

## Analysis of the May-June Situation in France

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During recent months West Germany, France, Great Britain, Spain, Italy and other capitalist countries of the West have seen tremendous upsurge of student and youth movement in the form of strikes, demonstrations, occupation of school and university premises and violent clashes with the police. Of these countries, France holds a unique position in so far as the amplitude, depth, nature and character of this movement is concerned. In May and June last, thousands of French students rose in revolt demanding reforms of the education system and removal of the fusty atmosphere in secondary schools and universities there. They left their classes, brought out huge demonstrations and, when the police moved against them, occupied the premises of their schools and universities, erected barricades on the streets and violently clashed with the police.

After initial indifference, the French working class by and large came out in support of the student movement when the latter had spread to every corner of the country. Nearly six million workers, constituting more than one-third of the total fifteen million wage-earners in the whole of France, joined the struggle by striking work and occupying some three hundred and odd major industrial concerns covering factories mines, dockyards, railways, airports, petrol stations, electric supply centres, etc., thereby paralysing not only the life line of communication but also the economy of the country as a whole. This struggle by the people of France is indeed an example of their heroic and militant mood worthy of emulation by the working population of our country.

There is no denying that the aims of the student and youth movement in the West are not the same everywhere; they are different in different countries. But notwithstanding the difference in the aims, the movement everywhere springs from a sense of burning indignation and resentment of the young generation against the existing capitalist social order with its concomitant evils of economic hardship,

insecurity in life, political persecution and moral degeneration which are eating into the very vitals of the peoples of these countries. The capitalist rulers of these countries, as their counterparts in the USA, are, of course, out to turn the attention of the young generation from these ulcers of capitalism and from struggle by encouraging easy purposeless Bohemian life intimately connected with sex, narcotics and crime, a life which makes one oblivious of one's duty and responsibility as a social being and develops indifference to and contempt for social action against social injustice. But, in spite of temporary success, even this strong dose of sex, narcotics and crime cannot destroy for good the finer elements in the youth. Bohemian life only adds to his insatiety and disgust for such a life, as soon the temporary excitement is over. The result is complete moral frustration, resulting in a desperate but mute spirit of revolt fretting and fuming within, which, when occasion presents, explodes like bombs against those who are responsible for creating such an intolerably hellish situation for common men. Behind the present ferment among the students and youths of the

Western countries is working this mental make-up of theirs. It goes without saying that there are others for whom is not the life of Bohemianism, who have found out the purpose of life, who are politically conscious and, so, determined to replace the present rotten society based on inequality, injustice and unreason by another where there will be no exploitation of man by man and where there will be equal opportunities for all to develop collectively. In the background of this composition and bent of mind of the younger generation the last situation in France should be studied.

A certain so-called nationalist newspaper in our country criticised the student and youth movement in France and extolled the conditions of education in secondary schools and universities and the education system obtaining in that country at the time of the last movement. The 'omniscient' writer of that article used the Indian yardstick in measuring the conditions and the system in France. And in doing so he committed a grave error. Even a school boy knows that the concept about goodness or badness is neither absolute nor universal. It is relative and varies not only from time to time but also from country to country. A standard which is regarded as very good now will in course of time be considered low. Similarly, what is covetable to a particular nation may be rejected as sub-standard by the people of another country. Hence, with the Indian yardstick the French standard should not be measured. The educational atmosphere in secondary schools and universities and the education system in France may be better than those in our country. But that does not make them up to the mark of and acceptable to the French people. According to the standard of living of the people in France in general and the rising taste of the student in particular,

the secondary schools and universities of that country are sub-standard. They are under-housed, under-staffed and ill-equipped. Stuffy class rooms, overcrowded and dingy, badly equipped laboratories and libraries, an education system highly expensive and having no living relation between the teacher and the taught and, above all, increasingly domineering attitude of the bureaucratic authorities at the helm of the educational world and more and more withdrawal of existing rights and facilities of the student community are some of the glaring instances of the backwardness and anti-democratic conditions prevailing in the secondary schools and universities in France which have provoked the French students to call their Alma Maters "teaching barracks", a term expressing closeness of the educational institutions with police or military barracks. As the Minister for Education has admitted—he has certainly not placed all the cards on the table—tuition fees in France are so high that not more than 10 per cent of the students can come from the workers' families, 40 per cent of the students are to work outside just to defray their educational expenses and even among the fortunate ones who can afford to be enrolled as students, three out of every four cannot complete their courses of studies. This is certainly not a happy state of affairs. But the last straw on the camel's back was the recent order taking away the rights of the students to hold political meetings inside the university campus and of the women students to receive their men friends inside their hostel rooms, rights so long enjoyed by the French students. The students of the Sorbonne University started movement for educational reforms. But the authorities, in place of favourably responding to the democratic demands for reforms, tried to suppress the movement with the help of the police. The brutal police

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## Absence of Correct Revolutionary Working Class Leadership is Responsible for Failure of the Movement

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repression had the effect of intensifying the movement till it became a country-wide mass student and youth movement militant in nature and character, throwing a challenge to the administration of de Gaulle himself. With the six million workers joining hands with the students, striking their work and occupying their factories, the movement gained further momentum and rose to a still higher pitch. It became a struggle for capture of power. The situation became so hot for the rulers of France that even the proud General once made up his mind to resign and even the bourgeois press could not suppress its anxiety at the possibility of the fall of the Fifth Republic. But the pity is that this mighty militant mass movement pregnant with so much tremendously revolutionary possibility with far reaching consequences to the advantage of the international revolutionary working class movement has ended in fiasco. Revolutionaries of every country including ours should draw correct lessons from this movement.

Some people are attributing the cause of the failure of the movement and left debacle in the last general elections in France to the "adventurist and irresponsible acts" indulged during the movement by the so-called extremist leadership. True that President de Gaulle has won a resounding electoral victory; inasmuch as out of a total of 470 seats for metropolitan France, the Gaullists have this time captured 350, thus improving their previous position by 119. While, on the other hand, the Communist Party of France and the Left Federation have got 34 and 57 seats respectively as against 72 and 118 seats held by them previously. From all counts it seems that the Communist Party expected to repeat the performance of 1936 when following strikes and occupation of factories,

mines, etc. by the French working class a Popular Front Government came to power. The debacle in the election has created a sense of discomfiture in the leadership of the Communist Party also. This has been evident from the all out efforts of Waldeck Rochet, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, to woo the voters by repeated assurances of "orderly and wise" conduct on the part of his party and his post-election reaction following the debacle. It is not correct, in our view, to attribute the reverses in the election entirely to the militant leadership of the movement. Even at the peak of the rising tide of any revolutionary movement in a country election results may be very bad for the party leading that movement. And at the time of decline of any revolutionary movement such a debacle is only to be expected. Let alone other countries, the history of France herself bears ample testimony to it. Thus there is nothing unusual or unexpected in the resounding victory of President de Gaulle and the crushing defeat of the Communist Party of France and the Left Federation in the last election. The political commentators of the bourgeois newspapers are further asserting, on the basis of election results in general and especially in Paris and its outskirts, acknowledged strong holds of the Communist Party, that the Party has lost its influence over the workers there. This betrays their ignorance only. Defeat, even utter defeat, in any election does not establish it. To cite one instance, our Party in the general elections of 1962 did not win a single seat when these so-called political *pundits* observed that our party had been completely wiped out from the body politic of India. But to the chagrin of these political commentators subsequent events proved that our Party had not only been not

wiped out but it had emerged much stronger than before. So it is foolish to conclude from the election results in France that the people there have become "disillusioned about the Communist Party of France."

In our considered view the movement has failed. For, it has failed to do what it could very well achieve, had there been a correct leadership. It is clear that the leadership of the student and youth movement viewed the movement as a struggle for seizure of power. The leadership of the Communist Party of France also, willynilly caught in the movement, visualised the movement in the like manner with the difference that while the former was for armed insurrection, the latter was preparing to "capture a stable majority in parliament with the backing of the mass movement and transform parliament, a bourgeois organ, into a genuine instrument of people's will", as Khrushchev in his thesis on peaceful transition to socialism had formulated and which modern revisionists are propagating even after the fall of that father of modern revisionism. And in that respect the leadership in both the cases is wrong. There cannot be any doubt about the validity of the law of violent revolution even in the changed international situation as at present. The law of violent revolution is still the general law of revolution in every country. So, given this condition, the revolution in France also will be violent. But revolution cannot be made to order. Nor does it take place at the dictate of some leaders. It takes place according to the law of development of mass struggles culminating ultimately in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie from state power. Revolution is impossible without a national crisis affecting both the exploited and the exploiters. In other

words, for successful revolution it is essential, first, that majority of the workers should consciously realise that the revolution is necessary and, hence, organise themselves as an army under the effective revolutionary working class leadership to carry on a protracted revolutionary battle against the reactionaries; secondly, that the millions and millions of the down-trodden masses of the people belonging to the middle forces must support the revolution or at least must not side with the reactionaries; thirdly, that the ruling classes also cannot continue in the old way and a national crisis develops; fourthly, that the rulers are divided among themselves, resulting in a split in the armed forces; fifthly, that the revolutionary forces have their own army or have sufficient support among the armed forces of the state so that they would join the revolution when it would be started and above all, there should be an effective genuine revolutionary working class party armed with revolutionary theory, dragging the people under its leadership with revolutionary politics and transforming them into an organised army of revolution. In the absence of this revolutionary leadership mass struggles are sure to take the form of ultra-left adventurist acts of sporadic movements without leadership or be diverted into the reformist-channel of parliamentary movement. Most of these conditions were absent in France in May and June last. Hence, to try to organise insurrection for capture of power was then the height of ultra-left adventurism and playing with insurrection.

While admitting that conditions for armed uprising and seizure of power by the people were not ripe, it cannot at the same time be overlooked that the mood of the people expressed in the movement indicates that, had

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# Sporadic Militant Movement Without Leadership Cannot Lead People to Power

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there been correct revolutionary working class leadership, the movement could be protected from both adventurism and parliamentarism, linked with the anti-imperialist, especially anti-US feelings of the French people and developed into a prolonged revolutionary struggle against the Gaullist regime. This anti-US movement, if it could be properly organised and conducted, would have drawn not only the vast masses of the French people but a section of the French bourgeoisie as well, paralysed to some extent the resistance of de Gaulle against the movement, taken out the wind from the sail of anti-Americanism which he is using to consolidate and strengthen his administration, isolated him from the bulk of the people who still harbour some illusion about his anti-US stand and accelerated the revolutionary preparation of the French people for ultimate struggle for seizure of power. This anti-US movement then would not have remained confined within the boundary of France. It would have unleashed a spate of anti-US revolutionary movements in all the capitalist countries of Europe now under the jackboot of US imperialism and, hence, suffering from a sense of national humiliation. In all probability this movement would have succeeded in forcing the USA to leave Europe. In any event it would have weakened the position of the USA, spearhead of international reaction and gangsterism, immensely and given a great fillip to the revolutionary struggle by the peoples of the metropolitan countries for socialism and in the colonial and dependent countries for national liberation as also the struggle for the preservation of world peace. But in the absence of revolutionary working class leadership, the militant mood

of the people against the administration and their readiness for a prolonged militant struggle, as expressed in the movement, could not be co-related with their anti-US feelings and the opportunities which the situation presented could not be utilised for revolutionary preparation for ultimate seizure of power by the French people. Thus the movement could not do what it could very well achieve. Herein lies the failure of the movement.

For the success of any revolutionary movement the establishment of correct leadership over the movement is an indispensable condition. And in the present era of disintegration of imperialism and proletarian revolution, correct leadership means one and only one thing—the leadership of the revolutionary working class exercised through a revolutionary working class party, that is, a real communist party. Facts have proved that the leadership of the Communist Party of France, as it is now, whatever might have been its revolutionary role in the past, is not that leadership. The leadership of this party has abandoned the lofty banner of revolutionary Marxism and picked up the condemned flag of revisionism. Otherwise how could it sabotage the movement by the French workers, students and youths by, first, condemning it in the beginning and, then, by diverting it into parliamentary politics? It is well-known to every genuine communist that when any revolutionary movement in any country is on the rise, the bourgeoisie of that country promises reforms and prepares the country for parliamentary election, in order to dampen the revolutionary fervour of the struggling people, create political confusion among the less conscious, less militant section among them, weaken the unity of the people and

their revolutionary struggle, channelise the revolutionary movement into parliamentary politics and, ultimately, give the movement an unceremonious burial, if the leadership of the movement swallows the bait of parliamentary election. A real communist party never allows itself to be caught in the trap of parliamentary politics, parliamentary movement and parliamentary election during the flow of the revolutionary movement. This is ABC of Marxism-Leninism yet the leadership of the Communist Party of France, in place of fighting both adventurism and revisionism and thereby raising the revolutionary tempo of the movement to higher and still higher pitch along the correct line, swallowed the bait of parliamentary election thrown by the foxy President, helped the bourgeoisie in diverting the attention of the French people from extra-parliamentary revolutionary struggle to parliamentarism and parliamentary movement and became, so to say, the model of 'orderly, wise and responsible' conduct befitting a truly parliamentary party. At the time of the rise of revolutionary movement such a stand means naked betrayal of the cause of the movement. Some so-called communists in our country in tune with the French Communist Party leadership are arguing that the leadership of the Communist Party of France, by deciding to turn the extra-parliamentary militant movement into a parliamentary battle of ballot box, has saved the French people from premature civil war, blood-bath and meaningless massacre of the revolutionary forces at the hands of reaction. Admittedly, in the interests of successful revolution it is necessary to fight adventurism and avoid untimely confrontation of the revolutionary forces with the forces of reaction. But then

adventurism should be fought not by reformism and parliamentary politics but by correct revolutionary theory and revolutionary proletarian politics. If the leadership of the student and youth movement had been adventurist as a result of which the movement suffered from petty bourgeois revolutionariness then the duty of the French Communist Party leadership was to fight its adventurist politics with correct revolutionary proletarian politics and lead the movement along the correct revolutionary line. In no case should it have worked to divert the extra-parliamentary militant mass movement into the revisionist channel of parliamentarism and parliamentary election. But it had done exactly this.

The leadership of the student and youth movement also was wrong. Because of the social condition, most of the students in France come with a petty bourgeois background. A large number of the students and youths have, no doubt, embraced Marxism-Leninism. But where the leadership of the Communist Party of France is so non-communist, it is doubtful how far correct understanding of Marxism-Leninism do the students and youths trained as Marxists under the aegis of that very non-communist leadership possess! It is likely that their understanding of Marxism is imperfect and they are apt to suffer from petty bourgeois revolutionariness. Besides, a lot others influenced by Trotskyism, anarchism and existentialism were in the movement under their respective group leadership. Such a hotchpotch combination can certainly feed the revolutionary movement if led by a really revolutionary working class party. But left to themselves, these forces cannot lead any revolutionary

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## The Name, Communist, by itself, does not Make a Party Communist

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movement. Sacrifice on their part, even sacrifice of life, may not be lacking but this spirit of sacrifice alone is not enough for leading a revolutionary movement. Revolutionary steeling, theoretical and practical, is essential. The student leadership lacked it. It is true that the leadership of the French Communist Party had exposed its revisionist character and betrayed the people in their movement. But that is no ground for being adventurist or anti-communist. The remedy of the damage done by the leadership of the Communist Party does not consist in starting sporadic militant mass struggles without any leadership. The remedy lies precisely in the building up of a *real* communist party in France. Scores of sporadic militant mass struggles will fail to improve the situation for revolution in France, tremendous sacrifice and militancy of the masses of the people notwithstanding, if the indispensable and primary task of building a *real* communist party in France is not performed. Such a party alone could save the last revolutionary movement in France from its ignominious failure and the catastrophe it had faced. Such a party alone can save the French students and youths and for that matter the people from the present unbearable situation. We do not know whether and how far the students, youths and workers of France have moved in that direction—the direction of building a *real* communist party in France.

We are deliberately adding the word 'real' before 'communist party'. For, one may like it or not, the reality is that many of the parties that are now moving with the name communist party are not *real* communist parties. Whether the communist party of any country other than our country is a *real* communist party or not is not for us to

decide. The people of that country will, of course, have to decide it. Nevertheless we cannot but draw the pointed attention of the peoples of different countries to the dry reality confirmed by historical experience of current international revolutionary working class movement that the name '*communist*' attached to a party by itself does not necessarily make that party a *real* communist party. For the growth and emergence of a *real* communist party are necessary the correct process of formation of a communist party, practice of Leninist organisational principle, dialectical methodology in

approach to problems, revolutionary working class process of thinking and process of movement and the correct revolutionary proletarian politics, that is, revolutionary theory. The name '*communist*', the sincerity of the members to build a communist party and their sacrifice are not sufficient for the emergence of a *real* communist party. It is ultimately the revolutionary theory, the revolutionary proletarian politics and the processes, principle and methodology mentioned above that matter. On them depends whether a *real* communist party or a petty bourgeois party falsely masquerading as a communist party will

emerge. Furthermore, the more organisationally strong such a petty bourgeois but nominally communist party is, the more difficult hurdles it creates in the revolutionary preparation of the masses of the people of the country concerned for seizure of power. Because, then more effectively it acts as an instrument of compromise with the ruling bourgeoisie. Without the liquidation of the influence of that party over the people there can be no revolutionary movement, let alone revolutionary struggle for seizure of power by the people. This is the lesson which our people must draw from the last movement in France.

### Santhal Pargana S. U. C. Organises 2500 strong Demonstration Before Pakur S. D. O.

(By a Staff Reporter)

On 9th. July last Pakur Town has witnessed 2500-strong biggest Adibasi Kisan rally ever held under the auspices of S.U.C. Despite the torrential rains which was continuing for several days Adibasi Kisans and workers of nearby stone mines numbering 2500 beating Santhali 'War-Drums' and holding Red Flags and S.U.C. festoons converged in the town coming from different villages of Pakur Sub-Division, some even travelling a distance of 25 miles in the noon.

The demonstration after gathering in front of the Maidan near the S.U.C. Party Office proceeded towards the Sub-Divisional Court. It was led by Com. Shankar Singh Bihar State S.U.C. Secretary, Com. Pritish

Chanda, a C. C. Member and Comrades Amin, Pakur S.U.C. Secy, Jitu Soren, Adibasi Kisan leader.

The S.D.O. Court was heavily guarded by Armed Police contingents. The Kisans demonstrated before the Court for some time while Com. Pritish Chanda, Shankar Singh, Amin and Jitu Soren met the S.D.O. on behalf of the Rally and handed over a memorandum which listed several demands including—

- i) Immediate declaration of "Famine Area" of the Pakur and Maheshpur P.S.
- ii) Free distribution of Ration to the affected people ;
- iii) Ration supply in villages ;

- iv) Enquiry in starvation death of Sheikh Ali;
- v) Stop of mass retrenchment in Quarries,
- vi) Return of Adibasi Kisan lands to the actual tillers which have been grabbed by the Mahajans.
- vii) To protect the poor Adibasi Kisans from merciless tortures by the Mahajans and Bhakats etc.

The S.D.O. assured to fulfil most of the demands. A big mass meeting was held after the demonstration before the court was over in the evening which was presided over by Com. Shankar Singh and addressed by Com. Pritish Chanda, Amin and Jitu Soren.

### ALL INDIA STATION MASTERS' 15th ANNUAL MEETING

(By a Staff Reporter)

The All India Station Masters Association held its 15th. Annual General Meeting in the Netaji Subhas Institute Hall, Calcutta, on 18th & 19th July last. On the 18th the Delegates' session was held

and the open session on the following day.

Com. Subodh Banerjee in his address on the 2nd day while supporting the demands of the SMs & ASMs said that the country was on the road of Fascism. Emergence of State monopoly capital,

concentration of economic powers, curtailment of democratic of rights, compartmentalisation of education, encouragement to all sorts of unscientific ideas & fads, were nothing but the symptoms of this trend. He said, that no move-

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