritual or hundred per cent Indian lights up with a triumphant expression. With the confident air of an ancient oracle, he remarks, "Nations that renounce their spiritual traditions and become convert to Western materialism, that shun the spinning wheel and import machinery, that depopulate villages and build cities, are visited by natural catastrophies which God sends them by way of retribution."¹

Pointing to Japan, over the red ruins of her shattered cities, he continues, "That renegade Nation, a *renegade* from the sublime spiritual idealism left to her as priceless legacy by her spiritual Asian forefathers, a *traitor* to her essentially spiritual Asian soul, fell (Oh woe to her!) under the hypnotic spell of Western materialism. She brought into her *chaste* land the corruption of European industrialism, imported among her simple people the *witchcraft* of European science and imbibed deliberately, in cold blood and without compunction, the spiritually pernicious doctrines of the materialist Western philosophy. Oh woe to her!

"She founded factories, built laboratories, constructed cities, established railways, cast cannon, cut canals (by methods

1 The Orthodox Press of India, both political and non-political, *did* interpret the earthquake eruption that took place in Japan in 1922 as a natural and just retribution of God on the Japanese for repudiating their own traditional simple and 'spiritual' civilization and introducing, in their land, complex industrial-economic forms and materialist ideology of modern Europe.

This crude, primitive, unscientific method of viewing life, this discovering of *judicial motives* of God behind all cataclysmic events both in the natural and social worlds, is rampant not only among the ignorant masses but, in varying degree, also among the religiously-minded intelligentsia. Thus Mahatma Gandhi ascribes the political servitude of the Indian nation, to some extent, to the *social oppression* which the upper strata of the Hindu population inflicted for centuries on the Caste of Untouchables. And so on. But we who know that God is only a hallucination of the human fancy and natural and social phenomena are determined by basic, *non-ethical, non-divine* material and economic forces, cannot subscribe to the *moral* and *religio-mystical* explanations given by those gentlemen.

of *Western* engineering), and committed a thousand other lapses from the simple spiritual life which her sages had preached her for centuries, while her simple duty was to plough the land and ply the *charkha* and spend her leisure in spinning out some transcendental, spiritual-mystical philosophy.

“And when the apostate nation refused to stop from her unholy materialistic career in spite of the eloquent warnings from Gandhi and other representatives and guardians of Asia’s religious and spiritual traditions, God in Heaven felt outraged at the continued obstinacy of that one time idealistic pious nation and made a divine decision to chastize the *intransigent*.

“He, the Almighty, more in His Infinite Justice than Mercy, commanded the latent fires of the earth to burst and consume to ruins two of the most magnificent cities of the renegade nation, at once the powerful strongholds of her industrial and scientific power.

“Thus does God chastise nations that have collapsed from their spiritual heights and accepted the principles, practices, ideals and apparatus of the civilization of the corrupt West.”

And the 100 per cent. Indian, the self-chosen guide and dictator of India’s future, warns his countrymen that if modern India does not learn from the Japanese incident, if she does not abolish her railways, cities, factories and other products of foreign civilization, if she does not revert to the plough and the spinning-wheel, then then a catastrophe more catastrophic than the one which befell Japan, would overwhelm India. India deserves greater punishment for her sin is greater since her spiritual traditions are stronger.

II

THE hundred per cent. Indian—the arch-expression of India’s reactionary longings to “Return to the Past” and go “Back to Nature” (synonymous with “Return to Animality” and “Back to Barbarism”)—traces all social, political, economic, intellectual, ethical and *finally* spiritual evils, which distract the contemporary world in general and India in particular, to the scientific and industrial civilization which Europe developed during the last century and imposed on all non-European races whom it conquered and dominated during the course of its victorious career of a century or more.

Once we realize this fact, it is easy to understand his antagonism to cities which are the creations, the symbols, embodiments and play-grounds of these *material* forces which the spiritual or hundred per cent Indian so mortally, so desperately hates.²

As victorious expression and evidence of what science and machine-power can achieve in defiance of the blind resistance of Nature, those cities — the grand conservatories of man's material and psychic conquest over Nature — seem to challenge our spiritual hero with his impotent reactionary gospel of "Back to Nature," "Back to Village," "Back to the Plough and the *charkha*."

And as if God's power is on wane or God Himself allied with the forces of Satan thus leaving His followers in the lurch, in spite of the most valiant and vociferous propaganda of all hundred per cent Indians with a Mahatma to lead them, India is being more industrialized from day to day, cities continue to develop, multiply and expand, and machinery penetrates even into the holy heart of simple, guileless villages (the strongholds of India's age-long social passivity and reaction, the almost invulnerable centres of her mental inertia).

Is history against the reactionary dreams, the conservative ideology of the hundred per cent Indian?

Not discouraged by this concrete, living, historical refuta-

² While extolling the formidable *productive* value of the very highly developed scientific and technical forces of the modern world, we do not forget the large-scale exploitation and misery from which the broad masses of humanity are still suffering. As scientific thinkers, however, we do not attribute this social tragedy to science and machinery. The uneconomic, unscientific, planless and capitalist monopolistic organization of contemporary human society is responsible for the exploitation and misery of the people. If society is reconstructed on the basis of the collective ownership of all scientific and technical resources of humanity, both exploitation and poverty will vanish from the human world.

But till such a socialist society based on an economic plan and co-operative labour is not achieved, are we to discard science and machinery? No. For, the development of science and machinery alone can increase production to that historically necessary level and create those social and psychological conditions when only, a socialist society can be realized.

tion of his theories, he, however, continues to cherish pious hopes that though India in particular and the world in general may temporarily be carried away by currents of industrialism, they would after a few cataclysmic experiences recognize both industrialism and scientific rationalist culture of Europe as arch-blunders of humanity, arch-causes of all its troubles.

A disillusioned humanity will abolish science, destroy machinery, and take to the plough and the *charkha*.

In the meanwhile, he as the prophet who foresees the calamities in store for the nation and the human race, strives with all his power and missionary's zeal to dissuade them from the suicidal career on which they have embarked!

III

THE blind hostility, the almost insuperable antipathy of the hundred per cent Indian, the living embodiment of Gandhian irrationalities, to the contemporary machine-based science-made western civilization (to be strictly distinguished from predatory western imperialism) with its Rationalist culture and collective social ideals, manifests itself, as mentioned already, in his hysterical hatred of modern cities and the modern man.

He declaims against cities, the work of steam and science and not of metaphysics. He denounces the modern *social* man who, strong in *social* cravings and instincts, refuses to subscribe to his anti-social or non-social ultra-individualistic philosophy of life (the hermit's pitiful existence in the woods, the anchorite's sterile egoistic ideal of a life of 100 per cent seclusion), who, rich in spirit and impulse of social solidarity, zealously unites with his kind, co-operates with members of his own species for the joint production of their common physical and psychic needs, and who is constantly engaged in extremely complex and varied social processes of life.³

³ It must be noted that, in capitalist society, this basic co-operation between members of working humanity, in the production process, (social division of labour now on an international scale) is concealed due to the atomizing of men as a result of capitalist private property and competitive market (where both products and labour power come for sale) as well as due to the existence of national frontiers.

The 100 per cent Indian is the arch-enemy of all *collective* goals, *collective* ideals, *collective* hopes, of *collective* life in general.⁴ Surfeited with the ultra-individualistic, superegoistic, spiritual metaphysics of ancient India which sets forth "individual salvation" as the prime goal of human existence, the *ultima-ratio* of all individual human effort, the hundred per cent Indian, incarnating the reactionary religious individualism of the most spiritual and sterile type, disdains to work for *social* goals, for *collective* ideals. An eternal seeker after Truth (God or some other nebula), an aspirant for achieving his own salvation (a figment of God-haunted imagination), the 100 per cent Indian wastes all his life in a futile search after Truth. By focussing all the impulses of his being on self, his ego, he weakens his social nature and lives the barren atomistic existence of an anchorite in an Ashrama or on the Himalayas. Imagining that he has discovered the 'ultimate' Truth, he carries on a fanatical though futile propaganda of his sterile anti-social philosophy. He calls upon humanity to wind up all collective effort, to minimize all individual wants and desires, to liquidate all social life, to abolish all complex tools such as machinery, railways and science on which all modern social life is based and is only possible.

Each for himself! Each must produce his own needs, must procure his own food, spin his own cloth, build his own hut, etc.

Each for himself! To the Plough and the *charkha*! Thus spoke the arch-reactionary in a super-religious mood. Away with all social ideals! Avaunt with all that pertains to *this* life, *this* world! Strive, strive for individual salvation, for *that* life,

4 All religious philosophies are *individualistic* having for their goal *the salvation of the individual*.

This does not mean that a religious man is necessarily a predatory man. In fact some of the best friends of humanity were religiously-inclined. They strove zealously though unscientifically (the mist of Religion clouded their social perspectives and prevented their correct understanding of social phenomena) for the advancement of humanity. Still the fact remains that all their beneficent social activity was only a *means to an end* which was their own individual salvation. The conscious galvanizing motive behind all their philanthropic social activities was *personal*. Their altruism was only a *means* to accomplish their *individual* salvation.

for the *other* world!

IV

"CITIES are Satan's Workshops,' cry in a sky-reaching chorus all hundred per cent Indians, these holy men led by the infallible Mahatma. "Cities make brutes of men, they kill his spiritual nature and seduce simple men to *multiply* his want, desire, appetite—while *true* progress consists in *simplifying* life, in *reducing* want, in *crushing* desire, in *abolishing* appetite!

"Cities stir up physical and intellectual restlessness in man, develop discontent in him and (oh calamity of calamities!), he aspires for more!—while *true* progress consists in *ceasing* to aspire (except in the nebulous spiritual Godward sense), in holding up a perpetual attitude of contentment!

"Cities make man more complex and collective while his *real* greatness and salvation lie in rehabilitating his individualistic nature, in becoming simple and non-social as an ascetic."

If the absence of desire be the classic test of all greatness, if the reduction of want be the criterion of all progress, is not animal (whose desire never transgresses the biological minimum of mere striving for food and procreation) superior to man?

V

Is not animal, stark naked animal with no desires beyond the cravings for food and procreation, a biologically higher species than man? Is not animal, when viewed from the illuminating (?) standpoint of Gandhian philosophy with "minimum of desires and needs" and no tools (except the ancient plough and the antiquated *charkha*) and "Each for himself" as its main substance, superior to man in the scale of evolution? Through the searchlight of the entirely wrong and retrogressive Gandhian philosophy, does not animal rise higher and higher in our estimate till it rises superior to man, who, with his complex multi-fold heterogeneous needs in contrast to the relatively few simple needs and desires of animal, appears as the degradation of animal rather than its evolution?⁵

5 We do recognize the necessity of *rationalizing* these ever-growing impulses, wants and desires of man so that they may not find a *predatory anti-social expression* but assert

VI

ALL growth, all progress, implies complexity, multiplicity. As a life-form evolves, progresses in the *spiral* of evolution, it develops more desires, more wants, more cravings and appetites. It becomes more complex, more varied, more desiring.

Man is superior to animal because man has more desires, more wants, and more needs. Man, in the process of his living with the inventive power of his mind, with the creative force of his human intellect evolves science, and material instruments (technique) wherewith he realizes his ever-growing desires, satisfies his ever-expanding needs and, in this constant process, he grows, becomes finer, develops more and more of his essential human *social* nature by an ever-increasing use of the complex machinery in co-operation with other members of his species.

As his ideal the improvement of the human species through the progressive transformation of his earthly environment for human use and enjoyment in *this* life, with the conquering force of science and complex tools, and on the basis of cooperative labour with his fellow-men, man abandons his individualistic attitudes and more and more vigorously strives for this worldly goods, for the earthly welfare of humanity.

The progressive social man recognises in complex machinery and its creations such as railways, steamships, radio, telegraph and aeroplane, forces which would unify humanity hitherto existing in fragments (divided by mountains and seas), which would build up a *social* psyche with *social* instincts, emotions

and realize themselves in a *socially useful* way. Since man's consciousness is the product of his social environment, the best way to rationalize his instincts, desires, and general consciousness is to *rationalize his social environment*, to organize it on a socially efficient basis. Rather than preach the gospel of suppressing desires and reducing wants, it will be more useful to stand for a complete rationalization, a *basic* reorganization of human society so that in the *new* social environment of man, his desires and impulses may be rationalized, may rationally persist and find social-creative expression.

The ever-multiplying impulses, needs, appetites, and desires of Man, constitute his *dynamic* force, urging him to adventurous action and creative work. They should not be suppressed but *rationalized*.

and cravings, among men compelled to work in large masses at huge machines.⁶

The use of complex machinery, the socially useful concrete creation of science, helps men to evolve and expand their *social* nature. Massed together in the fundamental field of human activity *viz.* the material economic field where they cooperate with one another at huge machines on the basis of division of labour (and not on that of the individualistic doctrines of "Each for Himself!" "Produce your own food and spin your own cloth,"), men begin to develop still higher social consciousness. They learn and feel an impulse to co-operate for a common *social* purpose.

The birth of complex machinery marked also the birth of advanced social consciousness (on mass scale) among men. Dead metal like steel, nebulous insentient stuff like steam, when transformed into machine and power and given thereby a social significance, accomplished a tremendous revolution in the life of humanity. It increasingly emancipated man from his *individualistic* aspirations and more and more instilled in him *social* urges, built up a *social* psyche in him.

Machinery is a saving civilizing power in the evolution of humanity. It integrates man with man by compelling all men to cooperative activity in the most fundamental sphere of human activity *viz.* the material field, that is the field of material production.

By working at big machines in cooperation with fellow-men for the production of common material necessities, man becomes more social and cooperating, more human and less animal. Self-reliance, the ideal of individualistic man, is replaced by social interdependence, the prime condition of a well-integrated, organic, cooperative single, social existence of men.

In a socialist classless society *materially* unified by means of a universal transport and industrial economic system and psychologically unified by the integrating power of social instincts, activities and consciousness developed among its individuals on the basis of cooperative economic relations, the last

6 Proletarian class consciousness or the embryo of socialist human consciousness grows out of its class struggle with the bourgeoisie as also from the collective labour process in which it is engaged.

vestiges of individualistic philosophies and psychology will vanish.

Social philosophies, with social ideals and improvement of humanity in this life and here (on earth) as their goal in place of individualistic philosophies with the ultra-egoistic and barren ideal of individual salvation, prosper in a well-unified (such unification is possible only on the basis of a universal and extensive use of complex machinery) society. The death-knell of individualist philosophy is sounded. Man working for his own benefit (food or salvation does not matter) emerges into, evolves into the highly developed social man.⁷ This is why a peasant or an artisan is primarily individualistic, while a factory worker, in spite of the competitive struggle in the market in the capitalist society, develops a collectivist class consciousness.

Machinery as a social-synthetic force, the parent of social (class) consciousness and general social psychology, calls large masses of people together, compels them to co-operate for collective social benefit and thereby kindles the social consciousness among men.

Machinery is a technical factor emancipating humanity from animality, from individualistic philosophy, from Gandhian metaphysics, and prepares him for universal large-scale collective enterprises.

VII

THE hundred per cent Indian, the philosopher-preacher of India's ancient, now obsolete and decadent feudal individualism and the patron-saint of the plough and the *charkha*, however, does not subscribe to this sane and scientific view deduced from history and demonstrated by the universal everyday experience of mankind. He does not recognize the social-creative and human-emancipatory role of science and machinery. He fails to appreciate them as the most potent unifying and material-productive forces of humanity whereby it achieves and extends its

7 Man has always lived in society, tribal, provincial or national. Hence he had always social consciousness but it became deepened and broadened with the emergence of larger social aggregates based on progressive techno-economic developments.

own social synthesis, develops and perfects its own social organization and, above all, solves effectively (as science and tools grow) the problem of all life-forms, the basic problem of *material* existence. Obsessed with the sterile spiritual philosophy and misled by the rosy but historically false pictures of India's mythical Golden Age drawn by patriotic (?) historians, the hundred per cent Indian is unable to interpret history in its true perspective, in terms of its basic technical economic development as the *demiurge* of all other forms of development, social, political, ethical, artistic and philosophical which, however, afterwards retroact on the economic development. Instead of viewing history as a great social evolutionary process developing, constantly and organically on the material basis of the constant and progressive development of the material instruments of production whereby humanity is carrying on its strenuous age-long struggle against Nature to extort from her its basic necessities of life (food, clothes, shelter, etc.), these holy men make a mystical gesture and discover in history the inscrutable workings of an arbitrary God or the realization of 'a *moral purpose*' or some other ghost.

VIII

THE fundamental urge of all life is *material*. All living things first strive for material existence. The ideal and idyllic things of life come only after material existence is secured. Art, philosophy and poetry come only when the economic question, the bread problem, is more or less solved.

The essential urge of all life is material. Only an ultra-spiritualist would deny that fact, the most obvious of all obvious facts. Before there can be 'good' life, 'spiritual' life, 'philosophic' life, there must be—life.

True, 'man does not live by bread alone'. But infinitely more true is it that, man can live only if he has bread!

All history has been developing on a *material* basis. The moral, metaphysical, and religious as also the social and political developments of humanity are outgrowths of and are conditioned by the basic material development, by the technical-economic development of society.

The fundamental urge of life being material, man's striving for securing the material means of existence has supplied the

fundamental motive force to all historical human development.

The history of humanity is only the history of his age-long struggle against Nature for the conquest of the basic nutritions of life. Since man conquered these nutritions from Nature by the help of tools, the history of humanity is also the history of the tools which Man has been inventing and perfecting from age to age, from generation to generation.

Man progressed in proportion that he solved the basic problem of all existence, the problem of *material* existence. He progressed in proportion that he secured from Nature more nutritions of life; in proportion that he produced more *i.e.*, in the final analysis, in proportion that he invented more complex and productive instruments of labour.

The progress of a social group should be measured in terms of the tools with which it produces. The more productive the tools, the more easily and effectively it solves the problem of material existence. Having solved the material problem, the community (at least a fraction of it) is free to achieve *ideal* work, to produce poetry and art, to build up a varied, complex organic social cultural life.

Man's progress, social, political, economic and cultural, depends on and is determined by the progress he has made in the tools of production.

Till the total production of a society does not exceed the *minimum* necessary to meet the mere material needs of existence of all members, there is no *surplus* to maintain even a fraction of the people to devote themselves to artistic, scientific, philosophical, and other cultural pursuits.

Culture is the product of leisure. Leisure even for a section of the people is possible only after the social labour power of the community, *working more productively by the aid of labour-saving machinery*, not only produces enough to meet the needs of all members but also *creates a surplus*, thereby making it possible for a section of the people (generally a section of those who *own* this machinery of production) to experiment and achieve in the sphere of art, science and philosophy.

The essential problem of humanity, struggling for ages against its environment is that of securing more production. Only after production reached a certain level (production increased in proportion that man invented more *complex* and

labour-saving instruments and, by means of scientific knowledge, harnessed and exploited for the purposes of production, the wild and powerful forces of nature such as steam and electricity), that some surplus labour remained which, instead of being concentrated on material production, was utilized to create and develop cultural forms of social existence. Machinery, complex labour-saving power-driven machinery, *alone* amazingly increases the *total* production of the community and creates leisure for wider and wider sections of the social group. Then only, a large-scale social culture can grow and develop.

As good socialists, we do recognise—in fact we proclaim and denounce most eloquently and in scathing terms—that leisure achieved as a result of the development of the productive forces of humanity has hitherto been the monopoly of a *class*, of the class which owns the productive forces. We also know that this culture, evolved by the master class or the social group favoured by the master class had a distinct class bias and been used by them to justify and perpetuate their rule (Aryan culture for instance). Still, this does not drive us, in a fit of reactionary 'democratic' anger, to denounce and call for the destruction of the highly developed technical and scientific forces which are indispensable for maintaining a high level of production, which alone can guarantee *leisure, the prime condition for the development of any kind of culture*. We should, rather, strive for realizing a social order such that the productive forces do not remain the monopoly of a section of the community but are owned by the whole community and are exploited to their maximum possibilities on the basis of a scientific economic plan of production and co-operative labour. We are so optimistic about the high degree of development of the existing productive forces of humanity that, under their social ownership and scientific planful organization, they will yield more production than at present, far more than we can conceive.¹ This will create leisure for all members of the working humanity who will then achieve creative work also in artistic, scientific and philosophical fields.

Greater production is the basic condition, the fundamental prerequisite, for achieving leisure for wider and wider sections of the people. *The negation of science and repudiation of machinery will destroy the very basic condition for the existence*

and growth of any kind of culture whether "European" or "Eastern," "materialistic" or "spiritualistic," "capitalist" or "socialist".

He who wars against science and technique, wars also against all leisure for humanity and therefore unconsciously against all possibility of culture.

We here do not refer to another great historical fact that even the intellectual and emotional capacities of humanity to produce a complex, wide-scale, social culture, have developed only in the process of carrying on the complex processes of social life based upon complex labour processes of machine production.

IX

THE spiritual Indian, however, cannot understand this gross, mundane, scientific, historical fact. He cannot appreciate the determining *role* of machinery in the making of human society and civilization.

He cannot comprehend that a well-coordinated, complex, varied social-cultural life is possible only on the basis of a very complicated and multifold *technique*; that the very social consciousness of man (the vital creative source of all his ethical, philosophical and artistic ideas and emotions) is ultimately the *product* of his social-material life; that the social consciousness of man is more highly developed, complex and creative, only if his material apparatus of production (whereby he produces in combination with other men) is more highly-developed, complex and productive.

Complex arts and social philosophies can flourish only in a society where heavy machinery is used for the purposes of material production. For in such a society only, we can find among the individuals a highly-developed social consciousness with very complex social emotions and conceptions. Only in such a society shall we find the uninterrupted conceiving, planning, and achieving of large-scale collective social programmes. In such a society, religion is at a discount and God-idea (the product of man's ignorance of and helplessness against the blind forces of the natural and the social worlds) declining. As science advances and man deciphers the mysteries of the natural world, as complex *technique* develops and man produces more and on the basis of the social ownership of means of production

and a resultant social plan avoiding social parasitism and waste of human labour power, he progressively shakes off his ignorance and helplessness. And as he steadily becomes free from the blind capricious forces of Nature and *consciously* organizes his own social life, man ceases to have any *active* belief in God. The God-reliant humanity becomes completely self-reliant. It develops a scientific, rational, human conception of life. It ceases to feel any longer the need of God ("the Prop of Ages") to explain (or rather mis-explain) the processes of the social and the natural worlds which he now understands in scientific terms, in terms of the laws of causality and ceaseless evolution.

Humanity, triumphant in its rationality and strong in social intelligence and feeling, equipped with science and complex labour saving machinery, eliminates *struggle* from within its own social organization, reconstructs it consciously on a plan fitting in with the needs of all and thereby eliminates 'chance,' 'blind accident,' 'the hand of God,' from its own social life. The God-Idea (the product of specific historical conditions, the child of man's powerlessness and his ignorance of the *anarchic* forces of Nature *and* society which he now through Marxism, the first scientific philosophy and sociology in history, understands and consciously organizes) declines and dies away. A victorious humanity, strong in science, equipped with machinery, and the planful architect of its own social organization, rises up in arms against God. It heroically commits God to the scrap-heap of history, to the limbo of history's melancholy memories.⁸

8 We have in view, here, the classless communist society of *the future free humanity*, based on the collective ownership of the productive forces of society and on the principle of co-operative labour. The productive social forces will be, then, exploited to their maximum possibilities according to a pre-determined social plan and in the interests of *all* members of the working humanity.

By reconstructing society consciously on the basis of a plan, humanity masters its social organization and controls its own evolution. It eliminates anarchy from the field of production. It rebuilds human relationships on the principles of solidarity and co-operation in place of competition and struggle. The fratricidal struggle between the members of the same species vanishes and there remains only the struggle between *a united humanity* and its environment.

X

THE development of the productive forces (instruments of labour) has been the prime motive power of all historical social developments, in all epochs and among all human groups. A race continues to advance, materially and ideally, till it continues to improve its instruments of production. On the basis of constantly increasing production, transport facilities and other material advantages resulting from the extensive use of an ever-growing *technique*, a social group solves the problem of material existence more effectively, becomes more and more unified and socially compact, develops greater social consciousness and wider social perspectives and achieves in the sphere of art, science and philosophies. The life-processes of such a society being complex and multifold, each individual becomes varied and complex and develops his *protean social nature* in all its multifold variety. In fact, the development of *technique* stimulates and is paralleled by a corresponding development of the economic and social-cultural life of the society, resulting in the intensifying of the *social* personality, and capacities of the individual.

A social group, however, begins to decline both in the material and ideal fields, as soon as its productive forces cease to grow either as a result of chronic internal struggles between different sections of the group or (as in India) due to the stifling weight of the top-heavy social superstructure (the caste system of the Hindus) too rigid to allow the free growth and the free movement of the basic technical-economic forces.

XI

THE caste system of the Hindus was the social organization of the Aryan conquerors to hold in eternal slavery the vanquished, suppressed, exploited and half-assimilated non-Aryan population. The Aryan society based on the caste system remained stationary, became immobile and bankrupt in creative impulses because of the ultra-rigid nature of its social construction. The colossal and throttling weight of the social superstructure, which reduced all its members to social puppets, stifled the free development of its productive forces. These forces, in their very nature *dynamic* and with a tendency always to grow and transform society, were artificially (by a system of most subtle, rigid

and drastic political and socio-economic legislation) imprisoned within the framework of a social system based on the most irrational of all principles, that of heredity.

Since the basic material (technical and economic) forces of the Aryan society never developed to that climax when they could successfully rebel against the social framework wherein they were constrained to move and blow up that framework into air, the productive forces were themselves steadily smothered.⁹ They ceased to grow and not growing, they steadily declined. And in proportion that the Aryan society deteriorated technically and economically, it also lost in social vitality, practical instincts, experimenting impulses, and inventive genius. The once living social organization of the Hindus was transformed into a mere fossil, dead to all change. The life-processes of that society became stereotyped, reproduced after the same pattern. Its culture, its philosophy, every bit of its life-activity gave suggestions of a universal hatred of change, contempt for new forms of creative action, a disgust for *this* world, a holy hankering to pass to God's territory or a divine longing for being dissolved into spiritual nebula. The action-instincts of the people became paralysed. Futile philosophical speculation, based on a fatal antipathy against things material and mundane, became rife among the upper strata of the society. Thus immobility in the material field, in the fields of *technique* and economy, brought about a corresponding immobility in the sphere of thought, of productive social action and cultural creations. The whole social superstructure became paralytic, its ideology became unrealistic, inconcrete, and other-worldly.

XII

WHILE the material productive forces ceased to develop in

⁹ Since no new productive forces developed in Indian society, there did not emerge a revolutionary class (as for instance the bourgeoisie) which through a social revolution, could negate the old society and create a new society based on new productive forces. The Bhakti movements were the religio-ethical expression of the democratic movements of the exploited classes but these classes were classes of the old society and not new classes bound up with new productive forces. Hence they were doomed to fail.

the Aryan society beyond the stage of the plough, the *charkha* and other rudimentary instruments, internal dissensions broke out in course of time, among the governing social groups (the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, and the Vaishyas) and their sections for religious, political and economic ascendancy. The unproductive sections of the community constantly struggled against one another, wasting the productive forces of the society while those productive forces had already ceased to develop as a result of the stultifying effects of the immutable caste system.

The cumulative tragic result of these civil struggles expressed itself in the progressive enfeebling of the Hindu society, in the general atrophy of its creative intellectual energy, in a complete paralysis of its vital powers.

And if the Hindu society as organized in the caste system survived for ages, it is due not to any inherent vitality or any immortal principle in it. It is only the privilege of the living to die, not of the corpses. *Corpses never die.*

The economic transformation of the Indian society brought about by the growing industrialization of modern India, has already begun to change its social *structure*.

The caste system, the social organization of the Hindus with its economic base laid in feudal agriculture, petty industry and trade, has been showing *disintegrating* tendencies since modern large-scale industries, country-wide transport and trade, began to develop in India and steadily change the old economic foundations of the Indian society.

The caste system, which triumphantly survived all devastating political convulsions, military struggles and religious revolutions of past centuries, is unable to resist the transforming power of the rising industrial forces in the country.

The political upheavals, military revolutions and religious struggles of the past, though they brought much suffering to the people and produced chronic warfare in the land, left the essential economic basis of the Indian society untouched. The economic structure changes only when new instruments of labour and a new mode of production based on these new instruments of labour come into existence. And since the means of production used by the Indian people never transcended the stage of the plough, the *charkha* and the simple instruments of

the artisan, the same economic structure persisted in India for centuries (the caste system being its *peculiar* social expression in India), in spite of religious, political and military upheavals.

Till the old economic system continued, the social caste corresponded to the economic functional group or a class. Each caste was also an economic category following the same economic pursuit and its members were *united* by the identity of the economic pursuit, resultant social outlook and interests.

The industrialization of India has *broken* the identity of interests among the members of the same caste, created wide economic distinctions among them and thereby changed their social outlooks. New groupings of individuals on the basis of new social and economic forces are gradually taking place. Again with industrialism, Rationalist ideas have been slowly spreading among the people who are being convinced of the irrationality and social inadequacy of the caste system.

Mere anti-caste propaganda cannot break the caste system. This propaganda will be effective in proportion that new industrial forces, inevitably bringing with them scientific and Rationalist ideas, revolutionize the economic basis of the Hindu society, thereby breaking the economic homogeneity of each caste and creating divergences of interests and social outlooks.

XIII

THE Aryan society was, like other societies, essentially an exploitative society. It was organized on a predatory basis.

The Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas were the predatory governing groups of the Aryan society. The Shudras, the vast hordes of toilers, formed the exploited group on whose labour the three master groups lived and thrived.

The Brahmins were the monopolists of religious and secular culture. They were the spiritual supporters of the social system based on the exploitation of the Shudras. The patriotic historians (Tagore for instance) glorify the humanity of the Aryans for having incorporated the non-Aryans into their social fold. True, the Aryan conquerors *did* admit the vanquished races into its social organization but they received them not as equals but as — the exploited and oppressed social group.

We may as well admire the lion for incorporating the lamb

into its stomach, so close to its heart. Then we may admire the Aryan conquerors for incorporating the conquered hordes into the monstrous maw of the abominable caste system where as the down-trodden human group they had to consecrate their services to the higher castes.

XIV

THE spiritual culture, the social and state organizations and the economic system of the Aryan society were so many ideal and material instruments of the victorious Aryans to keep in perpetual political slavery and exploit the labour power of the vast masses of Shudras and sections of the Aryans themselves subsequently, whom the humane (?) Aryans (the altruistic forefathers of poet Tagore) incorporated into their social organization.

The spiritual culture was evolved by the Brahmins. They administered religious and spiritual narcotics to the exploited classes (and by historical irony afterwards to themselves) so that they may not resist the material plunder which they were subjected to. By the subtle necromancy of its spiritual and religious teachings and preachings, the spiritual caste effectively exorcised the spirit of discontent among these exploited classes. The Brahmins taught them that their salvation lay in slaving eternally, that the caste-system was God-ordained and plenty of other reactionary stuff.

The material needs of these Brahmins were looked after by the other two castes, (one the politically dominant and the other the economically exploiting) who benefited by their teachings. It is doubtful whether the other two castes would have retained their reverence for the holy Brahmins and looked after their material wants if the latter popularized among the exploited classes the doctrines of freedom and if they had taught the submerged classes how to organize for and achieve freedom.

XV

BUT we neither blame nor glorify our Aryan forefathers (we only explain, make a historical statement), for evolving predatory social systems, for developing barren spiritual and other-

worldly philosophies or for exploiting toilers.

The moral consciousness, the philosophical ideas and the social conceptions of an age are only the product of its material conditions and are therefore determined by the degree of development of the material forces of an age. And if the ancient Aryans believed in slavery or semi-slavery, it was because their ethical consciousness, the sense of social justice was partially developed as a result of the partial development of the material productive forces of that epoch and resultant production and general social relations.

As the productive forces of humanity grow, higher systems of social relations emerge, its ethical consciousness, its sense of social justice and its feeling of social solidarity, develops.

Moral ideas are the product of material conditions of life and change with a change in the material conditions. As the productive forces of a society develop and its production increases, its social organization is more and more democratized and its moral criteria become higher.

XVI

MORAL ideas don't drop from the moon nor do they rain from the beneficent wing of a winged god. Moral ideas are rooted in the earth. They smell of the earth in spite of the divine drapery of words in which moralists and saints have dressed them. Moral ideas belong to the earth, they spring from the earth and are the specific product of the concrete, material, socio-economic environment of man. And in proportion that the socio-economic environment of man changes as a result of a change or improvement in his tools (material instruments of production), his consciousness changes and his moral conceptions are modified.

Moralists, saints, God-haunted philosophers and mystics have endeavoured for ages to *divinize* the origin of all moral ideas. Unable to comprehend the *social* origin of all ethical conceptions, they traced all moral ideas either to the divine intuitions of saints and supermen (to whom God revealed the Truth) or to some inherent moral faculty in man (Kant's 'categorical imperative'). Still when we scientifically study the rise and development of moral ideas—starting from the cannibalistic morality of savage society, passing by the ferocious ethics of

the barbarians and the slave-morality of the Roman period, through the serf-morality of feudal epochs to the *bourgeois* morality of the contemporary capitalist society — in relation to all social developments and economic transformations which ran parallel to and in fact determined the historical transformation of moral ideas during this long period of human evolution, we feel convinced that moral ideas have nothing to do with God or any latent moral sense in man. Moral ideas are the product of and grow on the basis of man's constantly changing socio-economic environment.

To believe that moral conceptions are the flashlight product of the divine intuitions of saints or the creations of the arbitrary 'creative will' of Nietzschean supermen or the suggestions of an inherent *moral will* in man as Kant postulated, is only to suffer from religious hallucination or metaphysical prejudices. Neither saintly visions nor the creative cataclysmic will of the superman, nor again the unerring ethical inner sense 'within' (independently working and independent of man's social circumstances) is the real and final source of moral ideas which, in fact, arise from and are the expression of the social necessities of an epoch. Moral ideas are the conditions, categorically expressed, for the maintenance of a specific form of society, for guarding a specific grouping of the social forces of an epoch. And since society is in a permanent state of development, developing on the basis of constantly growing instruments of labour and of constantly raging struggle between various social groups for the mastery of these instruments (the class struggle), ethical systems and moral codes constantly change from age to age and vary with different social groups to achieve their different social purposes. Hence we had different moralities in different epochs and even during the same epoch different moral codes prevail among different classes and social groups, corresponding to their divergent and often antagonistic group interests.

Moral criteria are, therefore, not to be discovered in the intuitions of saints or to be deduced from within the 'inner voice.' Moral standards develop out of the social environment and correspond to the specific interests of different classes and social groups which struggle for power in the amphitheatre of history.

There is absolutely nothing divine about moral ideas. They are as earthly as water and have a material basis and origin.

How the evolution of the *moral* sense and growth of ethical conceptions have depended on the development of productive forces and group interests, can be seen when we consider the moral ideas of a people in relation to their economic condition. When humanity was a conglomeration of tribes and had not developed agriculture, each tribe was compelled to supplement its scanty food supply of fruit, fish and fowl with the flesh of the prisoners whom it captured in its chronic war with other tribes. Cannibalism was the economic necessity in savage society and the moral sense of the people of the savage epoch was not outraged at the thought of eating their fellow-men. *The morality of that period sanctioned Cannibalism.*

When after some time the savage tribes developed agriculture and produced food *just sufficient* to maintain its members, it no longer needed to reinforce its stock with human flesh. The economic necessity of cannibalism vanishing, the moral ideas of the primitive tribesmen suffered a corresponding transformation. The prevailing moral standards began to condemn cannibalism as 'immoral,' 'inhuman,' 'barbarous.' Still *the tribe had no food surplus and, therefore, could not maintain prisoners of war.* They had no other option except *to massacre* them. So, the morality of the age, though it deprecated cannibalism as 'immoral,' supported the massacring of prisoners as 'moral.' The economic condition (*viz.* the existence of surplus food to feed the prisoners of war) necessary for the development of a moral concept which would condemn the massacring of prisoners as 'barbarous' not being present, the ruling morality of the age, though it condemned cannibalism, continued to support inhuman massacres of prisoners of war.

Through long ages, with the development of human knowledge and better implements of labour, the tribe developed agriculture to a high pitch of efficiency when after meeting the needs of its members, some food surplus was left. It no longer massacred the captives but transformed them into *slaves*, into useful labourers on the soil. The moral code of this period, while thundering moral condemnation against the previous practices of cannibalism and massacring prisoners of war, however, glorified the system of slave labour as an immutable part of the cosmic order, as ordained by God.

But after all arable ground was brought under the plough

and divided among a few landlords, slavery came to be regarded as reprehensible and was abolished. The socio-economic ground for this abolition was created by the fact that after all land was usurped and divided by a few powerful individuals among themselves, the latter could permit some degree of freedom to their slaves. Till all arable land was not seized by the land-owning class, any slave might leave his master and become a cultivator. Hence the system of slavery was legally enforced and morally condemned during the Slave Age. But when all land was partitioned among the few powerful ones, the makers of law and exploiters of slave labour, the historical necessity of slavery as an institution vanished. This social historical fact was reflected in the ruling morality of the age (the Feudal Epoch) which denounced slavery as a barbarous institution. The slave was elevated to the status of a serf.

It was after the industrial development that the rising class of manufacturers felt the necessity of *free labourers* for their growing industries. Their economic development required the weaning away of the *serf* from the soil where he was a semi-slave of the landlord. This social necessity for the abolition of serfdom in the interests of the industrial development of humanity, in the interests of the development of social productive forces of humanity, found a *moral* formulation in the revolutionary ethics which Voltaire, Rousseau and other revolutionary philosophers of the rising *bourgeois* class (the class of manufacturers and traders) preached and wherein they condemned, in scathing terms, *the immorality of serfdom*. But even the best ethical thinkers of the period (including Voltaire, Rousseau and other revolutionary pioneers of *bourgeois morality*) did not see anything wrong in the exploitation of wage-labourers by the manufacturers. The reason is obvious. The material conditions necessary for the rise of such a moral concept were not present at the time. It is now, after the material productive forces of the human society have enormously developed, that social-material conditions have ripened for the development and spread, among large sections of the people, of a new and higher concept of social morality viz. socialist morality. The fact that the new and higher ethical conception of social relationships has come into being and is rapidly permeating larger and larger sections of human population, proves that the necessary social pre-

requisites for reconstructing society on the basis of higher socialist economic and moral principles have already developed within the contemporary society.

Some of the finest intellectuals and artists of the modern age including Bernard Shaw and Henry Barbousse are the eloquent (though sometimes unscientific) spokesmen of the new socialist morality.

XVII

THE pessimistic, spiritual-mystical, individualistic and otherworldly philosophies, which developed and prospered in India for centuries, were only the pathological product of the Aryan society suffering from the basic material impotency. At a certain stage of their development, the productive forces of the Aryan society found it impossible to develop further on account of the resistance of the social framework. Not formidable enough to break this framework, the productive forces ceased to grow. And when the basic technical-economic forces of the Aryan society ceased to develop, its social and cultural life simultaneously ceased to develop and finally grew paralytic and morbid.

An analysis of the history of the decline of various societies and civilizations (Babylon, Greece, Rome, China, Egypt, etc.) demonstrates that they began to decline socially, economically, and culturally only after their basic material productive forces ceased to develop. The technical-economic paralysis of these societies brought about a corresponding social and cultural paralysis. With the cessation of development of the productive forces, a period of social decay and decline commences. All processes of social life grow first monotonous and then moribund. The psychology of the ruling social groups degenerates and is characterized by hysteria and morbidness. This hysteria and this morbidness often take the form of spiritual mystical philosophies which sidetrack the attention of the people from the living, persisting realities of life, which develop among them an anti-social hostility for all earthly and social things, and which stimulate among them futile hopes for a future happy Other-World or lazy dreams of *Nirvana* whereby the individual, after winding up all interest in earthly and social matters, may start the sedate life of an anchorite consecrated to chronic meditation and communication with God with the ultimate desire to dis-

solve himself into that Universal Nebula.

The intellectual life of decaying societies, decaying as an inevitable result of the decline or stagnation of its material productive forces, is essentially characterized by *degeneration* and becomes inconcrete, unearthly and Utopian. The society no longer feels powerful to create *new* in the field of social, philosophical and artistic activity. Its capacities for vital creative action are lost, its initiative is broken. This paralysis of creative instincts and capacities of the society, this weakening of the social egoism and idealism of its members, this morbid and futile hungering after a fictitious future After-World or nebulous inner spiritual self, this depreciation of the earthly and social Reality and Utopian hunting after Nirvana and other Willow-the-Wisps of God-haunted imagination—all this denotes a psychological degeneration and ideological confusion among the members of a decaying society. It is, in the final analysis, only the *psychic* product and counterpart of the unutterable confusion in which the material productive forces have fallen as a result of the extreme pressure exerted upon them by the social framework which is sufficiently strong to stifle the further growth of these forces and limit their movement within its narrow orbit. The inability of the social mind to originate *new* things in the philosophical and cultural fields is only the *psychic* reflection of the inability of the basic material productive forces of the society to grow further. Both the social mind and the productive forces of the society are held captive by the social framework (as the caste system of the *Hindus* in the case of *India*). And unable to transcend the limitations imposed on it by the stifling social framework, the social mind (in the person of its philosophers, artists, moralists, saints) achieves nothing creative, new and vital, and, at its worst, creates philosophies which are extremely individualistic, unearthly and anti-social in their character, which narcotize the consciousness of the individual seducing him to pursue anti-social and non-earthly ideals as Nirvana. All spiritual and mystical philosophies, all *unreal* metaphysics and ultra-individualistic ethics which ravaged *India* for ages, devastating the vital social instincts of the *Indian* people and robbing them of the robust healthy sense of earthly and social Reality, were the *ideal* product of the *Aryan* society during the historical period when it remained stationary as a result

of the stagnation of its technical economic forces. As soon as the material basis of the Aryan society became static, its social and cultural life ceased to be dynamic. It either did not create or created only futilities and fireworks of mystical philosophies which undermined the pragmatic instincts of the Hindu race, instigating it to refrain from mundane action and focus all their attention on fictitious Other-Worlds or on God within.

XVIII

How shall we explain the growth and growing popularity of mystical philosophies and cults (such as the cult of ghosts and goblins which has victimised even such a robust scientific mind as that of Oliver Lodge) in contemporary Europe, just after the First World War (1914-18) ?

The forces of production which have been rapidly accumulating in the European society (the nucleus and the determinant of the world social order) for the last one hundred years (since the Industrial Revolution) now find it difficult to develop further within the existing capitalist framework of the European society. Europe has made and is making such an amazing advance in *technique* and science and has thereby developed its powers of material production to such a climax that a conflict of formidable proportion and world-historical significance has developed between the forces of production and the existing capitalist mode of production on which the entire structure of contemporary world society is based. The economic and social systems as also the existing state structures of modern European nations have ceased to correspond with the needs of progressive expansion of the fundamental productive forces which, for further and untrammelled growth, require new and more free social, political and economic forms and framework viz. socialist. If the existing social system, which hitherto assisted the development of the technical, scientific, and other productive forces of society but which has now grown into an active obstacle to the rapidly accumulated productive forces, is not replaced by the socialist system, these productive forces—these basic forces of humanity with which it is carrying on its indispensable and age-long struggle against Nature for basic nutritions of life and which are the creation of centuries of human labour—will cease to develop, *will decline and perish*. Hu-

manity will retrograde to barbarism.

The human society requires to be reconstructed on the basis of its accumulated productive forces. The entire world is in the throes of a universal and profound social crisis which reflects itself in numerous, frequent, and extensive international wars, large-scale class struggles, chronic economic crises and deadlocks.

Some of the best intellectuals cannot comprehend the fundamental causes of the contemporary world-wide social crisis. They are terrified at the sight of the gigantic forces of production which can no longer develop within the limits of the existing social and economic systems and which wait for organization on an absolutely new basis. Unable to understand the essential cause of the world *debacle*—the want of correspondence between the social framework and the accumulated productive forces of humanity—they propose *moral, religious, reformist, reactionary* solutions for the problem. Or like Mahatma Gandhi they call on humanity to repudiate the productive forces (though the Mahatma may not have formulated this in unambiguous and systematic terms, the whole trend of his subjective metaphysical philosophy and ascetic ethics based on minimum of needs and desires, the spiritual beauty of the *charkha*, the virtue of individual self-reliance instead of social inter-dependence, the benefits of simple life, etc., proclaims it) and revert to the simple productive instruments of the past (the plough, the *charkha* and artisan's simple instruments).

The Utopian reactionary solutions suggested by these 'leaders' of humanity including 'the world's greatest man,' only betray their own exhaustion and confusion at the sight of the colossal forces developed within the modern society. Unable to suggest *practical* methods for the organization of these social forces, they advise the destruction of these forces, thereby revealing their own psychological exhaustion and bankruptcy of organizational talent.

This exhaustion and cowardly confusion of the 'leaders' of contemporary humanity, their terror before the vast productive forces of the modern world, finds a schematic psychic conscious expression and *rationalization* in the reactionary social Utopia of a Gandhi, or the spiritual—mystical philosophy of an Aurobindo.

As to Theosophy of Mrs. Besant and the Ghost cult of Oliver Lodge and his international comrades-in-Ghost belief, they gained recruits on account of a general psychological crisis which overtook the people soon after the First World War and was the product of the world-wide social and economic dislocation resulting from the War. Mystically-inclined people, in whom the scientific habit of thinking was not properly developed, joined these cults and found in them a cosy, half-romantic, half-aesthetic, pseudo-intellectual refuge.

IXI

THE fundamental task of our epoch is that of Organization, of the re-organization of the colossal and complex productive forces accumulated within the human society on a world socialist basis. The imperialist—capitalist framework of the world society is growing into a powerful obstacle to the further development of these basic forces of humanity. This fundamental contradiction, the contradiction between the forces of production and the social framework, manifests itself, in the contemporary social world, in the form of acute political antagonisms and devastating world wars, disastrous and almost universal economic crises, in the sharpening of class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the historically determined architect of socialism. It expresses itself in the intellectual world, in the shape of violent ideological battles between the theoretical supporters of the *status quo* and the proclaimers and protagonists of the new social order. In the Soviet Union, the proletariat has already secured political power and is engaged in liquidating capitalism and advancing on the road of building socialism.

The solution of the existing world chaos does not lie in the denial and destruction of the complex and gigantic productive forces and reorganization of human society on a simple basis, on the basis of simple tools of production such as the plough and the *charkha*. This would lead only to the retrogression of humanity, in point of evolution, to the primitive state when it was carrying on a desperate struggle for existence against Nature with such inadequate and therefore partially effective tools. This would mean the *suicide* of human civilization which is to be measured in terms of humanity's progressive victory over

Nature, in terms of the advance man has made in the technical field *i.e.*, in the field of tools which are man's weapons to secure from his environment more and more means of his sustenance.

All catastrophies in the contemporary social world, all wars and antagonisms, wide-scale poverty and exploitation from which large sections of humanity are suffering, are not due to the *growth* of productive forces in the human society but are the legitimate product of the *capitalist organization* of these forces. Not these forces which are only man's instruments to get more means of sustenance from Nature but the capitalist monopoly of these forces is responsible for the widespread misery which is rampant among large sections of humanity. One should not deny and liquidate these vast productive forces (things don't vanish by wishing) but to strive for a social order based upon the principles of collective ownership of these productive forces and co-operative labour. In such a society, these forces will cease to be instruments of exploitation which they are at present but will be transformed into the collective power of a united humanity to extort from its environment *more and more* basic nutritions of life and growth. A scientific, socialist organization and working of the productive forces of society, maximum exploitation of the technical, scientific and economic resources of humanity on the basis of a world economic plan (fitting in with the needs of existence and growth of all members of the working humanity) on the principles of 'work for all,' 'co-operative labour' and collective ownership of the means of production and distribution, will emancipate humanity from poverty, war, exploitation, and slavery. Not the demolition of machinery, science, and other productive forces, which constitute humanity's basic achievement across ages, Man's immortal instrument to fight triumphantly Nature, but a scientific world-wide, socialist organization of these forces, can alone bring freedom and plenty to humanity.

All social, political, and economic programmes of hundred per cent Indians and their international supporters, based on the negation of these forces, based on anti-machine, anti-scientific and anti-materialistic prejudices, will not succeed in realizing their reactionary goal of rehabilitating the social systems, philosophies and outlooks of life of previous ages.

'Earnings for the Past' in man is one of the most formid-

able enemies of all social progress. This Will to the Past must be conquered by all heroic and rational individuals who want to work for emancipating humanity both from the tyranny of Nature and exploitation within the human society. They must combat Gandhism as the cult of arch-reaction.

XX

THE philosophy of the hundred per cent Indians is essentially a reactionary philosophy. It is a restatement of the theories, beliefs, doctrines, and principles which prevailed in India in the past and were the ideal product of the social conditions of those early epochs. The Indian society has radically changed since then, especially after Britain's conquest of India and its subsequent industrialization. New social forces have developed in India which require different philosophies to explain them, to interpret them, to organize and guide them towards higher future developments. Not the metaphysical and individualistic philosophies of the past which the hundred per cent Indians preach to the Indian people but the scientific and social philosophies of the modern times can help towards the evolving and mustering of all progressive social classes for winning national freedom, towards a rational understanding and solution of the social, political and economic problems of contemporary India, towards the building up of a vital rationalist social culture. A religio-mystical attitude towards life in general and social life in particular, prevents a correct scientific dialectic materialist understanding of natural and social phenomena and a rational historical solution of social and political problems. Mysticism and subjectivism, on which the whole philosophy of the hundred per cent Indians is based, are most formidable obstacles to the growth of all social and scientific knowledge. Mystics, priests, saints, and metaphysicians see the natural and social worlds *topsy turvy*, inevitably misunderstand them and suggest Utopian solutions of the problems thereof. Instead of understanding the social forces of the contemporary world *objectively*, instead of studying the tendencies of these forces and the direction of their forward movements, and instead of mobilizing all their individual and social collective power to accelerate the advance of these forces towards the future (all forces move towards the future), these reactionaries cry *halt to*

these forces for they jar against their spiritual and metaphysical peace. And when these elemental forces of the social world (the technical, economic, and scientific forces of the modern Industrial Epoch) refuse to halt or commit suicide at the command of the saints and mystics but continue to grow enveloping larger and larger sections of the population, these "supermen" avenge themselves by finding fault with the moral and 'spiritual' capacities of the people. Instead of recognizing that their own understanding of the laws and dynamics of social evolution is wrong, these holy men brand humanity as a collection of moral weaklings who cannot resist material temptations and appreciate the beauties of spiritual life (the sweet spiritualizing music of the *charkha* as the Mahatma puts it).

Repudiation of industrialism, overthrow of science, demolition of machinery and reinstatement, in their place, of the holy plough, the more holy *charkha* and spiritual metaphysical cults and philosophies will bring neither salvation to humanity nor *Swaraj* to the Indian people. It will disintegrate humanity into tribes (machines alone can unite large masses of men through railways and steamships or by bringing them together in centres of production like factories, mines and workshops). It will destroy the social consciousness which has grown and been growing more and more in the international world as a result of, as a psychological product of social processes of machine labour and collective processes of social life developing out of the social processes of machine labour. The overthrow of science will rehabilitate superstition and error embodied in religion and God idea. And the reestablishment of the individualistic philosophies will only strengthen the egoistic, centripetal tendencies in man and weaken his social instincts without which no social life, no combination of men, can last and no large-scale collective efforts are possible.

So far as contemporary India is concerned, the reactionary economics and philosophy of the hundred per cent Indian, would, if practised, result into the loss of the material, psychological, and, intellectual advance made by the Indian people during the last fifty years. It will enthrone among the people, in their entirety, social superstitions and religious errors of the ancient and medieval epochs which are gradually losing ground as a result of the wider and wider spread of scientific

and rationalist ideas among the upper strata of the Indian Nation and by the intellectualizing power of machine processes of industrial production among the industrial workers. Machine operations destroy the mysticism of the peasant transformed into the city worker by teaching him the relation of cause and effect. In the actual act of working the machine, the worker loses his mysticism and becomes more rational and proportionately less religious. The industrialization of India is necessary for even a partial emancipation of large sections of the Indian people from the peasant's superstition and dread of God.

The philosophy of the hundred per cent Indian, his wrong social perspectives and conceptions of human progress (synonymous with 'reduction of want and desire,' 'realization of Soul' and other reactionary and nebulous stuff), correspond too little with the social conditions of the modern world and conflict too much with the rapidly growing scientific and social knowledge of humanity, for having appreciable influence among the people for a long time. In India also, the world's stronghold of metaphysics and religious superstition, social forces (scientific, technical and economic) are rapidly growing which would make more and more impossible the further thriving of these reactionary philosophies, cults and attitudes. Gandhism is the *last flash*, the most concentrated expression, of the steadily declining religio-mystical 'culture' and feudal petti-bourgeois socio-economic philosophy of Ancient India.

24

TRANSFORMATION TO THE BOURGEOIS BASIS

GANDHISM has played a decisive role in the life of the Indian nation for more than last three decades. It so signally dominated and shaped it, particularly in the ideological and political domains, that we can truly describe that period as the epoch of Gandhism.

Even after his life was ended by the bullets of Hindu reaction in 1948, Gandhism still continues to influence our national life, though to a diminished extent. In the post-Independence period, such conceptions, programmes and movements as Bhoodan and Sampattidan, Sarvoday and others have been elaborated on the basis of the Gandhian ideology. Further, Pandit Nehru again and again declares that the ideals of "peaceful co-existence" and *Panchsheel* conform to the essential principles of Gandhism, and he and other Congress ministers invoke repeatedly Gandhian principles in their speeches.

Like every ideology such as Liberalism, Fascism, Marxism and others, Gandhism rose out of socio-historical soil. Like any of these ideologies, it too has a class character and content.

To comprehend the rise of Gandhism, it is, therefore, necessary to have a concrete understanding of the society which gave birth to it. It is also necessary to have a grasp of the historical position and the interests of the particular class of that society of which it was the specific ideology.

As an ideology, Gandhism passed through two phases of development, one extending from about 1904 to 1920 and another enveloping the subsequent period. During the first phase,

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Gandhism had a petty-bourgeois social basis. It expressed in a *reactionary way* the interests and aspirations of the middle classes of the *old* Indian society, especially its artisan and peasant sections, which were substantially ruined as a result of the influx of cheap machine-made goods of modern foreign and Indian industries and heavy land tax respectively. During the second phase, which began in 1920, when Gandhi himself moved the Resolution on Swadeshi (for nation's support to the growing industrialization of India) at the Calcutta Congress and thus stood for modern industrialization, petty-bourgeois Gandhism, which had hitherto crusaded against modern machine-based industry, was transformed into full-fledged bourgeois Gandhism expressing the interests and aspirations of the Indian bourgeoisie as it was historically circumstanced. We will see how.

During the British period, the old artisan and handicraft classes of India were ruined as a result of their inability to compete in the market with the foreign and subsequently native capitalist classes which supplied cheap goods of modern machine-based industries. These ruined artisan and handicraft strata of the Indian population developed an antagonistic attitude to modern power-driven industrial technique, since they were unable to comprehend that it was not the machine technique but its operation on a capitalist basis which was the real evil. They, like the machine wreckers of the English society in the phase of the dawn of capitalism, developed anti-machine hostility, stood for the elimination of modern industries and longed for a resuscitation of the pre-capitalist society based on handicraft and artisan industries.

The "Hind Swaraj" published by Gandhi in 1906 expressed this urge. In that brochure, Gandhi crusades against modern machinery declaring it to be *absolute* evil in all social circumstances.

The British government also imposed on the Indian peasantry heavy land tax which steadily impoverished it. The impoverished Indian peasantry developed a yearning for the return to the past Indian society based on the self-sufficient village agriculture when the village peasant had not to pay the exorbitant land tax to the state and when he did not produce for the capricious market and was not therefore a victim of the vicissitudes of the market.

The "Hind Swarāj" (or the "Indian Home Rule"), the classical exponent of petty-bourgeois Gandhism, denounced the modern competitive capitalist society and exhorted the Indian people to repudiate modern civilization including modern machinery, modern industries, modern transport, modern press and schools, even modern medicine and re-establish the pre-capitalist society based on handicraft and artisan industries and the autarchic village, the pivot of that society. "Back to the *Charkha* (the spinning wheel)" was one of its basic economic slogans.

Gandhian ideology, during this phase, was thus essentially petty-bourgeois and socially reactionary. Gandhi's voice, during this period, was not the voice of the Indian bourgeoisie which, far from *liquidating* modern machine-based industries and transport, desired to *spread* them under the auspices of its own class ownership.

Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence, during this phase, has also a petty-bourgeois flavour. It was a variety of petty-bourgeois pacifism expressing the social timidity of the Indian petty-bourgeoisie sublimated and lifted to the level of an *absolute* ethical principle.

During this phase, other ideologies also existed, for instance the bourgeois ideology propagated by Tilak and his political group. The latter did not denounce modern technology and modern science and stood for the expansion of the Indian capitalist industry through the programme of Swadeshi. Here this group of leaders expressed the interests of the developing industrial bourgeoisie. During this phase, Gandhi expressed the interests and the social outlook of handicraft, artisan and peasant sections of the Indian petty-bourgeoisie which were antagonistic not only to foreign capitalism but also to Indian capitalism since both these threatened them with extinction. Tilak and his group on the other hand expressed the interests and the social outlook of the rising bourgeoisie which was a product of Indian capitalist development. Hence the programme of the "Extremists" headed by Tilak included the objective of rapid industrial expansion of India, of course under the auspices of the Indian capitalist class.

Hence, we can conclude that petty-bourgeois Gandhism (1904-1920) was a reactionary ideological phenomenon in cont-

rust to the bourgeois ideology of the "Extremist group" which, from the standpoint of the historical evolution of the Indian society, was progressive.

But when Gandhi, at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress held in 1920, supported capitalist industrialization of India through the programme of Swadeshi, petty-bourgeois Gandhism became transformed into bourgeois Gandhism.

The key to understanding such a transformation lies in Gandhi's basic class affiliation to the bourgeoisie. With his social origin in a bourgeois family (his father was a Diwan of a native State), with his having imbibed bourgeois education not in an Indian University but in a bourgeois educational centre in England, and further, with his intimate social contacts with the Indian bourgeoisie, such a transformation is easily explicable.

With this transformation, Gandhi was restored to his class, the Indian bourgeoisie. Thenceforward, he remained a domicile in the camp of his class, even became its outstanding ideological, political, and practical leader.

Why do we characterize Gandhism of the post-First World War period bourgeois Gandhism ?

It is because reconstructed Gandhism of this phase embodied the very consciousness of the Indian bourgeoisie, its fundamental class interests and yearnings, its basic class needs.

What were the basic class needs of the Indian bourgeoisie as it was historically situated ?

First, the Indian bourgeoisie could not freely develop the national capitalist economy since the British bourgeoisie obstructed such a development. The British bourgeoisie, by using its superior economic strength as also its state power in India, did not permit a *free and rapid* development of Indian industries; monopolized a large portion of the Indian market for itself, established the iron grip of British finance capital over Indian-owned industries and, above all, prevented any appreciable development of heavy industries in India so vital for a free, rapid, and independent development of a national economy.

This conflict of interests between the Indian bourgeoisie and the British bourgeoisie made the former antagonistic to the latter. The class interest of the Indian bourgeoisie demanded that it should fight the imperialist British bourgeoisie which had

politically enslaved India.

But the capitalist class carries with it, from its very birth, "its hostile shadow," the proletarian class, whose basic interest lies not only in fighting and liquidating foreign capitalism but also native capitalism. It has for its objective not only national liberation from foreign imperialist capitalism but also socialist liberation from all capitalism including *its own* native capitalism.

The Indian bourgeoisie was therefore sandwiched between two forces, British imperialism on one hand and the Indian proletariat on the other.

So the correct strategy for the Indian bourgeoisie in the struggle against British imperialism, from the standpoint of its own basic class interest, demanded that while it mobilized under its leadership all anti-imperialist forces of the Indian society such as workers, peasants, and petty-bourgeoisie and organized mass movements for freedom (Non-Co-operation, Civil Disobedience, Quit India, and others), it had to manoeuvre in such a manner that, first, the workers and the peasants whom it directly or indirectly exploited and mobilized for the struggle against imperialism, did not put forth their own class demands, did not fight for their own class liberation, i.e. for their liberation from both foreign and native capitalist exploiters and, secondly, that the anti-imperialist mass struggle which it led did not develop on revolutionary and class lines, did not assume revolutionary and class forms but remained supra-class national and within the matrix of a non-revolutionary methodology of struggle.

It needed a mastermind, a supergenius who could evolve an ideology and strategy for such a bourgeois class purpose.

Here intervenes the genius of bourgeois Gandhi. He evolved Gandhism or the classical ideology and strategy of the Indian bourgeoisie to serve its class interests *as it was historically placed*.

This will be clarified when we assess the ingredients of Gandhism.

Gandhism propounded the theory of class collaboration. In class-stratified society, which is based on the subjection of one class by the other, such a theory can only serve the interests of the exploiting class, can only instigate the victims of exploitation to fraternize with their exploiters, can only chain the slaves to their masters and perpetuate the exploitative society. Fur-

ther, it can only shackle the exploited classes to the political leadership of the exploiting class in the national liberation struggle.¹

Gandhism also propagated the doctrine of *absolute* non-violence. He exhorted the Indian people to discard the weapon of violence in their struggle for national liberation against armed British imperialism on the ground that violence *in itself* is evil and its use reprehensible *in all situations*.

There was, however, a fundamental contradiction in Gandhi's theoretical stand and his political practice. While he condemned the use of (in reality defensive) violence against the armed imperialist enemy who used extensive violence against even the non-violent anti-imperialist mass struggle which he himself organized and led, he reprimanded the Gharwali soldiers, a section of the imperialist army, for refusing to fire on the masses at Peshawar during the course of the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-31) when their officers commanded them to fire. Here the apostle of the principle of absolute non-violence rebuked the Indian army men for practising his own beloved principle of non-violence, for their patriotic refusal to fire on the unarmed masses who, in response to his own directive and under his own leadership, were participating in the anti-imperialist non-violent mass Civil Disobedience Movement, on the ground of the sanctity of the principle of military discipline! Here Gandhi subordinated his sacred principle of absolute non-violence to that of maintaining the discipline and, therefore, the integrity and efficient functioning of the alien imperialist army. He castigated the Gharwali soldiers for practising non-violence, *for not firing* on the crowd and thereby *for not practising* violence against the unarmed people!

1 It is permissible for the working class, for instance, to unite with the national bourgeoisie in the national liberation struggle. It should enter the united front but not merge into it. It must maintain its ideological, political and organizational distinct entity within the united front and propagate its own programme and methods of struggle (the general strike and others) to achieve national liberation. It must not subordinate itself to the national bourgeoisie in the national united front. It should conform to Lenin's directive "Strike together, March independently."

This was, however, not a solitary instance of the contradiction between Gandhi's theoretical position regarding the problem of violence vs. non-violence and his political practice. We will refer to other historical situations when he supported the use of violence. He supported British imperialism in its war against the Boers in South Africa during the first decade of the present century, when the latter heroically rose in revolt against alien British domination. His support to Britain was motivated with the hope that the latter would reward India for this support by granting some concessions and political reforms to India, in reality to the Indian bourgeoisie.

Here the protagonist of the doctrine of *unconditional non-violence* did not regard it paradoxical to support the war on the oppressor's side and still hold that principle. He unhesitatingly subordinated that principle to the exigency of bourgeois politics.

Subsequently, when the Congress governments were installed in a number of provinces in the latter half of the thirties under the aegis of the new Constitution inaugurated by Britain in 1936 and when workers' and peasants' movements for their class demands, also anti-Hindi agitation and other struggles, flared up in the Madras province, Gandhi advised Rajagopalachari, the head of the Congress government, to make use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act to combat these movements.²

During the Second World War, Gandhi, despite his immutable principle of *absolute* non-violence, expressed his willingness to support Britain in war against the Fascist Powers if she assured India that she would grant Independence after the successful termination of the War and provide for a National Government invested with substantial powers during the war period. Negotiations in pursuance of this objective did not succeed but it does not delete the fact that Gandhi was prepared to support war which is no carnival of fraternal greetings between nations but murderous nightmarish exchange of bombs and bullets making bleeding corpses of millions. There exists a staggering unresolvable contradiction between support to war and adherence to the principle of *absolute* non-violence.

² Refer: Menon, Dr., *Civil Liberties Under Provincial Autonomy*.

Here too Gandhi in practice subordinated, nay sacrificed his principle to the exigencies of politics.

How is this staggering dichotomy between theoretical Gandhism and Gandhi's own political practice to be explained?

If we scrutinize this problem through the illuminating searchlight of Marxist ideology, we will find that underlying this apparent dichotomy, this glaring contradiction between avowed theory and implemented practice, there existed a fundamental consistency, the logic of the class interest of the Indian bourgeoisie as it was historically situated.

The Indian bourgeoisie like every propertied (hence exploiting) class needed a state to protect its fundamental interest viz. class ownership of the means of production on the basis of which it exists as a class and exploits the working population, against any challenge to it by the latter.

Under the British rule, this fundamental interest of the Indian bourgeoisie was protected by the British imperialist state, which suppressed any attempt of the Indian workers, peasants, and tenants to challenge not only British capitalism but also native capitalism and landlordism.

Hence it was in the vital interest of the Indian propertied classes to safeguard the British state in India against any attempt of the Indian masses, whom both foreign as well as native propertied classes exploited, to seriously undermine it. The British state in India was the gendarme protecting not only British capitalist property in India but also the property of the Indian capitalists and landlords.

The Indian bourgeoisie, as we have stated before, renounced the programme of mobilizing the Indian masses for a revolutionary struggle for overthrowing British imperialism since it was afraid and rightly so that such a struggle might not stop at the limit imposed on it by the bourgeois leadership viz. the elimination of British imperialism but subsequently or even simultaneously might challenge Indian propertied classes also.

Hence, the fundamental strategy of the Indian bourgeoisie through its genius-leader Gandhi was to organize a non-revolutionary mass struggle as a pressure weapon to extort from Britain substantial reforms and finally a transfer of power to the Indian bourgeoisie.

To the bourgeoisie, the imperialist state was a vital neces-

sity to protect capitalist property relations against any challenge from the exploited classes.

Hence, it logically follows that, during the period of imperialist rule, the state machine even of British imperialism should not disintegrate through any disappearance of military discipline in its armed forces.

This vital need of the Indian bourgeoisie was *instinctively*, if not consciously, felt by his genius-leader, Gandhi, which prompted him to categorically condemn even the non-violent act of the Gharwali soldiers to refuse to fire on the peaceful demonstrators who had responded to the patriotic call of the Congress led by Gandhi himself and participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement. He withdrew movements when they broke through non-revolutionary and supra-class (in reality bourgeois class) forms and assumed revolutionary and class forms; e.g., his Bardoli Resolution withdrawing the N. C. O. movement which was criticised even by bourgeois leaders like C. R. Das and others.

Violence, both aggressive and defensive, springs from the social soil of exploitative class society based on private property in the means of production and resultant exploitation of the toiling value-producing classes. The state which includes armed forces, police, prisons, etc. is, as Pandit Nehru has often remarked, obviously an organization of force to protect in capitalist society, capitalist property relations. One who stands for private property must necessarily stand for the institution of the state.

Gandhi stood for the institution of the state. It was but logical. When one subscribes to the institution of private property and resultant class-stratified society divided into the exploiting and exploited classes, he must, of logical necessity, support the institution of the state.

Thus, by tragic irony, Gandhi, who abhorred even an atom of violence, was driven, by the logic of the vital interest of the class, the Indian bourgeoisie, of which he was the supreme expression, to stand for the institution of the state, specifically for the bourgeois class state defending bourgeois property rights.

One of the greatest misconceptions rampant on a planetary scale is that Gandhi, *in practice*, consistently opposed the use

of violence.

He did exhort the masses to perennially practise non-violence, not to deviate an iota from it, but he did not crusade against the institution of the state which is an organization of force. He did not stand for its liquidation (demobilization of the army, police, etc.).'

He was a bourgeois realist of the highest order and recognized the necessity of the institution of the state to protect the bourgeois society "from both external aggression and internal rebellion" (his speech at the Round Table Conference 1931).

Did not Gandhi endorse, even advise, the despatch of armies of the Indian Union against Pakistani armed forces which had invaded Kashmir?

As we have stated above, violence, both aggressive and defensive, arises out of the social relations of class-stratified society.

Only when private property is abolished, classes and class exploitation will disappear. With the vanishing of classes, the institution of the state will vanish. A socialist society based on the social ownership of the means of production, cooperative labour and fraternal relations among all humans, will emerge embodying the dream of Gandhi, the great bourgeois humanist, his dream of the non-violent social world, the historical road to which he however did not know.

Non-violence, when preached only to the oppressed subject people, only stabilized the violence of imperialism which ruled over them by autocratic and undemocratic methods. Gandhi's non-violence stabilized imperialist violence, potential in its state machine or unfolded when it operated with its military weapons. Gandhi's non-violence played a counter-revolutionary role in the national liberation struggle of the Indian people. The mass movements that he organized and led, however, had a progressive national reformist oppositional character and value.

The problem emerges whether Gandhi was conscious of the dichotomy between his declared principle of non-violence, which he, with such passionate, almost crusading zeal preached, and his political practice when, on certain crucial occasions, he supported the use of violence (support to war etc.)?

Is not this contradiction so obvious that even one with

meagre intelligence can see it? Did Gandhi recognize it?

We are convinced that he did not.

How can we explain that Gandhi, a leader of formidable intellectual calibre, could not locate such a flagrant contradiction which an ordinary human can do?

Gandhi incarnated the acme of moral integrity. He acted always in conformity with his convictions.

He was too great to practise what he thought to be untruth.

The problem can only be explained in terms of what the psycho-analyst describes as the process of rationalization.

Gandhi was the supreme expression of the consciousness of the Indian bourgeoisie. Gandhism was the theoretical expression of the practical historical interests of that class.

The contradictory position of the Indian bourgeoisie sandwiched between the pressure of imperialism and the threat of a socialist revolution of the Indian masses made theoretical Gandhism and Gandhism in practice contradictory.

For instance the economic interest of the Indian bourgeoisie lay in extending machine-based industries which would inevitably lead to the increasing destruction of cottage industries. But it also needed to divert the unrest of the impoverished peasants and craftsmen in a safe channel. In the programme formulated by its supreme leader Gandhi, therefore, both rapid industrialization and revival of the *Charkha* were juxtaposed though, in relation to the economic reality, they had the significance of being contraposed.

And Gandhism and the Gandhian programme bristle with such numerous contradictions.

The entire consciousness as well as the very instinctual urge of the Indian bourgeoisie to chase its own class interest were concentrated in Gandhi.

Precisely for that reason, he was the prisoner *par excellence* of the bourgeois class illusion, more than any individual bourgeois.

Through a series of subjective acrobatics and somersaults, tortuous mental manoeuvres and devices, through an avalanche of sophistry, he rationalized all the contradictory elements in theoretical Gandhism and Gandhism in practice and created a structure of thought and practice which, from the standpoint

of the laws of formal logic, was atrociously heterogeneous, contradictory and mosaic-like but, from the standpoint of the logic of the class interest of the Indian bourgeoisie as it was historically situated, most, almost completely, harmonious and pattern-like.

Since he represented to the maximum the consciousness of his class, its very instinct to devise all means to serve its class interest in the historically very unenviable situation in which it was placed, and since he was the architect of all these means, which constitute the ideology and practice of Gandhism, he could not notice the contradictions between and within them.

Ideology, as Marx observes, is visualizing phenomena with a false consciousness. The creator of the ideology by the very fact that he is its creator cannot see its inner contradictions. His subjective honesty itself is conditioned by that false consciousness, by that illusion.

Will to live and expand of the Indian bourgeoisie became incarnate in Gandhi and he created a classical ideology for this purpose for his class as it was historically circumstanced. Being the consciousness of his class to the supremest degree which very few leaders reach, he could not discern the obvious contradictions between and within that ideology and practice which even an ordinary human could see.

What is, however, of vital significance for our study of the role of Gandhism is that underlying the contradictions of its formal logical structure which reflected only the contradictory position and needs of the Indian bourgeoisie, there existed the dialectically unifying logic of its objective class interest.

25

A GREAT HUMANIST*

THE bullets of political Hindu reaction have killed Gandhi.

The shots fired by the Hindu terrorist have extinguished the life of Gandhi, incontrovertibly the unchallenged leader of the Indian nationalist movement since 1918 in all its stormy or sedate phases and the great architect of the nationalist *mass* movement of the Indian people for national liberation from alien British domination.

By assassinating Gandhi, political Hindu communal reaction has destroyed the life of one who was a living embodiment of rich and profound humanism, one whose heart was resonant with deep emotion of love for entire humanity, and whose outlook transcended the mere local or national. Gandhi was a contemporary link in the historical chain of those humanists who, through historical dialectic, occasionally emerge in the social world of man, and whose solidarity feeling is not merely restricted in expression to the community or the people from which they spring but envelops all human beings.

To portray Gandhi and evaluate his great and significant role in the life of the Indian people *as objectively as possible* is the highest homage that we can tender to this human Titan.

Gandhi was a nationalist *par excellence*.

Indian nationalism was the product of the economic and political pressures of British imperialist capitalism on the Indian people, which obstructed the free economic and cultural development of the Indian society. Capitalist Britain had also preserved reactionary Indian feudal states and created a semi-feudal class of zamindars which constituted an additional *feudal*

* Published in *New Perspective*, February, 1948.

obstacle to this development.

The Indian nationalist movement had thus for its objective the liquidation of foreign imperialism as well as of the feudal states and semi-feudal landlordism, which served as the social-political support of the British domination over India. This was the indispensable prerequisite for a free development of the Indian society on a capitalist or a socialist basis.

The national bourgeoisie was the pioneer of Indian nationalism and the nationalist movement. It created the Indian National Congress, its classical political party which organized and led great struggles for Indian freedom.

The Liberals (Gokhale, Banerjee and others), the Militant Nationalists (Tilak, Pal, Aurobindo Ghose, Lajpatrai and others), and subsequently the cadre of Congress leaders headed by Gandhi from 1918 onward, were the three groups of political leaders which historically succeeded one another in three different stages of the development of the Indian nationalist movement and which provided leadership to that movement in those stages.

Gandhi's supreme contribution to the Indian nationalist movement lay in the fact that he created a mass basis for that movement. He was the author of the first mass national liberation struggle of the Indian people. Gandhi further exploded the Liberal illusion that independence could be achieved *only with the aid and cooperation* of British "democracy". He also recognized the role of the masses and the extra-constitutional mass action in the struggle for independence in contrast to Tilak and other militant Nationalist leaders who did not adequately appreciate their decisive significance for making the nationalist movement effective and lacked the political imagination to evolve an appropriate programme for drawing the masses in the orbit of that movement such as Gandhi did viz. the programme of the non-payment of land tax for the peasant masses etc.

This was Gandhi's progressive contribution to Indian nationalism.

The Indian people, under his leadership, became heroic, audacious fighters for national freedom, courtiers of jails and receivers of hail-storms of bullets of the imperialist enemy.

Gandhi injected the people with deep hatred for the
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“Satanic” British government and with an unquenchable thirst for national freedom.

Gandhi was the highest expression of nationalism. Due to his social origin, education and all earlier experiences, as also due to bourgeoisie class influences, though he developed a progressive nationalist outlook, *ideologically* he could not transcend the bourgeois limitation of that outlook.

Subjectively he incarnated the very spirit of nationalism, its profound hatred of foreign enslavement and heroic will and determination to end that enslavement. The consciousness of Gandhi, the nationalist of the classical type, was also completely free from even the faintest trace of provincial particularism or communalism. He was not a Gujarati or a Hindu but an Indian, a nationalist *par excellence*.

The texture of Gandhi’s consciousness was, however, essentially bourgeois and, therefore, his nationalism was governed by a bourgeois class outlook. What does this signify? It means that his conception of imperialism, of struggle against imperialism, of the methods of that struggle, of national independence, were determined by that class outlook.

The ideology of Gandhism arose out of the historical needs of the national bourgeoisie. Since the national bourgeoisie was in objective opposition to imperialism which did not permit free industrialization and general economic development of the Indian society, it played a progressive role. Gandhism has, therefore, a progressive content too. But the economic dependence of the national bourgeoisie on imperialism on foreign finance capital, and further, its economic interlocking with landed interests gave that opposition a reformist character. There was also the perennial fear of the mass movement which might also challenge native capitalism and landlordism. This transformed the national bourgeoisie as well as its most-outstanding leader, Gandhi, into an anti-revolutionary and yet national reformist-oppositional social force.

Gandhism met both the needs of the national bourgeoisie viz. first, that of exerting maximum pressure on imperialism through mass struggle and the second, that of limiting that struggle lest it might threaten not only imperialism but also the national bourgeoisie itself.

Not that Gandhi was aware of the class *motif* behind his

ideology popularly known as Gandhism. His class inhibition prevented him from being aware of the bourgeois class nature of his ideology. Ideology is the sublimation of class interest on the conscious plane; it is the rationalization of that interest. But the creator of the class ideology is generally unaware of the class *motif* which, unconscious to himself, propels him to evolve a class ideology. He invests it with an absolute non-class character. In spite of his consummate genius, he remains the prisoner of this fundamental class illusion.

Gandhi's political theory, economic doctrine, ethical views, reflected the needs of the national bourgeoisie (as it was historically situated) to safeguard the bourgeois society in India and develop it further. To the extent that it stood for the development of the productive forces of Indian society, it played a progressive role. Hence, Gandhism, the class ideology of the Indian bourgeoisie, carried within it a progressive ingredient. To the extent, however, the national bourgeoisie, due to its historically weak position, was compelled to compromise with foreign imperialism and native feudalism, it played an anti-progressive role. There is in Gandhism, therefore, also an anti-progressive element.

Gandhi sincerely believed that a happy, prosperous, joyous national existence could be built up on the basis of a capitalist social system. This was due to the class limitation of his world outlook. Indian capitalism is not a young capitalism with a prosperous future in front of it. It is a feeble part of the declining world capitalism. It has no extensive foreign markets, colonies, as sources of super-profits. In competitive struggle with giant capitalisms of the U.S.A., Britain, and others, it has little prospect of success. It lives a precarious existence. It is denied the privilege of giving decent standards to the working masses since its revenue is limited.

Gandhi, however, due to class inhibition, was unable to grasp this objective historical fact. He did not realize that the laws of competitive capitalist economy are *objective* laws. There is no free will for the capitalists. Their practice in the economic field is dictated by the exigencies of competitive economic struggle under capitalism. Class struggle emerges out of the capitalist social soil itself. Imperialist wars too arise out of the economic competitive struggle between national groups

of capitalists. These struggles are only the emanations, the function of the capitalist social system.

Gandhi, the great humanist, since his titanic intellect, due to class inhibition, could not transcend the bourgeois framework, was unable to see the *social* roots of wars, exploitation, and oppression but attributed them to man's weak ethical structure. Instead of the programme of a revolutionary socialist transformation of the existing capitalist social structure as the solution of the world's ills, he gave the recipe of the "change of heart" theory as the panacea of those ills. Not that the social system should be changed but the human heart must experience a fundamental moral transformation. *Instead of fighting for a programme of substituting socialist social relations in place of capitalist social relations, he strove for humanizing capitalist social relations which, however, have intrinsic exploitative essence and character and cannot, therefore, be humanized.* The great humanist could not discover the origin of social ills in the class structure of society but in the ethical degradation of man which the capitalist social system itself engenders. He based his hope of the advent of a happy, strifeless social existence on the materializing of an ethical miracle, the miracle of the moral transformation of man.

The bourgeois consciousness of Gandhi should not, however, be confounded or identified with the sordid consciousness of an ordinary bourgeois. Gandhi was a *bourgeois* only in the sense that he *sincerely* believed in the validity of the existing society based on the capitalist property system as the *alternative* to which he saw only social chaos. Like Shakespeare, who recognized and exposed the atrocities of early capitalism in some of his sonnets and immortal dramas but whose mind moved within the framework of a bourgeois outlook, could not transcend it, Gandhi, too, in the twentieth century, recognized and denounced in burning words the barbarities of capitalist exploitation but could not transcend his essential bourgeois outlook. Gandhi loved the masses but also believed in the bourgeois social system. He indefatigably worked to alleviate the conditions of the masses *within* the framework of that system, a task which cannot be accomplished in the historical conditions in which backward Indian capitalism has been situated. A sincere believer in the capitalist social system (*and in that basic*

sense alone we describe him as a bourgeois), Gandhi naturally and logically disapproved of abolishing that system. He became the apostle of humanized social relations between classes and not the protagonist of ending the class structure of society itself. He became the bourgeois humanist of the highest type.

Gandhi was unable to recognize the historical conditional significance of the capitalist social system. He took the existing capitalist society *for granted*, as immutable. But, unlike other bourgeois humans, he deeply loved the masses and strove for the betterment of their condition with all his heart within the framework of that system. That is why he became a bourgeois humanist of the noblest type.

But, as we stated above, historically speaking there is no economic basis for implementing programmes of humanism or reformism in the era of the general decline of the world capitalist system, especially in a country like India where no prosperous capitalism can evolve. There emerges in such a phase the painful spectacle of an outstanding humanist engaged in making ineffectual attempts to alleviate the misery of the masses while becoming at the same time a consistent opponent of all attempts of the masses to change the extant capitalist social system through irreconcilable class struggle since he believes in the *validity* and the *immutability* of that social system. Thus the noble humanist, who is unable to recognize the reactionary nature of the disintegrating capitalist social system, becomes one of the staunchest opponents of a historically needed social transformation, of capitalism into socialism. He basically remains in the camp of exploiters, becomes its classical leader.

Gandhi was an anti-communalist *par excellence*. He interpreted Hinduism as a religion of human brotherhood and as such opposed all communal and other distinctions between men. He regarded both Muslim and Hindu communalisms as anti-national as well as anti-human. He condemned and combated both these passionately and with all his indefatigable energy. By resorting to long fasts he even staked his life to curb and extinguish communalism.

Millions of communally minded Muslims must be feeling puzzled how a Hindu can so nobly, naturally, and knowingly sacrifice his life and die from the bullets of his own co-religionist for protecting the life of the Muslim population. How petty

Jinnah must be looking before the Muslim millions when he described Gandhi's death as only the death of the greatest *Hindu* leader?

Gandhi launched his slogan of the Hindu-Muslim Unity on the eve of the great Non-cooperation Movement of 1919-21 as a vital prerequisite for securing national freedom. He made heroic persistent efforts to accomplish it in the subsequent period of the Indian history. The tragic fact, however, emerges, that the Hindu-Muslim antagonism, instead of declining, became accentuated from stage to stage till it culminated in the establishment of the separate Pakistan state of the Muslims and the most devastating Hindu-Muslim clashes recorded in history, which accompanied the Partition of India.

How is this failure to be explained?

The cure of the disease depends on a scientific diagnosis of the disease. Gandhi traced the roots of the Hindu-Muslim antagonism not to the material life processes of the Indian society but to the weak ethical structure of the people. In fact, historically, the communalism of the Muslim masses was the distorted ugly expression of their large scale economic discontent born of their exploitation by capitalists, landlords, moneylenders, and merchants *who, in India, due to historical reasons, happened to be composed predominantly of the Hindus*. The economically weak Muslim upper classes, in their struggle against their powerful rivals who happened to be Hindu, gave a communal turn to this class discontent of the Muslim masses. This was the origin of Muslim communalism.

When such is the genesis of Muslim communalism, the only decisive method to counteract it was to unite the Indian masses, both Hindu and Muslim, on the basis of their own common economic interests and lead them against Indian vested interests, both Hindu and Muslim. Thus alone the Muslim communalists could have been isolated from the Muslim masses. 'The development of class struggle was the only scientific, almost magic means to liquidate communalism.

This method to combat communalism did not occur to Gandhi due to his bourgeois class outlook. He could not discover the roots of social and political ills of the Indian society including communalism in the specific capitalist socio-economic structure of the Indian society but wrongly traced their origin to

the undeveloped moral sense of the Indian people. Here, unscientific idealistic and scientific materialist analyses of the causes of social ills collide. The great nationalist and humanist made heroic endeavours to end communalism for three decades by means such as passionate patriotic appeals, passionate soundings of man's human depths, frequent fasts and others. Communalism however became more and more aggravated.

Gandhi was an anti-communalist *par excellence*. He interpreted all religions as clarion calls of human brotherhood. He stood for a secular state permeated by the spirit of humanism.

It did not occur to Gandhi that struggles between man and man emerge from the existing economic organization of society, from its class structure. It did not occur to him that the genetic cause of Muslim communalism was the rivalry between weak Muslim vested interests and powerful Hindu vested interests. With such genesis, Muslim communalism like Hindu communalism which was adopted only for sectional advantage, as a political weapon by mainly feudal Hindu vested interests, could be counteracted only through the launching of united movements of the Indian masses, both Hindu and Muslim, for securing such demands as the abolition of Zamindari, freedom from debt, living wage, and others. Perennial development of class struggle was the only effective means of liquidating reactionary communal consciousness and increasingly building the historically progressive socialist class consciousness among the exploited masses, Hindu, Muslim, or others.

Objective laws of social development are *inexorable*, more powerful than the best, most heroic, and self-sacrificing endeavours even of a great humanist. Unless he bases his action on the scientific comprehension of these laws, of social roots of social ills, even his herculean effort to liquidate those ills will prove abortive.

Gandhi offered his life blood as living oblation to the cause of the liquidation of communalism in the social relations of the Indian people.

As a humanist Gandhi was a passionate internationalist. He dreamt of the unity, a *human synthesis*, of all peoples and nations which comprise humanity and which, at present, live apart and almost perennially struggle among themselves. Here,

too, Gandhi was handicapped by his bourgeois world outlook and was unable to reach a scientific diagnosis of such world evils as imperialist wars, national oppressions, and others. He could not trace the root cause of these evils to the world capitalist social system. He explained the eruption and persistence of these evils to the weak moral structure of man and not to economic necessity which drives national capitalisms to embark upon predatory wars of conquest leading to the enslavement and the oppression of large sections of humanity. With this outlook, Gandhi, with all his intellect, could not trace the roots of all class struggles, wars of colonial conquest and brigandage, to the capitalist economic system. Just as in the sphere of national politics, he could not recognize the united movement of the masses for their economic and political freedom as the only method to increasingly counteract communalism, he could not recognize the united movement of the exploited masses of humanity to end capitalism and establish worldwide socialist society (which alone is based on human relations between man and man instead of those between exploiters and exploited) as the only route to world peace and humanity's progress. The victory of the world socialist movement of the exploited masses of the world led by the world working class over world capitalism can alone eliminate wars between nations, can alone result not only in the peaceful co-existence among socialist nations but also in their fraternal collaboration and final fusion.

The pathos in the situation of Gandhi, the bourgeois humanist, is further accentuated by the fact that there is no economic basis for implementing programmes of even alleviating the worsening conditions of life and labour of the masses in the present declining phase of the world capitalist system, especially in an underdeveloped country like India. The struggle for markets, raw materials etc. is ferociously intensified among the capitalists as the crisis of capitalism deepens. Class struggle, drive to war, and other tendencies implicit in the capitalist socialist system acutely sharpen during this phase. The movement for a socialist transformation of society gathers momentum as the system of capitalism engenders increased material and cultural misery for increasing strata of the population.

The bourgeois humanist, whose heart throbs with love for

the common labouring population and who strives heroically but vainly to improve their conditions within the framework of the capitalist social system, finds himself increasingly in opposition to the socialist movement of the exploited masses to end the capitalist social system since, due to his bourgeois class perspective, he cannot recognize the fact — becomes more and more blind to this fact as the menace to that system increases — that the system has outlived its progressive role and constitutes a decisive hindrance to human progress. If humanity is to survive, capitalism must be destroyed.

There lies the tragic essence in the position of a bourgeois humanist in the declining phase of the bourgeois social system when there exists no economic basis for implementing programmes of even economic reform and concessions to the masses within the system of wage slavery.

In their ancient united struggle against Nature, men have been developing increasing social consciousness and solidarity feeling which accumulate from stage to stage. Gandhi embodied this historically accumulated humanism in the social world of man. We, socialists, treasure what was most precious in Gandhi's psyche, his deep humanism, his limitless love for fellow-men, his readiness to even squander away his life for their liberation *as he conceived it*. We reject his bourgeois illusion, which prompted him to consecrate his life-energies in attempts to conjure away all social evils, wars, exploitations and oppressions, without changing the economic foundations of the existing society, without abolishing capitalism and creating socialism.

In the social cultural history of man, socialist humanism is the historical heir to bourgeois humanism. Socialism or proletarian humanism is at once a historical continuation as well as negation (a dialectical negation) of bourgeois humanism. We socialists are direct heirs of bourgeois humanists among whom GANDHI was one of the best.

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SAMPATTIDAN AND BHOODAN MOVEMENTS

UNLIKE British capitalism in the eighteenth century, Indian capitalism is not a young, vigorous, rising capitalism with the perspective of a hectic spring of future development. It is, in fact, a weak part of the decaying, decrepit world capitalism. This is basically due to its belated historical arrival.

Since no real, free, and appreciable development of the productive forces of the Indian society is possible within the matrix of capitalist property relations, the economic conditions of the mass of the Indian people cannot improve within the framework of the capitalist system. In fact, the further "development" of Indian capitalism — in spite of its some episodic flushes on this sector or that — can only aggravate unemployment and accelerate the process of impoverishment of tens of millions. In the social sphere, this can only result in the further accentuation of the class struggle.

The Indian bourgeoisie and its state, confronted with such a frightful perspective as well as under the impact of class illusions, have been evolving a number of techniques and programmes to develop the productive forces of industry and agriculture on a capitalist basis. They labour under the hallucination that this is possible and can enable them to exorcise the sharpening class struggle in the country. Various Five-Year Plans and the Community Project (aided by American imperialism) are the two principal among these.

There have also emerged in the country such ethico-economic movements as the Bhoodan and Sampattidan move-

* Published as a Pamphlet in January, 1955.

ments which too attempt, by creating illusions among the exploited classes, to divert them from the only authentic solution of the economic debacle and their deepening poverty viz. overthrow of capitalism and establishment of socialism through class struggle. However deeply animated with humanist feeling their architects be, these movements only distract the working masses from the road of class struggle and thereby objectively help the exploiting classes to perpetuate the historically outmoded capitalist social system.

The following statement is an attempt to provide a Marxist i.e. scientific critique of these movements.

I

THE ideological collapse of Jay Prakash Narayan, the former avowed Marxist and the outstanding leader of the Socialist Party of India, is now complete. He has been irretrievably bogged in the morass of the bourgeois reformist Gandhian ideology. He has now completed his transition from the socialist ideology of irreconcilable class struggle having as its objective the transformation of the capitalist class-stratified society into classless socialist society to the Gandhian philosophy of the change of heart as a means to create a nebulously defined equalitarian society.

The Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements, based on the theory of the possibility of the ethical transmutation of the heart of those who own land and wealth so that they would voluntarily relinquish a substantial portion of their possessions, are, according to Jay Prakash, the decisive means to bring into being such an equalitarian society. The hearts of the wealthy classes, however callous they be at present, will thaw when incessantly stormed by powerful ethical appeals to their essential human nature and they must, in course of time, part with their surplus wealth for the benefit of the poverty-stricken section of the population. This would result in the diminution of the present staggering disparities of incomes between the members of the community and even their final disappearance. Thus an equalitarian society will be painlessly born.

Are not the wealthy also human beings and have, therefore, basically human hearts ?

Jay Prakash Narayan rejects both mass action and legis-

lation as alternate methods to bring about social change. Even legislation implies coercion and hence cannot help to evolve a non-violent equalitarian society. What is necessary first is to transform men's hearts so that they may be cleansed of greed, avarice and such other base impulses. When this is achieved—and that is the objective of the Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements—morally regenerate humans will spontaneously act in an equalitarian way. Their hearts will be surcharged with human emotion which will prompt them to relinquish possessions with a view to succour the needy and the suffering.

Such are, in brief, the motif and the programme of the Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements.

It must be noted that the ideology inspiring these movements is not a new one. It, historically, originated with the dissolution of primitive communist society and the rise of class society when, as a result of the private ownership of the social means of production, exploitation and economic inequalities came into existence in the social world. Since then, every class society—slave, feudal and capitalist—projected groups of humanists who, not comprehending the economic genetic cause of these inequalities viz. the private ownership of the social means of production, engaged themselves in making perennial ethical appeals to the exploiting classes to use a portion of their wealth to alleviate the poverty of the exploited classes through philanthropic and charity schemes. The inherited religious and secular ethical literature of all peoples abounds in directives addressed to the wealthy classes to part with a good portion of their wealth to rescue the poor from want. Christ, Buddha and, in recent times, Gandhi, too, incessantly bombarded the auditory nerve of the rich exploiters with moral admonitions to that effect. The survey of all history, however, decisively proves that this technique of liquidating poverty and economic disparities rampant in the social world has decisively failed. Before we examine the reasons of this indisputable failure, we will X-ray some of the characteristic features of the present Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements.

The Bhoodan movement is distinguished from the Sampattidan movement, since the former aims at the redistribution of land, the basic means of production in agriculture, in contrast to the latter which aims at the redistribution, not of the basic

means of production such as factories, and others but of the income derived by their capitalist owners on the basis of that ownership. This invests the programme of Sampattidan with a bourgeois class character since it endorses by implication capitalist private property in the means of production. It does not ask the capitalists to surrender this property which enables them to exploit the workers but appeals to them to set aside a portion of their profits born of this exploitation for relieving the distress of the poor. The right of the capitalists to own the means of production and thereby exploit labour and accumulate profit is implicitly, if not articulately, regarded moral and therefore sacrosanct. Immorality attaches only to the income from the exploitation not to the exploitation itself. Unlike in the sphere of agriculture the programme has for its objective a reshuffling of the income, not a redistribution of the means of production, the fountain source of that income. The bourgeoisie is only called upon to expand the scale of its charity and philanthropic activities. This reminds one of the incisive definition of charity given by Paul Lafargue viz., "Charity is robbing wholesale and giving retail."

Another striking feature of these movements consists in the fact that, regarding the method to achieve their objective their sponsors — Vinoba Bhave and now Jay Prakash Narayan who has expanded the limited agrarian programme of the former into a universal socio-economic programme — *exclusively* restrict the means to that of the ethical reconstruction of the consciousness of primarily the wealthy classes. Even Gandhi, who equally stood for the preservation and perpetuation of the capitalist-landlord social system, while addressing moral appeals to the capitalists, periodically reinforced this ethical weapon by strikes, peasant satyagrahas, and others to exert pressure on them to redistribute their incomes to a little advantage of the masses. Surely, he conducted those struggles within the matrix of the fundamental conception of the basic community of interests of the capitalists and the workers, the landlords and the peasants, and the resultant class collaborationist view; still he did not discard such episodic class struggles as a pressure technique to back up ethical appeals. Jay Prakash, on the other hand, regards even such struggles as socially and morally disastrous for the creation of a non-violent equalitarian society. Addres-

sing a gathering of industrial workers in Bombay he remarked :

“By persuasion and propaganda we can change the hearts of the people. The Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements will usher in the millenium in the country. There must be no class consciousness, there must be equality. This is my conception of a free state. The Sampattidan movement, if it succeeded, would in the very near future eliminate the profit-making instinct of capitalists”. He further said, “Some businessmen and industrialists have expressed in favour of the Gandhian ideal of trusteeship and, I feel, the day is not far off when that ideal will be realized without the use of force or compulsion”.

It is no wonder that Jay Prakash Narayan, who has outdone even Gandhi in the sphere of class collaboration, is invited by industrialists and merchants to address meetings under the auspices of their class organisations such as Chambers of Commerce, Grain and Oilseeds Merchants' Association (in Bombay), and others. These ruthless exploiters of the people, some of whom even supplement normal exploitative activity with such dark means (even from the bourgeois ethical standpoint) as blackmarketing, fraudulent accounting etc., enthusiastically greet Jay Prakash Narayan and support in words his Sampattidan programme. When asked about the donations received from the Bombay capitalists, he replied that the Sampattidan did not mean collection of funds. It was a way of life and acceptance of a new outlook on life. One who accepted the ideal need not pay donations or some contributions. He had to give up a part of his income for the well-being of his less fortunate brothers and sisters. Sampattidan is, in fact, “a life-long vow”. So unlike Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement which was a movement started with the objective of collecting land donations and distribute them among the peasants, the Sampattidan movement is to restrict itself to making moral appeals to the people to set apart in their budget a specific sum for aiding the people in distress and spend it for the purpose at the individual's will. It liberates the wealthy even from the social pressure which is exerted on them at a public meeting to make them donate a sum for a cause.

In class society, no programme can reflect the interests of all classes because the interests of the exploiting and the exploited classes are irreconcilably antagonistic. Hence, if a pro-

gramme wins the support of the capitalist class, it must — and capitalists are shrewd and know their interests best — be subserving their basic interest. Lenin once remarked that an auxiliary criterion, auxiliary to that of the Marxist analysis, which he subjected his particular line of action to, was what class supported that line. If the bourgeoisie extolled it, he concluded that his line must be incorrect from the standpoint of the interests of the working class whose interests irreconcilably collided with those of the bourgeoisie. Judged from this secondary criterion the Sampattidan movement and its sponsor Jay Prakash who receives bouquets from the Indian bourgeoisie should subserve the fundamental interests of that class. It must be noted that in the present historical phase, this class is threatened with the growing socialist movement which has, unlike the Sampattidan movement, the objective not of humanizing capitalism but its liquidation.

II

THE Sampattidan movement is based, as stated before, on the erroneous theory of the social genetic causes of the poverty of the overwhelming portion of the people as well as of the possibility of liquidating this poverty through the initiative and voluntary economic sacrifice of the exploiting wealthy classes of society. It is based on the abysmal ignorance of its sponsors of the objectively operating inexorable laws of the capitalist economy as well as of the social laws which determine the origin, the nature, and the functioning of the consciousness of the economic groups and classes of society.

In short, it is based on the philosophical, sociological and economic errors of these sponsors.

Contrasts of poverty and wealth which arise in the field of distribution are only the result, the inevitable outcome of the division of society into classes, the class which owns the means of production and the class which does not own these means but is, therefore, compelled to sell its labour power to the former which exploits it i.e. expropriates surplus value (unpaid labour) created by the latter. The wealth of the wealthy is built out of this surplus value which, when sold in the market, is transformed into profit for the capitalist owner.

The competitive struggle among the capitalist owners over market in the world of capitalist production compels them to cheapen the cost of production of commodities by such methods as wage cut, technical rationalization which creates unemployment, and others. In the present period of the organic crisis of capitalism, this competitive struggle has become more ferocious resulting in the intensifying economic offensive of the capitalists against the workers. To maintain the rate of profit, the only incentive to the capitalist, the capitalists are compelled to exploit their wage and salaried slaves more barbarously than ever. The middle classes along with the working masses are hurled into the hell of unemployment and increasing impoverishment giving rise to their militant struggles to resist this pressure and even to overthrow the very capitalist system which, as a result of the logical working out of its objectively operating laws, generates mass poverty and mass unemployment.

The capitalists inhumanly exploit the working masses not because they are inherently wicked but the exigencies of competitive struggle compel them to be brutal. Free will is a fiction of the idealistic philosophy. The capitalist has no free will as such; if he is to survive, he must intensify exploitation and generate poverty or he will perish in the competitive struggle. The working masses, too, have no free will as such; to survive they must organize strike resistance and, finally, overthrow capitalism and establish socialism.

Through the very process of capitalist production, wealth accumulates in the hands of an increasingly diminishing number of capitalists and poverty becomes the lot of an increasing number of the population. This process of polarization of wealth and poverty cannot be arrested unless the very capitalist mode of production is abolished.

The individual capitalists who succeed in the competitive struggle are compelled to set apart a big portion of the profits to renew, expand, or rationalize their productive technique. If they fail to do so, they would be ruined in the further competitive struggle. It is the remaining portion of the profit which they spend on themselves and, sometimes, for charitable and philanthropic work.

But this portion is a very small fraction of the total profit. Under pain of not losing in the competitive struggle, the capita-

list needs to spend a greater and greater section of the profit in further investment in the means of production.

Compared to the increasing poverty which the capitalist system of production, governed by its own objective laws, generates, the meagre alleviation of working people's misery which the capitalists, even if they are universally surcharged with humanist emotion for the victims of their exploitation, could achieve through philanthropic work, would be more than counter-balanced by the existing and new impoverishment which the system generates.

Even what charity or philanthropy the capitalists practise, is motivated mainly, consciously or sub-consciously, by individual or class interests. The chase for limelight drives some to start or endow institutions. Others build hospitals, for, disease is infectious and the poor, when struck down with disease, can convince the rich of their common humanity by transmitting the infection to them. Some may construct workers' chawls, for, labour must be kept efficient for being exploited to the maximum, hence be provided with minimum housing. Capitalist production needs trained cadres, therefore, technical and other educational institutions must be financed. Starvation is not infectious, therefore, no capitalist charity assures the starving that they will be provided with two square meals.

It is not the change of heart which supplies motif to capitalist charity and philanthropy. It is mostly craze for fame or conscious or unconscious class interest.

Even when the capitalist class parts with a portion of its material profit in the form of large economic concessions to the poor, it is not mainly motivated by human regard for their suffering. It watches the growing spirit of discontent among the suffering masses and discovers in it a menace to the very capitalist social system which is the goose that lays golden eggs for it. To save the system, it sacrifices a part of the profit which may take the form of, as in England, the unemployment dole. It is only an economic strategy and not the result of any qualm of guilty conscience or any change of heart. It is intended something as a chloroform to dull the spirit of revolt of the masses. As the leopard cannot change its spots, so the capitalists cannot change their hearts which eternally hanker for

more profits.

There is a vital reason why the capitalist cannot help—there is no free will for him—pursuing the road of ever increasing profit which is the fundamental urge of his psyche. Historical materialism alone can explain this phenomenon. According to it, the consciousness of a man is primarily the product of the mode of his livelihood, therefore, of the position he occupies in the economic structure of society. In the existing capitalist economic structure of society, the capitalist starts with a definite amount of capital, buys means of production, hires and exploits labour, and annexes surplus value which via market is transformed into his profit. The original capital M returns to him, with the addition of this profit, as M_1 . The motif of his entire economic activity is to transform the original capital into increased capital. It is an automatic chase for profit. Perennially engaged in this profit-chasing activity, he builds up profit-chasing instincts and exploitative psychology. The postulate of a common human nature of all men as such is a false postulate of idealistic psychology. Capitalist human nature with its profit-hankering and exploitative urges is quite different from the human nature of the proletariat when the latter liberates itself from the pressure of the capitalist ideology and which then becomes co-operative, socialist. The mode of its material living primarily moulds the psychology of the group and the class living in class society. There are only class men with class human natures in class society. An individual human with chemically pure human nature to which a pure human appeal can be addressed with a view to persuade him to act humanly and humanely is a myth of idealistic sociology.

The profit-chasing and greedy psychology of the capitalists is determined by the position they occupy in the capitalist economic structure viz., that of exploiters of labour and chasers after profits. Marx, in *Capital*, explains this as follows :

“The simple circulation of commodities (as in the case of handicraftsmen), selling in order to buy, is a means of carrying out a purpose unconnected with circulation namely the satisfaction of wants. The circulation of money as capital is, on the contrary, an end in itself, for, the expansion of value takes place only within this constantly renewed movement. The circulation of capital has, therefore, no limits. Thus the conscious

representative of this movement, the possessor of money, becomes a capitalist. His person, or rather his pocket, is the point from which the money starts and to which it returns. The expansion of value, which is the objective basis or main-spring of the circulation, becomes his subjective aim. He functions as capital personified and endowed with consciousness and will. The restless never-ending process of profit-making alone is what he aims at.

“This boundless greed after riches, this passionate chase, is common to the capitalist and the miser; but while the miser is merely a capitalist gone mad, the capitalist is a rational miser. The never-ending augmentation of exchange value, which the miser strives after by seeking to save his money from circulation, is attained by the more acute capitalist by constantly throwing it afresh into circulation”.

Thus the psychology of the capitalist human nature, his profit making instincts, his exploitative impulses, his greed for more wealth, arise out of his specific activity in the cycle of capitalist production. It is the psychological outgrowth of his practice in the capitalist economic process. Till he is a capitalist, he will have his inescapable capitalist psychology. Gandhi's moral appeals to the capitalists for over two decades to change their hearts and act as trustees of their property did not affect them by an iota. If at all, they have during and after the Second World War become more inhuman exploiters of the working people, more corrupt and brutal. And they cannot help behaving so since, as Marxist materialist psychology reveals, the consciousness of a class is the product of the material conditions of its existence.

The philosophy and the ethical theory of the bourgeoisie are the rationalizations of its class interest determined by its commanding position in the capitalist economic structure of society. Its consciousness and conscience are conditioned by this. A capitalist considers not only his ownership of the means of production but also his appropriation of profit derived out of that ownership as moral and legitimate. Likewise he regards the high standard of life he lives in the same way. He erupts with righteous indignation when his ownership is challenged or his profit questioned. For thousands of years, the exploiting classes—slave owners, feudal nobles and capitalists—have been subjected

to ethical appeals by saints and humanists to use their wealth for relieving the suffering of the poor but all these appeals have proved abortive. They listened but went on exploiting.

Regarding the futility of the moral appeals to the exploiting classes, Lenin used to narrate the story of Vaska the Cat. This cat had domiciled in the palace of Peter the Great, the Czar of Russia, and used to commit depredations in the kitchen of the Great Czar. It used to invade and consume dishes destined for the royal stomach of the august Czar. The palace cook, a pacifist and like Jay Prakash an exponent of the theory of the change of heart, used to make moral appeals to Vaska to abstain from its immoral bandit's activity. Vaska the Cat listened but went on eating.

So our capitalist and other wealthy classes will listen to the ethical admonitions of Jay Prakash Narayan, even extol and banquet him, but will go on exploiting and piling up wealth.

Jay Prakash Narayan was once a socialist and, in his own social democratic way, challenged capitalism and branded the capitalists as exploiters. He was the intrepid leader of the heroic anti-imperialist August struggle for national liberation. The spectacle of such a valiant fighter for national and social liberation being engaged in making moral appeals to industrialists, bankers, grain merchants and oil seed merchants, all hardened exploiters, to feel sympathy for the poor and rescue them from poverty marks the anti-climax of a noble career, looks almost obscene. But the present epoch is the epoch of titanic struggles between the forces of socialist liberation of mankind and those of capitalist reaction. Individuals, however heroic they be, disintegrate, but there is no time to feel sad over the ideological collapse of individuals.

III

THE Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements are foredoomed to failure because they come in conflict with the laws of economy and psychology. Regarding the Bhoodan movement, the tempo of its advance has already slowed down. This is because the donation of land by big landowners was prompted not so much by any change of heart but by the strategic motive of safeguarding by far the greater amount of land owned by them by conceding a small portion of it, mostly fallow and uneconomic.

This voluntary sacrifice on their part, in their view, would insure them against the kisan struggle which has been advancing with the slogan of expropriation of all their land. The chaotically collected land and its redistribution among the peasants could hardly help the poor and miserable strata of the peasantry. In the absence of cheap credit for livestock, seeds, and other prerequisites for agricultural operations, they could not utilise even the little advantage offered to them. Only the rich capitalist section could exploit such a situation and benefit by it. Further, since the motive inspiring the big landowners was not any change of heart but that of a strategic safeguard of their remaining land against any peasant demand for complete expropriation, the process of voluntary donation was bound to slow down and come to a deadlock at some stage.

Though the Bhoodan and Sampattidan movements are, due to the above mentioned reasons, bound to prove futile from the standpoint of the objective which their sponsors have in view, they can do harm to the growing class struggle in the country. By sowing illusions among the backward sections of the exploited classes, they can paralyse them and disrupt the unity of class struggle which alone can liberate them from exploitation and poverty. They would also tend to kill their healthy class consciousness and spirit of reliance on their own class action as a means of their emancipation. They would make them feel grateful to their capitalist and landlord exploiters. They would divert them from the road of class struggle, the only road to their freedom.

The sponsors of the movements eschew not only mass action, strikes and satyagrahas, and others but even legislative methods of securing favourable legislation in the interest of the poverty-stricken sections of the population. The movements, therefore, sabotage both mass action as well as parliamentary struggles as means of securing economic relief for the masses. The programme of the movements is reduced exclusively to that of moral appeals to the wealthy classes. This is putting into operation the change of heart theory of Gandhi with a vengeance. This is even outdoing the Mahatma who, despite his class collaborationist theory, stood for organising strike and satyagraha struggles to back up his campaign of moral appeals to the rich. Jay Prakash Narayan may now claim to have purg-

ed Gandhism of its non-spiritual adulteration.

The poverty-stricken Indian masses cannot, however, afford to be martyrs to such illusions in the present situation. Due to the organic crisis of the capitalist-landlord system, their poverty and misery are daily being aggravated. They cannot afford to listen to and be paralysed by illusions. Impelled by the biological impulse, the very will to live, they must discard the road of this fictitious solution of their poverty and advance on the road of the only real solution of that poverty, the road of class struggle.

IV

On Stalinism

INTRODUCTION

SECTION IV is comprised of two sub-sections. First sub-section contains a series of four essays on "Historical Genesis and Role of Stalinism". Sub-section Two consists of two articles viz. "Stalinists vs. Stalinists" and "Tragedy of the Hungarian Revolution".

It is beyond the historico-theoretical power of bourgeois critics of Stalinism to comprehend what *in essence* Stalinism signifies, why it emerged and what its precise historical role has been. These critics declare that the emergence of Stalinism has refuted Marxism and the Marxist prognoses. *In fact*, only Marxism can explain why Stalinism emerged and what precisely its historical role has been. *In fact*, the rise of Stalinism has only corroborated the truth of Historical Materialism, the sociological theory of Marxism.

Trotsky's genius lay in scientifically tracing the initially prevailing backward socio-historical conditions for the rise of Stalinism in the Soviet Union, in his prognosis of its temporary triumph and also its inevitable disintegration due to the rise of advanced socio-historical conditions.

The four essays are based on the ideas of Trotskism. They were originally delivered as lectures before the Youth Centre in 1961. During the Stalinist phase which began after the death of Lenin in 1924, all fundamental conceptions of Marxism-Leninism, ideological as well as political, experienced serious distortion. Some of them were even liquidated. Trotsky, the co-leader of the October Revolution along with Lenin, kept alive these principles by propagating them in his numerous writings. He even further developed them in the light of post-Lenin developments. Hence we may describe Trotskism as authentic and contemporary Marxism-Leninism.

The author in the fourth essay has attempted to prognosticate the future of Stalinism. In the view of the author, Stalinism is not still extinct in the Soviet Union and East European countries. It persists also in China.

What Stalinist leaderships of those countries have been trying to do is *to adapt Stalinism to the new historical situation in which mass discontent against the bureaucratic regimes has been growing*. Reforms conceded to the people, though they have softened and diminished the coercive character of those regimes, have left the fundamental essence of Stalinism unaffected. The reforms have been necessary to assure the survival of the bureaucracy and the fundamentals of Stalinism.

The article "Stalinists vs. Stalinists" deals with the conflict between "the orthodox" and "the liberal" wings of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The article "Tragedy of the Hungarian Revolution" analyses the social forces involved in the Hungarian Revolution of 1957 and evaluates it as a heroic revolt of the Hungarian proletariat supported by the toiling peasantry and socialist intelligentsia for national liberation from the grip of the Soviet Union over Hungary as well as for the overthrow of the indigenous bureaucratic Stalinist regime, the puppet of the Soviet bureaucracy, and for the establishment of socialist democracy.

The author recognizes the historically higher economic foundation (the social ownership of productive forces) of the societies of all these countries and calls upon every socialist in the world to defend them against any capitalist attack. As Trotsky puts it, the defect inheres not in the economic base but in the political superstructure which is bureaucratically deformed.

The author has also stressed the point that by subordinating the world socialist revolution to its nationalistically and bureaucratically deformed foreign policy the Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Union has only delayed the victory of the world socialism even by decades. So also the anti-Leninist practices of the Chinese Stalinist leadership in the international domain (towards Tibet, India) harm the world socialist movement by discrediting socialism itself and by helping the bourgeoisie, both imperialist and national, to create feelings of distrust, even antagonism, among the working masses towards socialism.

RISE OF SOVIET BUREAUCRACY

I

STALINISM originated as the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy. Every ideology expresses, is the generalization of, and subserves the interests of a social group or a class. The ideology of Stalinism expresses, is the generalization of, and subserves the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Since the Soviet bureaucracy is a part of the proletariat and is based on a state and a society resting on the social ownership of the means of production, its ideology is Marxism. But since it is a degenerate part of the proletariat, its Marxism is distorted. Stalinism is distorted Marxism.

This distortion was most virulently reflected during the Stalin era in all spheres of activity of the bureaucratic regime, both in the domains of its domestic and foreign policies. The phenomenal technological, scientific, economic, social, and cultural advance of the Soviet society is primarily due to its new material basis viz. the social ownership of the means of production which makes universal planning and resultant advance possible. But the distortion and retardation of this advance is due to the bureaucratic regime.

II

WORLD War I (1914-1918) was the decisive proof of the fact that the productive forces of the world capitalist economy had outgrown capitalist property relations as well as the frontiers of bourgeois national states, that the highly developed and supra-national character of the productive forces of the world

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society demanded the elimination of the world capitalist social system and the creation of a world communist social system.

In this historical situation, humanity became confronted with the crucial task of discarding capitalism and establishing communism on a world scale, *if it were to survive and further develop.*

As the new historical social task of world communism emerged out of the advanced techno-economic development of human society, the social means to achieve that task viz. (1) productive forces developed to a point when they could provide the material basis for the world communist society, (2) a class-conscious proletariat, and (3) the ideology of Marxism which could correctly guide the proletariat not only to win political power but also to transform progressively capitalism into classless stateless communism during a transitional period, also matured. It must be noted that the securing of political power by the proletariat, as Lenin observed, signifies only *"the political inauguration"* of the socialist revolution.

Due to a favourable constellation of historical conditions, the growing world socialist revolution triumphed on the Russian sector of the world capitalist society in October 1917.

A workers' state based on proletarian democracy (democracy for the toilers but simultaneously dictatorship against the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes) was established in Russia.

Due to a number of historical reasons, this first workers' state — a phenomenon of world historical significance — degenerated into "a bureaucratically degenerated workers' state," (Trotsky). The following are the principal among these reasons :

(1) The victorious socialist revolution took place in Russia, a country with a backward economy, with a low level of development of productive forces. Further, the workers' state established there inherited from the Czarist Russia not only a backward economy but also a war shattered economy, also further shattered by a civil war of long duration.

(2) The Russian people had not lived through the experience of even bourgeois democracy since the Czarist state was an absolute "feudal-imperialist-militarist" state as Lenin described it. The bourgeois democratic revolution had not taken

place there providing the people even freedom within bourgeois limits.

(3) The Russian people were culturally backward for the same reason.

(4) The civil war supported by international capitalism had resulted in the decimation of large sections of class-conscious workers and more than half the members of the Bolshevik Party which led the revolution to victory.

(5) Under the guise of Lenin Levy after the death of Lenin, the ruling bureaucratic group within the Party headed by Stalin flooded the Party with careerist and backward elements servile to the ruling group with a view to isolating and reducing the specific weight of the tried Bolsheviks in the Party.

(6) The fatigue experienced by the proletariat and the Party due to many years of war, revolution, and prolonged civil war weakened their capacity of resistance to the increasing inroads into Soviet and intra-Party democracy by the ruling bureaucracy within the Party and state apparatus.

(7) Russia was predominantly an agrarian country with a preponderance of peasant population. The pressure of the peasantry on the Party had also an adverse effect.

(8) The defeat of the socialist revolutions in Germany, Hungary, and other countries and the receding of the general socialist revolutionary tide which had enveloped a number of other European countries during the years following the end of the war, also had a depressing effect on the Russian proletariat. Its high hopes — even Lenin cherished them — of the eruption and victory of the socialist revolutions in advanced European countries was not realized, principally due to the absence of capable communist parties (Germany, Italy and others) to lead the proletarian masses. This damped the exuberance and adversely affected the spirit of the already fatigued Russian proletariat and its communist vanguard, weakening thereby their resistance to the ruling bureaucracy.

Thus the bureaucracy emerged and was able to establish itself in power in the Soviet Union due to historical reasons, the principal among them being the economic backwardness of the inherited Russian society, the low cultural level of the Soviet masses, the absence of bourgeois democratic traditions, the peasant preponderance in the social composition of the people, but

above all due to the receding of the socialist revolutionary tide outside Russia and the resultant isolation of the Soviet Union from the rest of the world. Encircled as Russia was by a hostile capitalist world, it became easy for the bureaucracy to entrench itself also by playing upon the fear of the proletariat.

III

LENIN had recognized these specific historical conditions in which the first workers' state was established in Russia, had recognized also the consequent danger of the rise of the bureaucracy due to these conditions and, further, had even located its perceptible growth. On the eve of his death, he was preparing to fight this "malignant" growth, the growth of the bureaucracy of which, as Trotsky puts it, Stalin was the personification and became the leader due to his specific psychological and ideological traits such as "ruthless will, narrow empiricism, unscrupulousness towards comrades and others."

The best elements with the Party maintained an uninterrupted and determined struggle against the terrorist bureaucratic regime which darkened the landscape of the first Soviet land. The perennial purges and shootings and the existence of the permanent concentration camps during the Stalin era is the decisive evidence not only of the chronic persistence of the bureaucratic regime but also of the heroic uninterrupted struggle against it.

The Soviet bureaucracy should be, however, qualitatively distinguished from the bureaucracies which exist in capitalist countries. The Soviet bureaucracy is based not on the capitalist but on nationalized property relations. For instance, the state and trade union bureaucracies in West European capitalist countries are based on their imperialist capitalist economies. The imperialist bourgeoisie of those lands are, out of the super-profits of the colonial exploitation, able to give relatively high standards to the middle classes and the upper stratum of the working classes. This provides the economic basis of the state, trade union, and Labour Party bureaucracies in these countries. Consequently, these bureaucracies lend support to the predatory policies of their respective imperialist bourgeoisies.

In contrast to this, the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union was based on nationalized property relations, the gains of the October

Revolution. Its very existence had been thus bound up with those nationalized property relations. The Soviet bureaucracy was, further, a part of the proletariat *which had risen above the proletariat, had expropriated the proletariat of its political power, and had utilized that power to instal itself as a privileged caste.* Under the leadership of Stalin, it utilized the state power to preserve and strengthen its own dominant position in the Soviet society and enhance its own privileges and power.

Lenin had prognosticated the danger of the rise of the bureaucratic tendency and observed its actual emergence in the Soviet Union but he did not foresee the subsequent emergence of a full-fledged bureaucratic caste which, under Stalin's leadership, would consolidate itself and, like an octopus, spread its tentacles over the entire life of the Soviet people in all domains, economic, political, cultural, and ideological.

A regime of terror, universal and all-pervading precisely because the bureaucracy, due to nationalized property foundation of the new society, controlled and administered all socially owned means of production, hence all jobs (sources and means of physical survival), was established. Mildest criticism of the ruling bureaucracy and its policies, internal and international, was brutally punished. The offenders were sent to concentration labour camps in distant Siberia where they were frequently subjected to atrocious physical and psychological tortures by means of modern advanced techniques or were confronted with firing squads. Even the relations and friends of the offenders were persecuted, frequently even imprisoned.

Nor did even eminent leaders like Trotsky, Bucharin, Zinoviev and others escape the sanguinary holocaust which, it is staggering to think, lasted for about three decades. Character assassination, forced confessions through physical and other forms of torture, shootings, mass scale imprisonments; became, during the Stalin era, the normal technique of suppressing *all those who, though staunch communists, differed over policies regarding such vital questions as the correct method of defending the workers' state against imperialism or the correct policy of developing the new economy based on nationalized property relations.*

The bureaucratic terror was not restricted to the domains of economy and politics. It also extended to other domains

viz. those of natural sciences like biology, astronomy, and others; also those of literature, art, poetry, music, philosophy, social sciences, and historiography. And this, notwithstanding the fact that those who suffered from such coercion were convinced Marxist-Leninist communists. They were attacked simply because they demanded freedom of creation in their respective domains. A host of profound Marxist litterateurs, artists, philosophers, and natural scientists were imprisoned or executed. The bureaucratic leadership, mainly composed of careerists and sycophants and headed by Stalin who, as Trotsky characterised him, was a "narrow empiricist" and steadily developed into an egomaniac, exercised a ruthless dictatorship over sciences and arts, liquidating all who, as genuine Marxists, defended the freedom of creation in their respective spheres while adhering to the goal of communism. Thus the bureaucracy practically suppressed socialist democracy in all domains of social life.

This has been corroborated by no less a person than Khrushchev, himself an associate of Stalin for many years in implementing his policies, and now a neo-Stalinist, in his speech at the Secret Session of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956. We may observe here that Stalinism has not disappeared with the death of Stalin but the post-Stalinist leadership headed by Khrushchev has only perpetuated it by adapting it to the new historical situation retaining all its fundamental anti-Leninist conceptions such as the theory of socialism in one country, absence of full Soviet and intra-party democracy, subordination of the international class struggle to the narrowly conceived foreign policy of Kremlin, and others. It has conceded freedoms and reforms but only within the framework of the bureaucratic regime which still persists. The fact that outstanding leaders like Molotov, Bulganin, Malenkov, and others were not allowed to place and argue their views even before the party members decisively proves that neither the Soviet nor the intra-party democracy has been still restored.

However, the nightmarish phase of mass executions and mass concentration labour camps has ended with the death of Stalin. The historical situation, both national and international, is growing more and more favourable for the Soviet people for securing full socialist democracy and for eliminating the bureaucratic regime.

THEORY OF SOCIALISM
IN A SINGLE COUNTRY

SINCE the capitalist state exists on a national scale, the international proletariat is split up into national sections, each section conducting its struggle against each separate national capitalist state.

This explains why the workers' state emerges also on a national basis. Due to the law of uneven development, a simultaneous victory of all national sections of the international proletariat over their respective national bourgeoisie leading to the simultaneous establishment of a single world workers' state is not possible.

As the socialist movement triumphs in country after country, the separate workers' states which emerge in historical succession should become first federated within the matrix of an expanding union of workers' states and then integrated into a national scale, from country to country.

Thus the working class can win political power only on a national scale from country to country.

However, due to the international division of labour and the supranational character of the world economy, the working class cannot build socialism in a single country. *As Trotsky remarked, the productive forces of modern society have not only outlived capitalist property relations but also national frontiers.*

Since the Soviet bureaucracy, though a part of the proletariat, degenerated into a caste with a privileged position, its proletarian class vision became clouded. Its outlook experienced a petty-bourgeois nationalist degeneration.

Stalin, its ideological leader, evolved the anti-Marxist-
...21

Leninist theory of socialism in a single country in defiance of the historical reality of the supranational character of the world economy. The theory was the result of the fact that the bureaucracy was based on the victory of the socialist movement in a single country and, besides, it was a privileged caste.

Stalin distorted the rich creative meaning of the word "socialism". In a subsequent stage of development of the Soviet society he declared that socialism had been completed in the Soviet Union and even transition to Communism had started.

In fact the Soviet society is at best socialist society in the making but not a full fledged socialist society. Socialism has *not* been achieved in the Soviet Union. It cannot be achieved in a single country. In countries where the workers secure power, they can only move in the direction of creating on a national scale the premises and the elements of the world socialist society.

Mere social ownership of the means of production is not socialism. It is only the material premise of socialism which can be built up only on a world scale due to the "supranational character of the productive forces and of the world economy based on the international division of labour."

Further, socialism signifies a productivity of labour higher than any ever achieved by capitalism. Lenin considered this as the decisive criterion.

Socialism signifies increasing reduction of disparities of incomes, of economic inequalities, as productive forces grow. Under the Soviet bureaucratic regime, these disparities became only aggravated.

Further, a workers' state signifies, in Lenin's words, widest democracy for the toilers. It is a historical advance over bourgeois democracy which is only formal and not real. Under the Stalinist bureaucratic regime, a ruthless dictatorship over the working people became rampant. The working population comprising industrial and agrarian workers, writers, artists, scientists, doctors, and other categories lived under a reign of bureaucratic suppression during Stalin's time and, in its alleviated form, after the death of Stalin. Their creative self-expression was thwarted, even stifled.

Socialism signifies frank, fraternal, mirror-like relations between the members of the socialist community. It signifies the

return, at a historically higher and conscious level, of the solidarity feeling and mutual affection and trust which characterized the relations between the members of the pre-historic communist tribe, of rich human emotions animating them which the rise of class society based on private property in the means of production and resultant exploitation of man by man had destroyed.

In ghastly contrast to this perspective, the relations between the members of the Soviet society under the dictatorial bureaucratic rule under Stalin became poisoned by universal fear lest a spy may overhear and report to the most elaborately organized Secret Police in history, the mildest criticism of the bureaucracy and its policies, economic, social, political, or cultural. Within the Communist Party itself which Marxist prognosis conceives as the embryo of the future communist society, all freedom of self-expression was stifled and its members lived in an atmosphere of perennial dread of the Party bureaucracy. Even among its summit leaders, the difference of views over policies was resolved not through free democratic discussion, but by means of imprisonment or execution of those who differed from the group which controlled the apparatus of the Party¹.

What has socialism to do with such a nightmarish regime, both the state and intra-Party?

Due to the nationalized property relations which made universal economic planning possible, science, technology, and general productive forces of the Soviet Union have made amazing advance. But this has created only a material premise for socialism and not socialism itself. Socialism is possible only on a planetary scale due to the international division of labour. But, even here, by stifling proletarian democracy and hence the creative initiative of the working people and the socialist intelligentsia — artists, scientists, literateurs — *the bureaucracy, though it guided, also retarded and distorted this development of the productive forces* which was primarily possible due to nationalized property relations created not by the bureaucracy but by the great October Revolution.

At best, the Soviet society is socialist society in the making.

1 Refer: Krushchev's speech at the Secret Session of the Party in 1956.

The Soviet bureaucracy urged by its own sectional interests distorted the proletarian objective of world socialism into the utopian objective of socialism in a single country. It did not relinquish the conception of world socialism but misinterpreted it through the bureaucratic lense as a mechanical addition of a series of national socialist systems built up in various countries, one after another.

This view basically ignored the organic world-wide character of capitalist economy and the international character of the social division of labour on which that economy was based.

As Trotsky observed, the world capitalist economy is not the summing up of various national capitalist economies, but each national capitalist economy represents a peculiar (national) amalgam of the basic features of the world capitalist economy. He further said that the national bourgeois state exists in irreconcilable contradiction to the international character of the capitalist economy. Thus both the national capitalist economy as well as the national capitalist state have become historically out-moded. As we previously observed, since the national bourgeois state exists on a national basis and, further, since due to the law of uneven development the socialist revolution matures unevenly in separate countries, it is possible to win power by the proletariat in a single country. Socialism, however, cannot be built up in a single country.

The new socialist economy could be built up only on the basis of the international division of labour which was the historically progressive creation of the bourgeoisie unifying mankind into a single community. *The theory of socialism in a single country is therefore not only an utopian but even a reactionary slogan.* It deletes the economic progress achieved by capitalism in the domain of social division of labour. --

The theory signifies a petty-bourgeois nationalist degeneration of the proletarian internationalist theory of the possibility of building of socialism only on a world scale due to the international character of the social division of labour. The theory expresses and is the rationalization of the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy which rests on the basis of the victory of the international socialist movement in a single country and only in the political domain. Socialism, in the scientific sociological sense,

could however be built only on a world scale.¹

Thus, there occurred a bureaucratic distortion regarding the road to the proletarian goal of world socialist economy and society. Since the End and the Means are dialectically interconnected, the Means also became bureaucratically distorted.

1 The economic system in the Soviet Union is however not "state capitalism". Capitalism would imply a capitalist class composed of bondholders guaranteed income without productive work or any work done by that class by the capitalist state. In the Soviet Union there is no capitalist class or the capitalist state. The bureaucracy is only a caste. Glaring economic inequalities which are *historically unnecessary* arise not in the domain of production but in that of distribution. The bureaucrats only appropriate more products than they should do. Thus the principle "To every one according to his labour" is bureaucratically distorted. Deformity however exists in the field of distribution, not in the domain of production.

Further, though the economic system is bureaucratically distorted, it is founded on the social ownership of means of production, resultant universal planning, production not for the profits of a few but for the needs of the community. The state which plans all this is a workers' state, though bureaucratically deformed.

It is the sacred duty of all socialists to defend this state and society against all capitalist attempts to destroy them. The historically higher new state and society have come into existence but with a bureaucratic deformity. The new economic foundation *viz.* the social ownership of means of production is the precious pearl to be protected while the bureaucratic deformity should be combated.

THE HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES
OF STALINISM

WE have already briefly alluded to the anti-Leninist means resorted to by the Soviet bureaucracy in the Stalin era such as the suppression of proletarian democracy and democracy within the Party, trade unions and all other workers' organizations, the stifling of the creative self-expression of the working people in all domains of social and cultural life etc.

Distortion of the Leninist methods and principles occurred also in the sphere of the international practice of the Soviet bureaucracy, in the domain of its foreign policy.

The basic objective was no longer that of world socialism to be accomplished through support to consistent and perennial international class struggle. International class struggle, the basic means to achieve world communism as well as to defend the Soviet Union, was subordinated to the auxiliary means of utilizing the contradictions between various capitalist states, by forming episodic alliances with this or that group of capitalist states. The hallucination of the possibility of building socialism in a single country impelled the Soviet bureaucracy to abandon the strategy of consistent and uninterrupted development of the international class struggle of the world proletariat for its victory over world capitalism, and that of national liberation struggles of the colonial peoples (an integral part of world proletarian struggle for socialism since directed against dominant imperialist capitalism) to shake off imperialist domination. The Soviet bureaucracy subordinated the development of these struggles to the exigencies of its foreign policy which had, as its basic and primary objective, the creation of socialism in a single country

viz. the Soviet Union. Hence it sought alliance with this or that capitalist state (which is permissible) by guaranteeing through its ideological and political influence over the Communist Party of the allied capitalist country complete suspension of class struggle (which is not permissible) in that country. The alliance with the capitalist country was thereby only purchased by the betrayal of the proletarian socialist liberation struggle in that country and, further, by the betrayal of the *unity* of the liberation struggle of the international proletariat on a world scale.

The Communist Parties of various capitalist countries, under the ideological and political influence of the bureaucratized Communist Party of the Soviet Union, instead of consistently developing the socialist working class struggle in their countries in harmony with the objective situation and correlation of class forces at a given moment, now suspended (even opposed), now soft-pedalled, now accentuated this struggle not on the basis of any changing objective situation and shifting correlation of class forces in their own countries, but in accordance with the shifts in the bureaucratically distorted foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy at a given period.

The Communist Parties of imperialist and colonial countries, as Trotsky remarked, were transformed into the *only* means of the "defence" of the Soviet Union as that defence was comprehended by the Soviet bureaucracy through its bureaucratically distorted Marxist lens. This resulted in the debasing of Marxism (the bureaucracy had to distort Marxism to defend its policies), the disorienting of the international proletariat, and the disrupting of its unity and united struggle *against all bourgeoisie* (fascist or democratic) through the practice of the policies of class collaboration in countries ruled by those bourgeoisies (fascist or democratic) which happened to be in a temporary alliance with the Soviet Union.

It is permissible, nay is even obligatory, as Lenin stated, for a workers' state to form an alliance with a bourgeois state against another bourgeois state which threatens to attack it. It is, however, not permissible for the Communist Party of that allied capitalist country to suspend class struggle.

Any policy of class collaboration even in such a situation only weakens international proletarian consciousness, engenders

nationalist moods among the proletariat, disrupts the united struggle of the world working class against world capitalism. The Soviet bureaucracy urged by its own sectional interests and the resultant illusion of the possibility of building socialism in a single country (the Soviet Union) subordinated the interests of the united world proletarian struggle (its consistent and perennial development) to its own sectional interests. The part appropriated the place of the whole in the political calculus of the bureaucracy.

Following this anti-Leninist line, it opposed or soft-pedalled or prematurely kindled struggles through the Communist Parties under its influence in other countries. The policies were derived independent of the objective situation in a country (studied through a Marxist economic analysis) and similarly also independent of the correlation of class forces existing there at the time. The policies were not derived from the inner dialectic of the situation prevailing in those countries, but became a function of the bureaucratically distorted foreign policy of the Soviet government.

This foreign policy itself was derived from a bureaucratically distorted conception of the method of the defence of the Soviet Union against the imperialist assault. The method of that defence was conceived through bureaucratic miasma, through the lens of the sectional (and not proletarian class) consciousness of the bureaucracy, the texture and structure of this consciousness built on the basis of its existence as a privileged caste of the Soviet society.

The foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy had the following two aspects :

(1) The Soviet bureaucracy was an integral part of the Soviet proletariat as well as of the Soviet society based on nationalized property relations created by the October Revolution. Hence like the Soviet proletariat, the Soviet society and the Soviet (Workers') State, the Soviet bureaucracy had socialism as its objective.

(2) However, the Soviet bureaucracy was a degenerate part of the proletariat. It had crystallized as a privileged caste *rising above the proletariat of which it was only a part*. It had experienced also a nationalist degeneration. Having emerged as a result of a successful socialist revolution in a single country

(which is possible due to the uneven development of the class struggle of the proletariat in different countries against the bourgeois states existing on a national scale), it evolved the erroneous theory of socialism in a single country (which is not possible due to the world wide character of the contemporary economy resulting from the international division of labour as a consequence of modern technology). Impelled by its own sectional interests rationalized in the form of the theory of socialism in a single country, the Soviet bureaucracy subordinated the international socialist movement to its bureaucratically conceived anti-Leninist foreign policies of the defence of the Soviet Union and the realization of world socialist society.

What has been accomplished in the Soviet Union is the social ownership of the means of production. It does not signify socialism but the creation of the indispensable economic premise for socialism. Socialism would imply full flowering of socialist democracy. Further a *full-fledged socialist economy* can be built up only on a world basis since the modern productive forces and the resultant social division of labour have a supranational character just as a full-fledged capitalist economy could be built up on a national basis when the productive forces and the resultant social division of labour acquired a national character.

Despite its bureaucratic deformities, a new social system has come into being in the Soviet Union. It is based on the social ownership of the means of production demanded by the highly developed social character of modern productive forces. The defect inheres in the social and political superstructure of the Soviet society. Its economic foundation is the precious pearl to be protected by all. As has been remarked, the Soviet Union must be defended as the apple of one's eye against all capitalist attack by all socialists the world over.

Throughout the rule for more than three decades of the Soviet bureaucracy, *the fundamental motive* determining various foreign policies pursued by it as well as those adopted by the Communist Parties of different countries which came under its influence was not that of the victory over world capitalism through the consistent development of the international proletarian socialist movement but to win capitalist allies for the Soviet Union threatened by other capitalist groups. The atti-

tude to the socialist class struggle was determined by this crucial motivation. For instance, to win French imperialism as an ally of the Soviet Union against the menace of Nazi Germany's invasion of the latter during middle thirties, the Communist Party of France discarded the policy of class struggle, even adopted the policy of active class collaboration in France and abandoned the slogan of the national independence of the Moroccan and other colonial nations enslaved by French imperialism.

In spite of the seemingly capricious shifts of the policies of various Communist Parties pursued during last three decades or more, there is visible an underlying unity behind those shifts. viz. they always reflected shifts in the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The parties sometimes suspended class struggle, even actively collaborated with the national bourgeoisie, if the latter was in alliance with the Soviet Union. They sometimes accentuated it as a pressure weapon against the national bourgeoisie to compel it to refrain from any hostile attack on the Soviet Union.

Since socialist victory over its own national bourgeoisie through class struggle was not their basic objective, the class struggle led by those parties lacked the inner logic of the class struggle moving towards the goal of socialism. From the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle as the means of the victory over indigenous capitalism, it had a capricious, spasmodic character. It was now stifled, now artificially made ablaze.

From the standpoint of reinforcing the bureaucratically distorted foreign policy of the Soviet Union during its various shifts, the shifts of national Communist Parties were however logical and consistent.

By following such a line, the Soviet bureaucracy seeing through the lens of its distorted Marxism thereby only discarded the basic weapon of defence of the Soviet Union viz. that of the consistent and perennial development of international class struggle, relying primarily on the secondary means viz. episodic alliance with this or that bourgeois state which is permissible but not by subordinating the former to it.

Narrow empiricism, as Trotsky observed, is the core of the ideology of Stalinism. An empiricist attempts to serve the immediate end by sacrificing the basic end. He, of course,

rationalizes and imagines that he is moving in the direction of the ultimate end while he really delays his reaching it.

Stalinist policies pursued by Communist Parties have delayed the victory of socialist revolutions in a number of countries (e.g. in Germany in 1930-31, in France and Italy at the end of the Second World War and so on). After the end of the Second World War Stalin stood for a coalition government formed by the Communist party of China and the bourgeois Kouminatang. The Communist party of China however followed a different policy and organized a successful revolution and captured power.

When a Communist Party practises the policy of class collaboration to appease its national bourgeoisie hoping thereby to persuade the latter to enter into an alliance with the Soviet Union against an anti-Soviet capitalist state or a coalition of states, it is a shortsighted policy based on an illusion. First, the bourgeoisie of any country unites with the Soviet Union irrespective of the policy of class collaboration and hence the class betrayal by the communist party. It does it because of its own class interests, because of inter-capitalist contradiction. Secondly, when the Communist Party of a particular country follows a class collaborationist policy, it unwittingly only helps the anti-Soviet bourgeoisie of another country (for instance, the Nazi bourgeoisie during the Second World War).

When the proletariat of Nazi Germany saw the shameful spectacle of the proletariats of Britain and France supporting their own imperialist bourgeoisies being urged by the respective Communist Parties of those countries, it was only bewildered and became subsequently susceptible to the patriotic propaganda of the fascist German bourgeoisie.

Stalin and the Stalinist Communist Parties were puzzled why the German proletariat did not rise in revolt in Germany when the Red Armies advanced towards it. The fundamental reason for the failure of such a revolt lay in the fact that the entire war against Nazi Germany was conducted by the Stalinist government on the basis of bourgeois nationalist slogans. The Stalinist leadership, out of narrow unprincipled empirical considerations, even resuscitated the name of and glorified General Suralov, the oppressor of the exploited Russian peasantry in the pre-revolutionary Russian history. Further, it denounced not

the German bourgeoisie exclusively as the war criminal but the entire German people including the German proletariat which in fact was only the victim and the dupe of the German fascist bourgeoisie. Though Stalinism is basically the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy, it is of crucial importance to note that since the Soviet bureaucracy is based on nationalized property relations, it is also the ideology of the defence of those property relations, but by bureaucratically deformed means. Stalinism is distorted Marxism. It deforms the principle of proletarian internationalism. It ideologically and politically disorganizes the normally and spontaneously developing movement of the world proletariat for world socialism. It weakens the international consciousness of the world proletariat and disrupts its unity and united struggle, now by its class collaborationist policies, now by its adventurist sectarian policies.

We have given a few instances (in our evaluation of Stalinism) of how the End determines the Means and how the distortion of the End inevitably results in the distortion of the Means.

When the Soviet bureaucracy, urged (unconsciously) by its own sectional interests, appropriated the identity of the proletariat of which it was only a part, it lost objectivity and developed subjectivism. Consequently, it developed a series of anti-Marxist illusions and misconceptions which, through sophistry, it rationalized as Marxist-Leninist truths. It invented the theory of Socialism in a single country, the theoretical expression of the petty-bourgeois nationalist degeneration of its international proletarian) consciousness, and made it its basic objective. This distortion in the domain of the End culminated in the distortion in the sphere of the Means since the End and the Means are dialectically interconnected. This resulted in the emergence of Stalinism, the ghastly parody of Marxism-Leninism. There ensued a holocaust of Marxist principles in the realm of all ideology. All strategies and tactics in the economic and political spheres as also all policies in the domains of art, literature, and even natural sciences became deformed.

To sum up, during the Stalin era, a monstrous deflection from the basic proletarian objective of world socialism, historically derived through the Marxist analysis of capitalist society from the dialectic of the world developmental process, by the rul-

ing bureaucracy took place in the Soviet Union. With this deflection from the supreme objective, there simultaneously occurred also a deflection from the road to world socialism. With the distortion of the End the Means too became distorted.

This degeneration of the Means to achieve the End became inevitable in proportion as the deflection from the End took place. Historically, both the End and the Means to achieve it emerge in the social-developmental process and constitute a dialectical unity. Hence with the distortion of the End, the Means too are inevitably distorted. The End *determines* the Means and the distorted End inevitably brings the Means in conformity with the distorted End and distorts them.

The Soviet bureaucracy which emerged as a result of the historical reasons enumerated previously, though an integral part of the Soviet proletariat, became relatively independent of it and developed its own sectional interests to which it subordinated the interests of the very class of which it was only a part.

And when a part rises above the whole, appropriates the place of the whole, substitutes its own sectional interests in the place of those of the whole, a resultant distortion of the End of the whole inevitably occurs. This deflection of the End of the whole inexorably results in the adoption of Means by the part which only serves its own sectional End distorting the achievement of the End of the whole.

Since the basic End of the bureaucracy was the conservation and expansion (nothing is stationary, conservation only orients towards expansion) of its own power, position and privileges, the Means it adopted (the ideology it elaborated, the programmes and policies it formulated) were basically determined by that End. That every living organism struggles for its own survival and development is the basic biological law governing the behaviour of every organism. This decisive law is valid also in the case of the bureaucratic caste as in that of classes and other social aggregates. Advancement of its own sectional interests became the supreme determinant of its basic ideology, strategies, tactics, programmes and policies (domestic as well as foreign). This resulted in the distortion of the development of the life of the Soviet people in all its domains. The first workers' state, the offspring of the great October Revolution, became

bureaucratized, with the bureaucracy instead of the proletariat in command. The distortion occurred, as we have said, in all domains of life, economic, political, social, cultural; also in the sphere of international activity since foreign policy is only the continuation of the domestic policy.

However, since the bureaucracy was based on nationalized property relations and was an integral part of the proletariat, it did retain a proletarian consciousness. But since it rose above the proletariat, its proletarian socialist consciousness became bureaucratically deformed. Instead of the crystal pure proletarian socialist consciousness, it evolved a bureaucratically distorted proletarian socialist consciousness.

This consciousness being proletarian could not break with the essential proletarian socialist consciousness since the bureaucracy was a part of the proletariat and its very existence was bound up with that of the nationalized property relations. The bureaucracy was not a new class based on a new species of property relations but a degenerate part of the same proletarian class. Its consciousness remained, therefore, proletarian but suffered from the bureaucratic myopia.

Ideology is the rationalization of class interests. Marxism-Leninism is the world outlook of the proletariat which helps it to overthrow the historically outmoded capitalist social system and to be the architect of the world classless stateless communist society.

Soviet bureaucracy being a part of the proletariat, though deformed, subscribed, due to this decisive reason, to Marxism-Leninism. However, since it had set itself above the proletariat and had installed itself as a privileged caste, it debased Marxism-Leninism. It recast Marxism-Leninism by adapting it to its own sectional outlook.

Stalinism is bureaucratically distorted Marxism-Leninism.

The very structure of the consciousness of the bureaucracy determined by the conditions of its being has been such that through its lens, it visualized situations and problems of world communist movement and of the defence of the Soviet Union not from the Marxist-Leninist standpoint but through the lens of a Marxism-Leninism befogged by the bureaucratic myopia.

FUTURE OF STALINISM

THE international Stalinist movement led and dominated by the Soviet Stalinist leadership has entered an organic ideological, political and organizational crisis. The emergence of this crisis *happened* to synchronize with the death of Stalin and received a momentum after the speech of Khrushchev at the Secret Session of the C.P.S.U. in 1956.

This crisis has been further aggravated, in some countries, even at a geometrical rate, after sharp divergence of views between Moscow and Peking on vital problems such as war, disarmament, working class capture of power, road to communism, the relationship of workers' states with the national bourgeoisies of countries which have recently achieved independence and others.

This divergence of views (despite the facade of seeming agreement embodied in the joint manifesto of communist parties of eighty-one countries which recently met at Moscow) still persists, is irreconcilable and hence cannot be overcome.

This sharp cleavage of views between the Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Communist Party and that of the Chinese Communist Party is mirrored in varying degrees in all the communist parties of the world, threatening their ideological, political and even organizational monolithism. The perspective of increasing splits and resultant disintegration of these parties is unfolded.

We will attempt to locate the genetic source of the divergence of views between these two parties.

We have already enumerated the principal historical genetic causes of the rise of the Soviet bureaucracy in the early twenties viz. the economic and cultural backwardness of Russia

where the proletarian revolution first broke out and was victorious, the peasant preponderance in the Russian society, the absence of democratic traditions in that country, and above all, the defeat of revolutions in other countries during the years following the First World War.

Both Lenin and Trotsky had located these unfavourable features of the historical situation in which the first workers' state came into existence and functioned. Lenin was "alarmed" at the bureaucratic growth and drew the attention of the Party to it on the eve of his death. Subsequently, Trotsky conducted, for over a decade and a half, a heroic struggle, both ideological and political, against what was during Lenin's time a tendency but thereafter developed into the phenomenon of a full-fledged bureaucracy.

The Soviet society made phenomenal progress in the domains of science and technology, industry and agriculture, during the Stalin era. To-day the Soviet Union stands only second in the hierarchy of highly industrialized countries, only second to the capitalist U.S.A.

This progress is, however, principally due to the new property relations which the great October Revolution created. By its bureaucratically distorted social, economic, and political policies, the Stalinist regime only retarded and distorted this colossal advance.

By the time Stalin died, the economic and other developments of the Soviet society had reached a point when the bureaucracy from being a relative obstacle was beginning to prove an increasingly absolute obstacle to the further advance of the Soviet society.

The contradiction between the bureaucratic regime and the highly developed Soviet society had reached a point when massive discontent was growing among the Soviet people threatening to explode into a growing struggle against the bureaucracy. It was at this historical moment that Stalin, who concentrated in his person the dictatorial power exercised by the bureaucracy over the Soviet people, died.

It was just a historical coincidence.

The Stalinist leadership after some dissensions and eliminations in its ranks finally stabilized under the leadership of Khrushchev. It tided over the crisis by adapting itself to it by

softening the bureaucratic regime, by conceding some reforms but within the matrix of the bureaucratic regime.

But in the present historical situation, reforms cannot appease the aggrieved people, can only whet their appetite for greater reforms till, finally, the bureaucratic regime and the bureaucratic caste are eliminated.

The Soviet bureaucracy stands at a historical disadvantage. Russia's material and cultural backwardness has been liquidated. The backward peasant has been, through the mechanisation and the collectivisation of agriculture, transformed into a worker. Due to the titanic advance of the productive forces of the Soviet society, products have appreciably increased and despite the appropriation of by far a larger share of these by the privileged bureaucratic caste comprising the top echelons of the administrative personnel of the state, trade unions, collective farms together with the upper stratum of scientists, technologists, writers, artists and others, the share of the common people in the social products has also *absolutely* increased. With the rising standard of life, the Soviet people have been developing urges for political and ideological freedom. Discontent against the bureaucratic regime is steadily growing. When minor concessions i.e. reforms within the matrix of the bureaucratic regime are exhausted, the bureaucracy will be inevitably confronted with the final and crucial demand of socialist democracy implying the re-establishment of democracy within the party and trade unions, within all organs of the Soviet society. All contradictions of the bureaucratically administered Soviet society viz. contradictions between the Soviet people and the bureaucracy and between the upper and lower layers of the bureaucracy, will become more and more sharp. Further economic, social and cultural development of the Soviet society inevitably due to its new economic foundation viz. social ownership of means of production, despite the bureaucratically deformed character of this development, will only accentuate these contradictions and resultant struggles between the Soviet people and the bureaucracy.

Thus, both contradictions viz. (1) that between the needs of further material development of the Soviet society and the existing bureaucratic political superstructure and (2) that between the Soviet people with their rapidly increasing urge for

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a higher standard of life and socialist democratic freedom on one hand and the bureaucracy frantically resisting these demands or attempting to assuage them by the technique of concessions which however have a limit on the other, will be accentuated.

In the international field too, history is working against the Soviet bureaucracy. It can no longer subordinate proletarian socialist or national liberation struggles to the needs of its bureaucratically conceived foreign policy for the defence of the Soviet Union (the theory of peaceful coexistence). The colonial revolution is spreading over more and more countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Algeria, the national liberation movement has been developing in spite of the Communist Party of that country. In its anxiety to win over de Gaulle, Khrushchev has abstained from supporting the Algerian revolution and recognizing its provisional revolutionary government established in Tunis.

The theory of peaceful coexistence is mocked at by the advancing proletarian socialist and national liberation struggles in various parts of the world.

Further, the undisputed political and ideological authority of the Soviet Communist Party leadership is being more and more challenged, in practice though not categorically in words, by the Chinese Communist Party leadership. As we have previously observed, the bureaucracy due to its position as a privileged caste and with its existence based on the victory of the world socialist movement on a national scale loses international proletarian consciousness and develops a national consciousness. It hence evolves the anti-Marxist theory of socialism in a single country and, in pursuing that mirage, subordinates the world socialist movement based on international class struggle to its empirically conceived distorted foreign policy for the defence of the workers' state. This subordination has resulted, as history corroborates and the face-saving self-criticism by the Communist Parties themselves confirms, in the defeats of socialist struggles in various countries with the resultant delay of the victory of world socialism.

The communist consciousness of the Chinese Communist Party too has experienced a nationalist chauvinist degeneration. The leadership of the Chinese Communist Party has also survey-

ed the world through the nationalistically distorted Marxist lens. The post-revolutionary Chinese society is however in a different stage of development as compared to the extant society in the Soviet Union. Hence the Chinese communist leadership views the world development from the nationalistically distorted Marxist lens, different from that from what the Soviet leadership views it.

The productive forces of the Soviet society have amazingly developed, elevating the Soviet Union to the status of the second economic power in the world, next only to the U.S.A. This advance, it must be noted, is basically due to the social ownership of the means of production which makes real, universal, economic planning possible with the resultant astonishing tempo of the growth of the productive forces and production and is not the achievement of the bureaucratic regime. The Stalinist regime has, by its bureaucratic social, political and economic policies, only hampered its tempo as well as made it unsymmetrical (disproportion of heavy and consumers' goods industries, contradiction between industry as a whole and agriculture etc.).

On the basis of this formidable economic progress and its own interpretation of the nature of the further aggravating crisis of the world capitalist economy, the Soviet Stalinist leadership has developed new *illusions* viz. vanishing of world capitalism through peaceful economic competition, ideological struggle and others.

The post-revolutionary Chinese society is still in a backward economic stage though due to the new economic base viz. nationalized property relations, it has made tremendous progress though by bureaucratic oppressive means (the Communes), in the domains of productive forces. Hence in contrast to the Soviet leadership the Chinese leadership advocates the policy of the accentuation of and aid to the growing proletarian socialist and national liberation struggles. For instance, it has recognized the provisional Revolutionary Algerian Government and actively assists the anti-imperialist and communist movements in South Asian and other countries of the world.

However, it must be noted, the intervention of the Chinese leadership in the world historical process also takes a bureaucratically distorted form. First of all, it is motivated basically

by its desire to achieve the objective of a socialist society in China. The development of anti-imperialist and socialist struggles in other countries are only a means to achieve that national socialist goal. It too, like the Soviet leadership, subordinates these struggles to its national socialist goal. Secondly, it also like its Russian counterpart, aims at spreading Communism in other countries by anti-Marxist military-bureaucratic methods (for instance in Tibet) and not socialism as the result of a desire and the resultant struggle of the exploited classes of those countries themselves against their exploiters.

The Bolshevik Government, after the October Revolution, broke up the feudal-imperialist multi-nationality Czarist empire, conceded the right of national self-determination to various nationalities comprising the Russian people to the point of secession and subsequently built up the state of the U.S.S.R. on the basis of the free desire of those peoples for such a Union. In contrast, the Chinese (Stalinist) Government, *forcibly* incorporated Tibet into the People's Republic of China on the plea that it was once an integral part of the feudal Chinese Empire. So also in relation to the Indian territory forcibly occupied by it. Cynical disregard of Marxist-Leninist principles here reached an anti-climax.

Chinese Stalinism is only a variety of international Stalinism.

Such anti-Marxist practice of the Chinese leadership only discredits communism in the eyes of the proletariat and other exploited classes and subject peoples living under colonial domination. It makes it easy for the imperialists and bourgeoisies of independent capitalist countries to mobilise the masses in their struggle against the communist movement. The anti-Marxist policies of the Chinese leadership have weakened the influence of the Communist Parties in Asiatic countries (India, Indonesia, etc.) over the masses.

The Chinese leadership stands for and propagates certain Marxist principles such as "war cannot be prevented without eliminating capitalism", "peaceful co-existence of capitalist and socialist countries *for all time* is not possible", and others. Though it has resuscitated these Marxist-Leninist conceptions for its own reasons, this will nevertheless have serious repercussions in the world communist movement and within all com-

munist parties of the world including the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Already, a number of communist parties including the Communist Party of India have been divided into pro-Moscow and pro-Peking wings. The Communist Party of Albania is even almost openly pro-Peking.

The divergence of views between the Soviet and Chinese Stalinist leadership is fundamental, and hence irreconcilable. The expanding colonial revolution and the growing resurgence of the proletarian movement in the West European countries, as evidenced in the recent militant and prolonged general strike of the Belgian workers, have exposed more and more the anti-Marxist views of Soviet Stalinism on vital problems of the world communist movement. Chinese Stalinism, too, is also discredited due to its anti-Marxist programme and policies of armed territorial aggression and expansion pursued by it in relation to Tibet and India.

Further, with the prospect of the sharpening of the crisis of the capitalist economies in more and more countries in the near future, a new wave of mass struggles will sweep over the capitalist world. This together with the further extension of the colonial revolution to other African, Asian and Latin American countries will further undermine and threaten the capitalist system. These developments will challenge and refute the anti-Marxist theories of the Soviet Stalinist leadership.¹ The dialectical process of life developing through *irreconcilable* contradictions will refute these theories.

These developments will also undermine the Chinese bureaucracy which while formally standing for some genuine Marxist views today, will only try to twist them for achieving its own national communist goal.

But the present revival of and formal advocacy of some of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism by the Chinese Stalinist leadership will have a formidable and far-reaching repercussion in the world communist movement and world communist parties.

1 It is true that Khrushchev has supported the Castro regime in Cuba after the Cuban Revolution led by Castro had overthrown the bourgeois regime of Baptista. The Communist Party of Cuba however did not support Castro until after the victory of Cuban Revolution.

Further, it will not only contribute to the deepening of the ideological, political and organizational crisis of international Stalinism (its negative aspect) with the inevitable consequence of splits in the various communist parties but will also pave way for the emergence of new authentic Marxist-Leninist parties which will finally break through the ideological hypotheses and organizational fetishism of Stalinism both of the Soviet and Chinese variety.

TRAGEDY OF HUNGARIAN
REVOLUTION

THE uprising of the Hungarian proletariat in alliance with the socialist intelligentsia and the toiling peasantry for national liberation and socialist democracy is an event of almost epochal significance. The uprising was directed not only against the Red Army of the Stalinist Soviet Union but also against the indigenous puppet Stalinist government.

Though restricted to a relatively small country like Hungary, the event has crucial historical significance and profound future implications. The Hungarian Revolution sought to eliminate the subjection of socialist Hungary by the more powerful socialist Soviet Union and establish in its place a voluntary free alliance of the two socialist states. Further, it aimed at the overthrow of the indigenous bureaucratic regime of the Hungarian Stalinists and the establishment of socialist democracy.

Every struggle in the social world—a revolt, or a full-fledged revolution—implies the interlocking of social forces (classes and other socio-economic groups) which collide due to their basic or secondary divergent interests and strive for supremacy, for the seizure or the retention of political power. The Hungarian Revolution also should be examined in the light of this truth. However, due to a unique conjuncture of historical circumstances, it has been an extremely complex phenomenon.

The social forces involved in the revolt were: (a) the Red Army, the striking force of the Soviet Union ruled by the

* Published in *New Perspective*, 1957.

Stalinist bureaucracy, (b) the Hungarian government reflecting the interests of the indigenous bureaucracy, (c) the Hungarian proletariat, (d) the Hungarian petty-bourgeoisie (i.e. students, the intelligentsia etc.), (e) the Hungarian peasantry and (f) insignificant survivals of the overthrown bourgeoisie and landlords *in liaison* with foreign imperialism.

As Marxism teaches us, every social group, like any living organism, acts according to its own interests, survival being its basic interest. The Soviet intervention in Hungary, therefore, was motivated by the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy. What are its fundamental interests? Itself based on nationalized property relations, the Soviet bureaucracy has also to defend the nationalised property relations in the East European countries against any imperialist attempt to restore capitalism in those countries. This distinguishes the Soviet bureaucracy from the social democratic bureaucracies of the West European capitalist countries which are based on the super-profits of imperialist exploitation and have, therefore, always defended their respective imperialism.

The claim of the Soviet bureaucracy, however, that its intervention in socialist Hungary was directed against the menace of capitalist restoration by forces of bourgeois counter-revolution supported by foreign imperialism is blatant perversity of truth. In fact, no recognizable social basis for such a counter-revolutionary consummation exists in Hungary since the capitalist-landlord property relations have been substantially superseded by nationalised property relations. It is true that toiling peasantry exists in that country and resists *forcible* collectivization policies of the Stalinist regime but, nevertheless, it is the inveterate foe of any restoration of landlordism. If it favoured this, it would only imply its desire to rehabilitate its own former feudal slavery.

In reality, the workers and the peasants of Hungary were up in arms against their subjection (national oppression) by the Soviet Union ruled by the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Hungarian bureaucratic regime, the servile tool of the former to maintain its political and economic hold over Hungary. Even in the Soviet Union there is growing discontent against the bureaucratic regime which, in fact, compelled it to inaugurate a policy of reforms, announced by Khrushchev at the 20th Con-

gress of the C.P.S.U. This does not at all mean that the masses in the Soviet Union desire a return to capitalism. So it is in the case of the Hungarian masses also. What in reality the Soviet bureaucracy and its puppet Hungarian bureaucracy are fighting against is the demand of the Hungarian people for national liberation and socialist democracy.

It must be noted here that, historically, the capitalist and landlord classes in Hungary and other East European countries were dislodged from power not by an indigenous socialist revolution but from above and outside, by the might of the Red Armies. This inevitably resulted in the establishment of indigenous bureaucratic regimes subservient to the Soviet bureaucracy in those countries. Their national economies were subordinated to the economy of the Soviet Union. Thus the peoples of the East European countries were subjected to national subjection and economic exploitation by the Soviet Union. Further they lived under the terror regimes of their own national bureaucracies.

Herein lies the root of the Hungarian Revolt. The Revolt was not the product of any activity of fictitious counter-revolutionary social forces. These forces, very negligible, were eclipsed by the forces of the almost universal revolt of all strata of the Hungarian people — workers, peasants, intelligentsia, large sections of the armed forces and lower ranks of the bureaucracy itself. There is a decisive criterion to judge the social aim of a mass upheaval, viz. the character of the organs of struggle and the programme of demands inscribed on its banner. The organs of struggle evolved by the Hungarian masses were workers', peasants' and soldiers' committees, in fact, Soviets, a term which the revolutionaries deliberately avoided because, in the Stalin era, the Soviets had degenerated into organs of coercive bureaucratic domination.

The demands of the workers were crystal clear and categorically stated. They were revolutionary class demands viz. establishment of socialist democracy, workers' control over factories, workers' determining voice in the socialist planning so that their interests and not those of the bureaucracy be assured, establishment of a genuine democratic (and not a bureaucratically distorted as existed) workers' state based on workers', peasants', and soldiers' committees etc. These demands have an

aroma of the October Revolution. And further, to whom did they appeal for help in their revolutionary struggle? They appealed not to the nebulous "nations" of the world but, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, to the international working class calling on the latter to reinforce their heroic struggle for national liberation and socialist democracy by its world-wide general strike.

This decisively torpedoes the lie that the Hungarian uprising was instigated by counter-revolutionary forces, agents of Western imperialism. The uprising was a chemically pure working class uprising like the Poznan Revolt in Poland. Even Gomulka, the leader of the Polish bureaucracy which extorted from the unwilling Soviet bureaucracy substantial independence for itself, emphatically dismissed such an explanation advanced by the Soviet leadership regarding the origin of the Poznan riots. He stated, "The clumsy attempt to present the Poznan tragedy as the work of imperialist agents and provocateurs was very *naive* politically. Agents and provocateurs can never and nowhere determine the attitude of the working class. Agents, provocateurs of reactionaries never have been the inspiration of the working class; they are not and never will be."

This view of Gomulka regarding the genesis of the Poznan Revolt is true in the case of Hungary also. Imperialist agents might successfully instigate terrorist acts but they cannot successfully bring about a revolution and draw in its vortex millions of workers and peasants. And further, such a mythical imperialist-inspired revolution will not inscribe on its banner such demands as socialist democracy, much less invoke the aid of the international working class in the form of a general strike which would only disorganise the already unstable imperialist economy.

That the Soviet leadership is forced to resort to such a macabre explanation reveals the panic which has seized its consciousness at the heroic armed challenge to its domination by the rising tide of the people's democratic and proletarian socialist revolts in the East European countries one after the other. It is in mortal fear that these struggles for socialist democracy will, if not suppressed, have reverberations in the Soviet Union itself where the inauguration of the policy of reforms by the Soviet leadership itself is decisive evidence of the growing dis-

content among the people.

The Hungarian Revolution, as its programme shows, also does not aim at vivisectioning the unity of socialist countries. It does not trample under foot the principle of proletarian internationalism. It only demands that such unity must be based on the principles of equality and free choice. Thus it aims at the elimination of the distortion which the concept of proletarian internationalism has suffered during the Stalin era by substituting genuine proletarian internationalism in place of the pseudo-proletarian internationalism practised by the Soviet leadership. The socialist revolutionaries in Hungary also have not demanded the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the precious organ of defence of the socialist world against the imperialist assault. They only say that if such a Pact should continue, its membership by a socialist state must be free, voluntary, and equal.

Stalinism is distorted Marxism. It is the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy. It is Marxism since the bureaucracy is based on nationalized property relations and its existence is bound up with the preservation of these property relations. But, as Trotsky has profoundly analysed, the Soviet bureaucracy *has risen above the proletariat, has deprived the latter of political power and has become a privileged caste*. Hence there is a contradiction between the base viz. nationalised property relations and the political superstructure viz. the bureaucratic regime; also between the interests of the free symmetrical development of the nationalised economy and of the proletariat on one hand and those of the bureaucratic caste on the other.

This distortion of Marxism by the bureaucracy expresses itself in all domains including those of foreign policy, relations between the Soviet Union and East European countries, economic planning, art and culture. Stalinism perennially generates deformities. While achieving the union of all socialist countries which socialist internationalism demands, the bureaucracy subordinates other socialist countries to itself within that unity thus reducing socialist internationalism to a ghastly parody. In the international domain, the Stalinist leadership develops the international class struggle of the proletariat, but primarily not for abolishing world capitalism but for exerting pressure on capitalist states to compel them to be allies of the Soviet Union. It regulates it, now accentuates it, now soft-pedals it, now sabot-

ages it, to suit its bureaucratically distorted foreign policy of the defence of the Soviet Union. It thus distorts international class struggle thereby delaying the victory of the world socialist movement as well as subordinating that struggle — the best defence of the Soviet Union — to its foreign diplomacy, a secondary means for that purpose.

Stalin justified the integration of the Hungarian economy with that of the Soviet Union in the name of socialist internationalism. This integration however took place in the form of the subjection of the Hungarian economy to the needs of the Soviet economy. Similarly, though the principle of the coalition of socialist states for the purpose of defence is a correct Marxist-Leninist principle, the Warsaw Pact was a caricature of that principle. It was a Pact forcibly imposed upon the workers' states of Eastern Europe. It must be noted however that even in this form it does serve the limited purpose of defending the nationalised property relations of the Soviet Union and also East European countries against world imperialist attack, though in a bureaucratically deformed way.

The proletarian revolt in Hungary should be distinguished from Tito's revolt against Stalin. Tito's revolt was the revolt of the indigenous bureaucracy of Yugoslavia against the Soviet bureaucracy, though it also expressed the urge of national independence of the Yugoslavian people. Complete socialist democracy still does not exist in Yugoslavia. The arrest of Djilas, not an exponent of capitalist restoration, for expressing his criticism of the bureaucratic regime decisively indicates this. The only difference lies in the fact that the Tito regime is less bureaucratic than the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union.

The emergence of Gomulka on the crest of a popular movement in Poland has also been an indication that the national Stalinist bureaucracies of the East European countries are coming in conflict with the dominant Stalinist bureaucracy of the Soviet Union. Internally, however, Gomulka has not still established full-fledged socialist democracy for which the Hungarian proletariat is fighting. Both Tito and Gomulka, however, have broken with Stalinism *to the extent* that both have fought for equality of relationship between national workers' states.

In Hungary the genesis of the revolution lay in the massive discontent of the Hungarian people both against the indigenous

bureaucratic regime and the foreign (Soviet) domination. A section of the Hungarian bureaucracy led by Nagy took advantage of the popular discontent to oust the regime of Rakosi and Gero, outright puppets of Moscow.

But the Nagy regime which succeeded it could not fully meet the aspirations of the Hungarian proletariat and peasantry since this would signify complete elimination of the bureaucratic regime itself which safeguards the interests of the privileged indigenous bureaucracy. Hence, the proletariat set up their independent workers' and peasants' councils all over the country as their organs of struggle to realize socialist democracy. These councils demanded (1) democratisation of the workers' state and legalising of all socialist parties, (2) workers' control over industrial management, (3) withdrawal of Soviet troops, and (4) fraternal relationship of Hungary, on the basis of equality, with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. *These were proletarian democratic demands. No amount of Stalinist propaganda can efface this arch-fact.*

The Hungarian peasantry also suffered under the bureaucratic regime. It was opposed to forcible collectivisation of land which was in fact the distortion of the Leninist principle of socialisation through persuasion as crystallized in the directive "Convince but not Coerce". Moreover, the peasantry in common with the workers hated the secret police set up by the bureaucratic regime whose atrocities can be imagined from those of its counterpart in the Soviet Union which were vividly portrayed by Khrushchev at the Secret Session of the C.P.S.U. held in 1956. The mass fury was mainly directed against members of the secret police.

The objective of the Soviet bureaucracy in organizing armed intervention in Hungary is to perpetuate its hold over the East European states, a condition necessary for its survival in the Soviet Union itself. The foreign policy of a state is only the continuation of its domestic policy. The victory of the struggle for socialist democracy in the East European countries would mean precipitating as a repercussion the struggle for socialist democracy in the Soviet Union also. The bureaucracy can never make an exit voluntarily. The process of liberalization set in motion by Khrushchev's "de-Stalinisation" campaign has its organic limits. The partial reversal of the old Stalinist policies by

Khrushchev was intended to defend the basic interest of the Soviet bureaucracy, its survival against the growing discontent of the Soviet people. Same motivation marks the liberalization process initiated in some East European countries by the bureaucratic regimes.

Stalinism, the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy which is based on nationalised property relations, masquerades its action against the Hungarian proletariat under the garb of the defence of socialism in Hungary against imperialist counter-revolution, under the mask of the principle of proletarian internationalism. To the extent that a section of the Hungarian bureaucracy led by Nagy, motivated though it was by its own sectional interests, strove to overthrow the domination of the foreign Soviet bureaucracy with popular support, it played a progressive role. It represented the urge of the toiling people for national liberation.

After the suppression of the Revolt, the Hungarian bureaucracy under Janos Kadar has been trying to perpetuate its rule by granting liberal reforms. But it is of most crucial significance to note that it is prepared to unite with the Soviet bureaucracy to guard the common interests of the two bureaucracies when the Hungarian proletariat demands socialist democracy and thereby threatens their common existence. That is the meaning of the intervention of the Red Army in Hungary and the Kadar Government's frantic call for its aid.

The process of the Hungarian Revolution confirms the above Marxist analysis. The Kadar government represents the Hungarian bureaucracy which can survive *only with the help of* the Soviet troops. Due to the insufficient maturity of the Hungarian Revolution, serious weaknesses characterised it, the principal being the absence of an experienced Marxist-Leninist proletarian party to lead it. It must be however noted that the demands formulated by the Hungarian Workers' Council which led the general strikes had a classically socialist revolutionary character. The Hungarian proletariat is advancing on the road of creating its genuine class party in course of time. The immaturity of the workers' leadership is evidenced in the fact that it still supports Nagy who basically is a Stalinist. Moreover, the international proletariat — disoriented by international Stalinism — has failed to rise in aid of the Hungarian proletariat even when the Hun-

garian worker leaders called upon it to come to their rescue. Due to a lack of explanatory campaign about the significance of the Hungarian Revolution from the standpoint of regenerating the world working class movement, the international proletariat was still confused and hence remained immobile.

In the face of the superior forces of the adversary, the valiant epic fight of the Hungarian proletariat supported by the oppressed peasantry and the socialist intelligentsia has been suppressed. It was inevitable in the given historical situation. But its implications are far reaching. In fact it is a dress-rehearsal of its future, inevitable triumphant struggle. It is also the precursor of similar struggles in other East European countries. It will further have a stimulating effect on the population of the Soviet Union which is also growing more discontented.

The Hungarian revolt has revealed that the contradictions of international Stalinism have matured for its increasing disintegration. By their heroic and agonizing suffering, the Hungarian workers will unleash tremendous forces. The Hungarian revolt was the expression of the accentuating discontent, admitted by Khrushchey himself in his revelations, against Stalinism. It must, however, be noted that reforms announced by the bureaucratic regimes in the Soviet Union and East European countries will not pacify the proletariat in today's historical situation but *will only whet its appetite* for further reforms to the point of the demands for the elimination of the bureaucratic regimes themselves and the establishment of socialist democracy.

International Stalinism has been a great obstacle in the path of the world socialist movement. But the heroic challenge of the Hungarian proletariat has shattered the moral authority of the Stalinist leadership and shown that Stalinist regimes are not invulnerable. The Communist Parties in the capitalist countries have been weakened due to their wrong policies and are in a state of more or less ideological, political, and organizational crisis.

The Marxists must, however, guard themselves against the illusion that the Communist Parties nurtured for three decades in systematic political opportunism could reform themselves. The Communist Parties will undergo a series of splits rather than a metamorphosis. By their very nature these Parties are

bureaucratic and cannot permit any challenge to the fundamentals of Stalinism by its members. Their self-reform like the self-reform of the Soviet bureaucracy can be ruled out. The best elements within the parties will, as the real role of their wrong policies is more and more revealed, find it difficult to function within these parties and will split from them.

If today international Stalinism is still strong and is a formidable world force, it is mainly because of the *absence* of powerful genuine Marxist parties in various countries. The social democrats and the bourgeois liberals are fully exploiting the developments in Hungary to discredit Marxism itself. They misidentify Stalinism as authentic Marxism. In reality Stalinism is the ideology of the Soviet bureaucracy that emerged in the Soviet Union, because of the peculiar historical conditions after the October Revolution.

Stalinism is distorted Marxism adapted and therefore debased to suit the narrow sectional interests and the empirical outlook of the bureaucracy. The Marxist concepts and categories become deformed through the lens of the consciousness of the bureaucracy. Class collaboration is frequently paraded as class struggle and Stalinist leaders weave consummate sophistry to establish this.

By the ruthless suppression of the Hungarian proletariat struggling for national freedom and socialist democracy, by disbanding the legal Nagy Government and installing the puppet Kadar Government in power, the Soviet bureaucracy is desperately attempting to safeguard its privileged position endangered by such a struggle. But this action of the Soviet bureaucracy only harms the world socialist movement, discredits Marxism, and antagonises increasing sections of the world proletariat not only against the Stalinist regime but against socialism itself. It, therefore, strengthens the world bourgeoisie.

The heroic and militant march of the Soviet and East European masses towards genuine socialist democracy cannot be halted. The twilight of international Stalinism has begun.

32

STALINISTS vs. STALINISTS

IT is an inexorable law of all political systems based on the negation of democracy – bourgeois or proletarian – that a constant and fierce struggle for power must rage among the summit leaders ending only when one single leader emerges triumphant, concentrating all power in his own hands. Further, even subsequently, “the dictator” can maintain his “dictatorship” and the continued existence of the undemocratic political system (of which he is only the personification)¹ only by periodical purges and pogroms. The history of the Soviet Union, since the death of Lenin whereafter the bureaucratic degeneration of the first workers’ state started, most convincingly illustrates this law. The Stalin era provides a monstrous nightmarish picture of such gruesome purges and holocausts. (Revealed by

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1 Stalin represented and defended basically the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy (the privileged caste in the Soviet Union) and only exercised the dictatorship of that caste over the Soviet people. Similarly, Nazism in Germany did not signify Hitler’s personal dictatorship over the German people but, in fact, Hitler only exercised the dictatorship of German finance capital, (Nazism), over the former. Hitler was only the Fascist fighting arm of German capitalism concentrating in himself the will and power of the latter, using them to suppress the threatened socialist revolution.

In fact, it is a class or a caste which instals a “dictator” in power. The psychological traits and specific capacities of “the dictator” make him eligible for being chosen as a dictator by the class or the caste to serve its own interests. Thus, “the dictator” only exercises the dictatorship of a class or a social group.

Khrushchev in his speech at the Secret Session of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1956).

The basic reason for the emergence of such a phenomenon lay in the fact that once proletarian democracy was suppressed by the Soviet bureaucracy, it logically and causally resulted in the suppression of the intra-party democracy within the CPSU, thereafter in the suppression of democracy within the Central Committee and the Polit-Bureau (now called the Presidium). The process culminated in the emergence of one leader as "the dictator". Hence the rehabilitation of proletarian democracy in the Soviet Union *alone* can restore democracy not only for the proletariat but also within the Party, the Central Committee and the Presidium. Then *alone* will emerge the basic condition for the vanishing of "the dictator". The removal of the bureaucratic dictatorship (personified in and exercised by the "dictator") by the people can alone restore socialist democracy in the Soviet Union. Since the same bureaucratic system (though relaxed and softened) has persisted even after the death of Stalin, the same law of that system has been still operating. First Beria was executed. Now Khrushchev-Bulganin-Zukov group has eliminated Molotov-Malenkov-Kaganovitch group. This does not, however, imply that the belligerent groups are animated by mere lust for power as many bourgeois ideologues explain. Every such struggle is based on divergence of views among leaders regarding the foreign or domestic policy or both. Under the bureaucratic system, such a divergence is resolved not through democratic discussion within the Party but through such means as imprisonments, exiles and executions of opponents under Stalin and now through demotion and other less brutal methods under Khrushchev.

The manner in which the Molotov group has been eliminated vividly demonstrates that the bureaucratic regime still in essence persists and functions in full vigour in the Soviet Union. The purged group has not been allowed the freedom to argue its policies, domestic and foreign, before a Party Congress or in the country. It is gagged and a one-sided political campaign has been started. When outstanding leaders, who also are staunch Stalinists, are so summarily disposed of, it is the most eloquent testimony of the persistence of the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death. What concessions have

been made by the leaders as a panicky manoeuvre for the survival of the regime do not affect the *basic* hold of the bureaucracy over the people. They are designed only to protect that regime.

It is necessary to realise that there is no fundamental difference in the objective of the divergent policies of the Molotov and Khrushchev groups. Both the groups hold to Stalinism and aim at maintaining the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union, its grip in varying degrees over the East European countries, and the subordination of the world socialist movement to the bureaucratically conceived foreign policy of the Soviet government. However, they differ regarding the programme and policies to achieve this objective in the given historical situation. Regarding the East European countries, both groups are drawing contradictory conclusions from events such as the workers' uprising in East Germany, the Poznan workers' revolt in Poland, and, above all, the Hungarian Revolution. The Molotov group holds the view that, to keep these countries in subjection to the bureaucratic Soviet regime it is indispensable to adopt the strong "blood and iron" Stalinist policy of old. It considers the slogan of "Every country has its own national road to socialism" as dangerous since, even if lip loyalty is given to it, it would instigate those countries to strive for the overthrow of the domination of their countries by the Soviet bureaucracy through the respective puppet Stalinist regimes in those countries. The Khrushchev group, while having the same objective in view, however, in light of those revolts, stands for the policy of concessions to those countries as the means to maintain the basic grip over them.

This signifies only differences among the two groups as to the correct method to maintain the grip of the Soviet Union over those countries. It would be a dangerous misconception to think that Khrushchev stands for a socialist democratic policy towards those countries. If it were so, he would have repudiated his suppression of the heroic Hungarian revolution and withdrawn Red Armies from Hungary, leaving the Hungarians to follow their "national road to socialism".

Similarly, in the domain of domestic policy, both groups aim at defending the bureaucratic regime against the aggravating discontent of the people. They differ, however, in their policies

to achieve this identical objective. The Khrushchev group stands for a policy of non-vital reforms and concessions and hopes thereby to appease the masses. For instance it stands for relaxing the pressure on collective farmers by relinquishing the policy of the requisitioning of farm products. The Molotov group is more or less the exponent of the old Stalinist policy.

In the sphere of international relations, both groups stand for the policy of subordinating the international class struggle to the nationalistically distorted foreign policy of the Soviet government. But they hold relatively opposite views regarding the attitude towards the imperialist powers. Both groups subscribe to the theory of "peaceful co-existence" of capitalism and communism. However, while the Khrushchev group advocates a soft policy, its opponents stand for a stiff policy.

It should be noted that the power struggle between Stalinist leaders thus expresses divergence of views among them regarding the adequate policy for (1) defending the bureaucratic regime within the Soviet Union, (2) maintaining hold over the East European countries, and (3) achieving "peaceful co-existence" with capitalism so that the bureaucracy can build up peacefully "socialism in a single country", the Soviet Union. As staunch Stalinists they are in agreement on these basic aims. Differences, even if they call into action firing squads as happened in the Stalin era, or demotions and denigrations as after Stalin's death, are only with respect to the policies to be pursued to attain those common aims.

All these leaders are thus equally firm opponents of socialist democracy, of the independence of the socialist peoples of the East European countries, of the unfettered development of the world socialist movement. Even the so-called "liberalizing" measures glorified recently by Nehru constitute only the technique adopted by one group of Stalinists to attain the basic aims of the bureaucracy.²

² By conceding reforms of secondary significance during the period of 1954-57, the Stalinist leadership was not embarking on the road of "de-Stalinization". These minor reforms had for their objective the preservation of Stalinism the fundamental features of which (*viz.* the bureaucratic suppression of proletarian democracy and intra-party democracy, the basic subjection of the East European Workers' states to the

Since, as we said, the tendency of every undemocratic regime based on the negation of democracy, bourgeois or proletarian, is that of constant struggle among summit leaders for power till one "leader" emerges, we can prognosticate further struggles in future among the leaders comprising the Khrushchev group, for instance between Zhukov (the Army) versus Khrushchev (the Party).

But parallel to this, the discontent of the populations of the Soviet Union and East European countries will also be aggravated and give rise to heroic actions against the bureaucratic regimes.

The October Revolution resulting in the establishment of nationalized property relations has created a premise for moving in the direction of socialism. These new property relations should be defended as the apple of their eye by all the socialists against any attack of international capitalism.

What is historically needed in the Soviet Union is the elimination of the bureaucracy (which has expropriated the proletariat of political power) by the Soviet people and the establishment of socialist democracy. The economic foundation of the Soviet Union society is sound. The defect inheres

powerful Soviet Union, the subordination of the interests of the world socialist movement to the bureaucratically distorted foreign policy of the latter) remain unaffected by those reforms. In fact, by this step these leaders aimed at adapting Stalinism to the new historical situation when the discontent of the Soviet people against the privileged bureaucracy and its dictatorial rule was aggravating and threatening to erupt into a large-scale struggle.

These reforms cannot therefore be described as a step towards de-Stalinization. On the contrary, by conceding these reforms the Stalinist leadership aimed at tiding over a crisis.

The reforms, however, did not succeed in appeasing the socialist East European peoples but, in the given historical situation, only whetted their appetite for full national independence and socialist democracy. The workers' uprising in East Germany, the Poznan revolt in Poland, and finally the Hungarian Revolution were the consequence of this.

The Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Union became alarmed at these developments, moved in the retrograde direction, and halted further reforms.

only in the political superstructure viz. the-bureaucratic regime.

Hence what is needed in the Soviet Union is not a Social Revolution (which changes property forms also) but a political change which will restore power to the proletariat as prognosticated by Trotsky.

