

**Preparing  
for the  
coming storms**



**Challenge  
facing  
Indian  
communists**

**Report adopted by the Second Congress of  
the Communist Ghadar Party of India**

**Workers of all countries, Unite!**



**Preparing for the Coming Storms:  
Challenge Facing Indian Communists**

**Communist Ghadar Party of India**

First published in March 1999

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**Price: Rs. 100/-**

*Publisher:*

Communist Ghadar Party of India  
E-392, Sanjay Colony, Okhla Phase—II,  
New Delhi—110 020

*Distributed by:*

Lok Awaz Publishers and Distributors  
E-392, Sanjay Colony, Okhla Phase—II,  
New Delhi—110 020

## Publisher's Note

This report entitled *Preparing for the Coming Storms—Challenge Facing Indian Communists*, presented by Comrade Lal Singh, General Secretary of the Communist Ghadar Party of India, on behalf of its Central Committee, was discussed and adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India, held in October 1998. By decision of the Second Congress, this report has been edited for publication.

The publication also includes a Summary of the Proceedings of the Second Congress of the CGPI, the Resolutions adopted by the Second Congress and the Messages of Greetings received from sister parties and organisations.



# Contents

<b>Summary of the Proceedings of the Second Congress</b>	1
<b>Report Presented to the Congress</b>	5
<b>Part I</b>	
<b>CGPI since its First Congress in 1990</b>	
Swimming Against the Tide	7
<b>Part II</b>	
<b>India on the Eve of the 21st Century</b>	
Crisis of Capitalism	49
Political Crisis and the Renewal of Democracy	115
Capturing the Space for Communism	167
<b>Part III</b>	
<b>Program and Tasks of the Party</b>	
Program of the Party	209
Tasks of the Party	231
<b>Resolutions</b>	241
<b>Messages</b>	275
<b>About CGPI</b>	291





## Summary of the Proceedings of the Second Congress

The Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India was convened in the first week of October, 1998. On behalf of the Central Committee, the General Secretary Comrade Lal Singh submitted a draft report that was discussed and adopted at this Congress, called *Preparing for the Coming Storms—Challenge Facing Indian Communists*. This was the main theme and aim of the Second Congress.

### Inauguration

The event began with a colourful tableau presented by the youth of the Party, highlighting the main theme of the Congress. Comrade Lisamma, a veteran revolutionary from Tamil Nadu who has been militating in the ranks of the communist movement for over four decades, then formally inaugurated the Second Congress. Recounting the profound impact that the Party and the mission of the revolution and communism had had on her life, Comrade Lisamma opened the proceedings on a note of revolutionary optimism. A nine member Presidium was then elected to conduct the proceedings of the Second Congress.

### Tribute

In his initial remarks from the Presidium, Comrade Lal Singh saluted the memory of two of the founding members of the CGPI who had passed away since the First Congress— Comrade Hardial Bains and Comrade P.Das. The podium was adorned with photographs of these comrades, with a bouquet of beautiful red roses in between. The Presidium paid rich tribute to their unforgettable contributions. Comrade Hardial was the architect of the Party and its founding, and its most outstanding ideologue, theoretician and creative organiser. Comrade Das was one of those rare Indian communists who rose above all sectarian considerations and plunged into the work to reconstitute the unity of the vanguard Party in India. The Congress observed a two-minute silence in memory of these heroic sons of the Indian communist movement, comrades who had fought for the cause of socialism and communism till their last breath.

### Participation

Delegates and observers coming from different parts of India as well as from various continents participated in the proceedings. The majority of delegates were wage workers. About 40 percent were women.

The report was presented in Hindi and Tamil, and the discussions took place under an arrangement that allowed all the participants to express themselves in the languages of their choice. This was a powerful repudiation of the Brahmanism and elitism that is prevalent in the Indian communist movement, whereby the most important discussions take place in English, marginalising the majority of our working people to whom this language is alien and unknown. All the delegates and observers appreciated the

language policy followed in the Second Congress of the CGPI as a policy that empowers all participants to engage in discussion and participate as equals in decision making.

## Discussion of the Report

After the entire Report submitted by the Central Committee (CC) was read and heard in the languages of the delegates, the discussion of the main themes of the Report began. The rules for discussion at the Congress were framed and agreed upon right at the beginning. These rules laid down, among other things, that every person could intervene in any session of the discussion and speak up to five minutes, and that every intervention should address the topic or issue facing the Party and not be confined to merely agreeing with or opposing anyone else's point of view. The discussion of the Report was conducted in the form of four sessions, with the first two relating to the Party's program and plan and the later two relating to the obstacles or roadblocks to this work. Overall, more than 80 percent of the delegates participated in the discussion with interventions from the floor, in addition to the four initiating interventions, one in each session, that were made at the invitation of the Presidium.

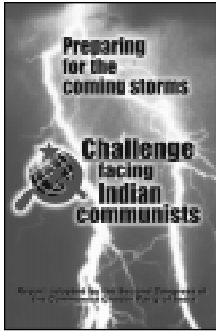
## Resolutions

The principle of collective decision making was affirmed in a very lively and militant manner on the fourth and last day of the Congress. Having listened to and discussed at length the Report of the CC, the time had come to make decisions. Summing up the discussions of the preceding days, the Presidium moved 11 main resolutions for adoption by the Congress. In addition to these resolutions, and consistent with them, there were many more resolutions that were moved from the floor. All the

resolutions were read out in several languages to ensure that all the participants could understand and consciously take part in the decision making. These resolutions together constitute the collective decisions of the Second Congress, which every organisation and every member of the Party is duty bound to defend and implement in the coming period. Having taken part consciously in drafting the resolutions and in voting for them, all the participants were extremely determined to see that the common decisions are implemented.

## Conclusion

On the concluding day, the Second Congress elected the Third Central Committee of the Communist Ghadar Party of India. At a reception held that evening, Comrade Lal Singh announced that Comrade Prakash Rao has been elected the Spokesperson of the Central Committee of CGPI. He also announced that messages of greetings to the Second Congress had been received from our close sister parties and organisations including the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) and the Indian Workers Association (Great Britain). During the reception, communists of all ages expressed themselves in their respective languages and in varied forms, to convey the common spirit—determination to implement the decisions of the Second Congress so as to turn our successes into victory.



**Report Presented to the  
Second Congress of the  
Communist Ghadar Party of India**

## **Part I**

**CGPI since its First Congress in 1990**



## Swimming Against the Tide

The Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India is being held at a crucial time for all Indian communists and for Indian society as a whole. The conditions point to great storms ahead. But will these be revolutionary storms that will sweep away all that is reactionary and backward in Indian society? Or will they be storms that lead to further retrogression of Indian society, to devastation and destruction of the toiling masses and all the productive forces, and to fratricidal wars among and between the Indian peoples and other peoples of South Asia? The challenge facing Indian communists is to ensure that the coming storms lead to revolution and not to retrogression. What we decide at this Congress and implement collectively afterwards will not only have enormous bearing on the fate of the communist movement but also on the future of India.

It is clearer than ever before that all Indian communists must unite to organise the working class to prepare for the coming storms. We are confident that the Second Congress, by adopting a program that is consistent with the general line of march in this period, will serve to focus and unite all Indian communists, thereby arming us to take up the challenge. By affirming the communist principles of party organisation, it will guarantee that the General Headquarters of the Indian working class, its Red



Fort, will never be conquered by the enemy.

Comrades, we were in our youth, full of ideals, full of the fire of revolution, of the passion, ardour, innocence, heroism and daring of youth, when we took up the mission of founding the Party 18 years ago. Today, some of us have grey hair. But the passion and ardour for revolution have not left us; on the contrary they have only become stronger. Militating in the ranks of our Party are now comrades who were the youth of the fifties as well as whole new generations, including the youth of the nineties who are showing their revolutionary zeal through their words and deeds. That several generations of communists, women and men, young and old, militate in our ranks confirms that the best daughters and sons of our people want to actively participate in preparing the conditions for revolution. Our Party has provided them space to do just that.

Our Party comes to this Congress full of confidence that it will play the role assigned by history, the role of restoring the unity of Indian communists at the head of a politically united working class and people, of preparing the subjective conditions for the revolution, by taking up the program to end the crisis and open the door to the progress of Indian society. From where do we get this conviction? Comrades, we get this conviction from social science and from the ideas, words and deeds of our Party. Our Party was born in fire. It has been steeled in fire, especially by the experience of the past eight years, which have been one of the most difficult periods for communism.

**E**ight years ago, our Party held its First Congress in December 1990. That was a time when abrupt changes were unfolding on the world scale. The Soviet Union was on the verge of collapse, with Gorbachev's

*glasnost* and *perestroika* in full swing. Socialist Albania, which had been waging a heroic struggle led by the Party of Labour of Albania (PLA) with Comrade Enver Hoxha at the head, in defence of socialism in the previous period of the bipolar division of the world, was on the verge of capitulating to the capitalist offensive. We were conscious that great and abrupt changes were taking place internationally. We were conscious that such changes were around the corner in India as well. With great foresight, the First Congress took account of the fact that a new period was just beginning to reveal itself. The First Congress made important decisions that have provided a solid foundation for the work of the Party in this period of retreat of world revolution.

Recognising that the development of revolutionary theory was seriously lagging behind the demand of the times, the First Congress set the task of analysing the changes that had taken place on the world scale, of developing the theory of Indian liberation and elaborating the General Line for this new period. It positively assessed the work that had been done since the founding of the CGPI in 1980 to bring communists together in one revolutionary Party in the course of providing leadership to the class struggle. The First Congress came to the important conclusion that the most decisive task in the new period was to forge the broad political unity of the people irrespective of ideological considerations. Today, when we sum up the successes of our work over the past eight years and note that our Party has withstood the tremendous anti-communist pressures of this period and emerged stronger from it, we can fully appreciate the importance and profundity of the decisions of the First Congress.

Consistent with dialectical materialism, our Party recognises that the revolutionary process does not

progress smoothly along a straight line. It moves up and down like the waves in the sea. Abrupt changes are brought about as quantity transforms itself into quality. The key issue for communists in such situations is whether they recognise the change in the situation, analyse its content and redefine their line of march accordingly. The greatest merit of the work of CGPI in this period is that it has done precisely that—namely, assessed the changes on the national and international scale and elaborated the General Line for this period.

Comrades, these have been years in which the world bourgeoisie has launched the greatest assault against the theory and practice of communism and the communist party. The world's first socialist country covering one-seventh of the globe disintegrated. The Soviet system was destroyed. A free market economy and the multi-party system were imposed on the Russian people with the full backing of world imperialism. Socialism was destroyed in Albania in front of our eyes. For the first time in this century, the working class of Russia and Eastern Europe marched under the banner of anti-communism. Our Party, starting with the First Congress and through the numerous consultative conferences held in these eight years, has taken account of these developments and decided collectively that the tide of revolution has turned from flow to ebb.

The First Congress recognised that the new period demands that communists elaborate their positions afresh. And that this had to be carried out in the face of the tremendous ideological pressure against communism. The First Consultative Conference held in 1992 recognised that the bourgeois ideological pressure on the communist movement took the form of the division between "radicals" and "conservatives". These were two

trends that arose along with the abrupt changes, in order to sabotage the communist and workers' movement and make it impotent in dealing with the new situation. The "radicals" declared that the principles and conclusions of Marxism-Leninism were outdated and inapplicable for the new period. The "conservatives", on the other hand, declared that there was no new period, that it was enough to follow the same old tactics as before. These two trends, each allegedly the opposite of the other, actually had the one aim of assisting world imperialism and the bourgeoisie in paralysing and destroying the communist movement.

Through its theoretical and ideological work, and involving the entire Party in the discussion, the CGPI has taken the collective decision that this is a new period within the same epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, with the new feature being that the tide had turned temporarily against the revolution. We concluded that within the epoch of imperialism and the revolution, this is, in objective terms, a period of the retreat of revolution. Hence the communists have to organise in such a way that they minimise their losses and prepare to seize the initiative as the tide once again turns in favour of revolution.

In the Soviet Union, "radicals" like Gorbachev used the abrupt changes to declare that Marxism-Leninism was outdated and began to flagrantly violate every fundamental principle of our doctrine. On the other side, the "conservatives" denied that abrupt changes had taken place. They denied the need for elaborating afresh the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution. The trap of the conservatives and radicals was the trap set by world imperialism and the bourgeoisie to destroy the achievements of the working class and peoples in the twentieth century. Between them, the radicals and

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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conservatives joined hands to destroy the Soviet Union and all vestiges of socialism there.

Our Party watched with great sympathy and concern as the Albanian working people and the Party of Labour of Albania faced the test of the greatest assault on communism in this century. The Party of Labour of Albania, which had under very heavy odds carried out a successful struggle in defence of Marxism-Leninism and led the construction of socialism in Albania with Enver Hoxha at the head, in the period of the bipolar division of the world, completely failed the test when the tide turned.

In the late 1980s the signs were clearly pointing to the fact that no force could act in the old way any longer. The Party of Labour of Albania under the leadership of Ramiz Alia ignored these signs. It acted as if Albania was isolated and insulated from world developments, created a sense of euphoria that everything was going well, and refused to prepare the party and the Albanian society to face the storms that were about to break on Albania's shores. When the full force of retrogression hit tiny Albania, when world imperialism and internal reaction combined forces and started the open wrecking of socialism, the Party of Labour of Albania went over from a "conservative" to a "radical" position.

The PLA quickly started capitulating to each and every demand of imperialism and internal reaction, to each and every attack of the revanchist forces in Albania. It began to praise bourgeois democracy as being superior to the proletarian democracy in socialist Albania. It changed its name to "Socialist Party" to openly declare its departure from its communist past, its open and complete capitulation to social-democracy and the capitalist-imperialist system. Socialism was completely destroyed

and Albanian society thrown into barbaric conditions, a tragic situation that still continues.

In these conditions, our Party has been grappling with the challenge to work out the General Line for this period. We have successfully resisted and overcome both the “radical” and “conservative” pressures to liquidate this work. We have achieved this by firmly defending the revolutionary principles and conclusions of Marxism-Leninism and dealing with the abrupt changes that have taken place from the vantagepoint of the present and with the guiding light of our revolutionary doctrine. We have achieved this by involving the entire Party in the crucial work to establish the General Line.

This has been the period when several communist parties in the world openly abandoned the mission of communism and threw the red flag into the mud, embracing the bourgeoisie and its discredited ideology. The bourgeoisie on the world scale asserted that communism had failed.

“Marxism-Leninism is no science! Why do we need the communist party? We have been wasting our time! We have made mistakes! We should recant and disband the party! Democratic centralism is stifling—we should decentralise! The working class is disintegrating!” Such have been the cries of the waverers and deserters. Such have been the pressures of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, pressures to which the waverers and deserters capitulated. Our Party has stood bold and firm against these pressures. We have recognised that the aim of these attacks and pressures was to disorient and paralyse the Party. The Party refused to submit. It marched ahead boldly and unwaveringly. We have emerged a thousand times stronger, more united, with reinforced conviction in our theory and ideology and in

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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the inevitability of the triumph of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie.

This has been the period in which once again a discussion was imposed on the world communist movement to re-evaluate the role of J.V. Stalin. Many new adherents to the imperialist vilification campaign against Stalin have surfaced in this period. Others emerged who began to organise in the name of Stalin. Our Party came to the conclusion that to take a stand against or for Stalin is not the key question facing Indian and international communism today. Rather, the debate on Stalin is a deliberate diversion to prevent communists from addressing the contemporary problems of the revolution and socialism. Comrade Stalin did his work in his time, heroically and gloriously. Communists of today must do their work. And we have continued to do just this.

Comrades, this is a period in which our Party, as well as all those parties and communists throughout the world who have stood steadfast in their mission, have faced the imperialist weapon of character assassination, of spreading slanders through rumour and gossip and creating doubts about the integrity and morality of individual leaders. The aim of this campaign was and remains to disunite communists, to break up communist parties, to divert communists from the task at hand into the discussion of the character of individuals.

Marx, Engels and Lenin had faced the slander and rumour mills of the bourgeoisie in their time. The biggest character assassination factory was set in motion by world imperialism to discredit the name and work of J.V. Stalin and pave the way for the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. Enver Hoxha and other main leaders of the Party of Labour of Albania were made the target of vicious character assassination and slander, as a prelude to the

dismantling of socialism and the restoration of capitalism. The family of Enver Hoxha, including his wife Nexhmije, was subjected to the worst kind of political persecution for years on end. The biggest robbers and plunderers of the world laid charges of corruption on the family members of Enver Hoxha, one of the purest personalities of the twentieth century. And wherever the politics of character assassination does not achieve its aim, the bourgeoisie also uses physical assassination to wipe out individual personalities of the revolutionary camp.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and socialism in Albania, world imperialism in general and Anglo-American imperialism in particular have stepped up their slander campaign, not only against the great leaders and teachers of the international proletariat, but also against the moving force in each and every revolutionary party. Our Party has faced the pressure to make the morality of individual communists the topic of discussion in party circles. We have withstood and overcome this pressure. We have refused to get diverted from the task at hand. We communists do not need the help of the most decadent and parasitic forces on earth—the bourgeoisie and world imperialism, the forces for whom honour, morality and all other values are saleable commodities in the market—to give us lessons about morality.

Our Party, as is the case with any serious communist party, pays strictest attention to the norms of communist morality. Our Party considers that the greatest communist morality is to fight unwaveringly for the cause of the revolution and communism, for the creation of a society free from all traces of exploitation of persons by persons. Our Party firmly believes that it is in the fire of this glorious and ongoing struggle that the new communist man or woman, a person with communist morality, is moulded.



**S**ince the First Congress held eight years ago, the CGPI has organised many consultative Party conferences, regional conferences and enlarged plenums of the Central Committee. All these and other forms and mechanisms have been used to engage the entire Party in the work of establishing the General Line for this period. We have analysed the rise and fall of socialism in this century and drawn appropriate conclusions. We have analysed and assessed the absolute necessity for the restoration of communist unity in order for the Indian revolution to make headway; we have also identified the main roadblock to communist unity against which the ideological and polemical struggle needs to be directed.

Our Party has analysed the major turning point that took place in the Indian economy with the unleashing of the economic reforms by the Rao government and the jettisoning of the Nehruvian model. We analysed that the destruction of the Babri-Masjid in December 1992 was a turning point in the Indian polity and that henceforth the Indian big bourgeoisie would not be able to rule in the old way. We concluded that the empowerment of the Indian people was on the agenda. At this Second Congress, we are going to adopt the political program that is consistent with the times, consistent with all of the above theoretical and ideological considerations.

In this most difficult period, the CGPI took up the challenge to preserve and expand the ranks of communists by systematically occupying and expanding the space for communism. We have carried out communist work spanning a broad arena—of theory and philosophy, of party building, of the restoration of communist unity and of the political unity of the working class and toiling masses. As a result of this work, we have overcome the liquidationist pressure to abandon communism and the

Party. The balance sheet of eight years of our Party's work reveals a Party on the offensive, a Party making decisive advances when objective conditions have not been favourable for revolution and communism. It is not easy to swim against the tide. Our Party has succeeded in this difficult task and is therefore ready to take up the challenge facing Indian communists today.

While waging the most stern struggle in defence of the Party and revolution, we have never directed the struggle against individuals. We know that any individual can become a victim at some time or other to the constant bourgeois imperialist ideological pressure. Through the steadfast work of the Party, many of those who might have wavered for a while under the bourgeois imperialist pressure have once again joined the ranks of the Party in this period. This is a testimony to the broadmindedness and maturity of the Communist Ghadar Party of India and to the strength of character of the communists and of the Indian people, to their deep desire and longing for revolution.

Through its work in these eight years, our Party has clarified what has failed and what has not failed. We have clarified what kind of party is needed and what kind of party is certainly not needed. Together with Marxist-Leninists around the world, we have elaborated modern definitions—of the communist party, of political democracy and of individual and collective rights—affirming the eternal freshness and relevance of the doctrine of communism.

Our Party has clarified that the revision and the dogmatic rendering of Marxism-Leninism have been the subjective factors that assisted the turn of the tide of revolution from flow to ebb. We have fought and will continue to fight with all our collective might to defend democratic centralism. We uphold that democratic centralism is the most precious

and powerful weapon in the hands of all members of the party, to exercise their rights and fulfill their duties. We recognise in democratic centralism the powerful weapon through which the proletariat will organise the new society and exercise its class dictatorship. We have fought the imperialist idea of decentralisation tooth and nail, with the firm conviction that if adopted, it would lead to the destruction of the General Headquarters of the proletariat, and leave the working class and people defenceless.

In December 1993 the Second National Consultative Conference of the CGPI discussed the question: *What Kind of Party?* This issue had become one of the most important questions facing communism at the end of the twentieth century. Indian and international developments had already shown the utter criminality of bourgeois political parties. But the retreat of revolution also implied that communists could not ignore analysing whether communist parties too had become outmoded and irrelevant.

So many communist parties were openly disbanding themselves or changing their names and ideology and program. Others were presenting themselves as mere electoral machines, no different from other bourgeois parliamentary parties. The very relevance of the communist party was under question. In these conditions, our Party elaborated afresh the role of the communist party, summing up the entire experience with political parties in the twentieth century. We affirmed that the CGPI is not and cannot become an electoral machine, but must develop as a powerful instrument for the empowerment of the working class and all the oppressed.

The discussion at the Second National Consultative Conference, released in the form of the document called *What Kind of Party?*, assessed that in a class divided

society, all political parties objectively serve either the interest of the bourgeoisie or the interest of the proletariat. Bourgeois political parties appear to be fighting for party rule, because this is the way the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is exercised in the polity. The proletarian party cannot fight for power for itself, even in appearance. It cannot substitute itself for either the class, or for the united front of the class and the oppressed masses. It has to be the main subjective factor for the realisation of the class aim of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and establishing socialism through the revolution.

A communist party that starts playing parliamentary games starts losing its class character. It begins to advance conceptions like dictatorship of the party. It begins to create illusions about bourgeois democracy. It begins to look at revolution as a future prospect while parliamentary struggle is placed as the most important question of the time. It stops organising the working class and oppressed masses for the wielding of political power in their own interests and in the general interest of society. In sum, such a party begins to transform itself from the party of the proletariat into a party of the bourgeoisie, a party that is at peace with the status quo and has converted communism into merely a policy objective for the distant future.

This question “what kind of party?” can be addressed only in the context of examining the kind of political system and political process that are needed. Behind every political system and process there exists a political theory. The political theory behind India’s multi-party parliamentary democracy has its origin in the theory of the 17<sup>th</sup> century English king, James I, who justified concentrating supreme power in his hands on the basis of the “divine right of kings”. Modern proletarian political power has its origin in the political theory of Karl Marx.

The Second National Consultative Conference in 1993 analysed the achievements of democracy in this century. Proletarian democracy was established in the Soviet Union after the October Revolution. This was guaranteed in the Soviet Constitution of 1936. However, Soviet democracy was still a representative democracy in which the working people played a decisive role but did not yet govern themselves on their own behalf. The problem of how the working people could rule on their own behalf was a problem that needed urgent solution in the second stage of socialism. The failure of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) to address this problem led to the overthrow of socialism. The CPSU(B) degenerated and became the instrument for the transformation from one kind of political power to another, from the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

In the course of this important discussion, our Party elaborated the modern definition of a political party as one that does not strive for power in its own hands, but one that empowers the people to rule themselves. Such a political party will aim to create a new political power for the people, not capture the existing power even if for noble aims. It would not seek to hold political power in its own hands once the new power is established, because the new power will have the necessary mechanisms to ensure that the people hold power in their hands.

**O**ur Party has repeatedly emphasised that the retreat of revolution does not mean the end of revolution, nor does it mean that communists can follow the same old tactics as in the previous period. The working out of new tactics needs a thorough analysis of the motion at the base of society and of how the major contradictions are being played out in this period. Carrying out such analysis has

been an important element of the constant work of the Party in this period.

A definite stage in this work was reached in December 1995, at the Third National Consultative Conference of the CGPI. The report that was released for discussion by this conference, called *Whither India?* represented a major landmark in the work to establish the General Line for this period.

The Third National Consultative Conference assessed the problems posed by the period of the retreat of revolution. It concluded that the fundamental demand of this period is to resolutely and persistently uphold the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism and unite the working class and all the oppressed around the definite practical tasks of the present epoch. It elaborated these tasks, namely: an immediate end to the bourgeoisie's anti-worker, anti-people and anti-national program of liberalisation and privatisation; democratic renewal and the lifting of society out of the crisis; the overthrow of capitalism as the condition for the completion of the democratic, anti-colonial, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle; and the building of socialism through revolution.

The Third National Consultative Conference affirmed that the most important and crucial task in front of all communists was to plunge into the work to develop theory, establish the general line, build the political unity of the people and lift society out of the crisis. It affirmed that the unity of Indian communists would emerge in the course of this work and a single vanguard party of the working class would arise on the soil of India.

The report of the Third National Consultative Conference further elaborated the reasons for the rise and fall of

socialism in the Soviet Union. It pointed out that the socialist system would degenerate if the new problems that presented themselves at each stage of the building of socialist society were not addressed and solved by the proletariat and its party. Once the first phase of socialism had been successfully completed, new problems emerged in the Soviet Union that had to be addressed and solved in theory and practice. In the sphere of the economy, there was a need to put the role of the working people in the first place in determining everything in the realm of production and distribution, including the remuneration of labour. In the sphere of the polity, there was need to revolutionise the political mechanism so that people could rule themselves and directly participate in governance. In the sphere of philosophy, it was necessary that the role of dialectical philosophy be brought forth into the centre of socialist life with the human factor and consciousness playing the leading role in all developments.

Khrushchev and others who followed him at the head of the CPSU(B) failed to address these questions. Instead, they organised diversions, such as the campaign against the character of Stalin. The failure to address the problems of socialist development ultimately led to the destruction of socialism in the Soviet Union.

The report *Whither India?* called upon communists to defend and develop contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought on the basis of the summation of the historical experience of the entire epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, starting from the present. Contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought is the summation, taken in general form, of the experience of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the conditions of socialist revolution and socialist construction and to the struggle against modern revisionism and capitalist restoration. It is

also the summation of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the struggle of the people against fascism, militarism and imperialism, as well as the struggle to end medievalism. Contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought is Marxism-Leninism as enriched and developed by the practice of the revolution. It is an affirmation of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism and their higher development. Contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought is not the final form of Marxism-Leninism in the present conditions, but its continuation and enrichment.

On the basis of the theoretical work and broad consultations organised in this period, the CGPI has been able to identify the content of the ideological and polemical struggle. And in 1995, the report *Whither India?* called upon all Indian communists to take the struggle against the conciliators with social-democracy right through to the end. It clarified that the history of the Third International is the history of defending the Marxist program and its conclusions against the distortions by the enemies of revolution and socialism. It is the history of opposition to all conciliators with social-democracy on the one hand and defence of the purity of Marxism-Leninism on the other hand.

It is the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism by many parties and their conciliation with social-democracy that has led to the present setback to the cause of the working class, revolution and socialism. The aim of social-democracy is to ensure that workers do not look into the conditions of their own countries, work out their own philosophies, elaborate their own economic and political theories, develop their own state structure and establish the direction of their economy and culture. It is precisely on the question of the nation that social-democracy is extremely harmful. It has thrown the banner of the nation into the mud, while presenting itself as



the greatest defender and champion of the nation and justifying its action in the name of “national unity and territorial integrity”.

One of the important decisions of the First Congress of the CGPI in 1990 was the affirmation that *we are our own models*. This meant a clean break with the debilitating outlook of looking towards the Soviet Union or China or Albania or somewhere else for a model. This meant adhering firmly to the fundamental principles and conclusions of Marxism-Leninism, and affirming that the immediate task before Indian communists was the development of the theory of Indian liberation.

Comrades, the First Congress set before us this most challenging task—the task of developing the theory of Indian liberation, a theory consistent with social science and capable of illuminating the road to be traversed by the Indian working class and people towards their liberation. We have made significant advances in this regard, especially on the front of Indian philosophy, or *Darshan shastra*.

Basing ourselves on the starting point of Indian philosophy, that things and phenomena reveal themselves, we have unravelled the motion inherent to Indian society. We have investigated the profound Indian conception of rights and duties as revealed in the early Vedic period, as well as its evolution in subsequent periods, from the vantagepoint of the present day struggle to provide a modern definition of rights. We have studied the development of Indian political theory from the Rig Vedic period, through the period of Bhishma, Manu, Shukra and Chanakya, and how the relationship between the people (*praja*) and the king (*raja*) was conceived in different periods, as well as its evolution along with the evolution of society. This work has reinforced that it is both the right as well as the duty of

the Indian working class and people at this time to carry out revolution.

It is the right as well as the duty of the working class to fight for a system that ensures prosperity (*sukh*) and security (*raksha*) for all. It is the right and duty of the working class to restore sovereignty to the people. The working class has to establish the supremacy of the exploited and oppressed over all exploiters and oppressors as a prelude to ending the division of society between exploiters and exploited, between rulers and the ruled, as a prelude to ushering in classless communist society wherein the people will govern themselves. This work has established the indissoluble link between rights and duties that existed in the early Vedic period and the necessity to restore this link in modern times. This work has established that a modern India in which there will be no exploitation of persons by persons, in which the interests of individuals and collectives will be in harmony with the general interest of society, will be the next stage in the development of Indian society.

The work of studying and modernising Indian philosophy and Indian political theory has meant a fierce struggle against our old conscience. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels dwelt at length on the necessity of settling scores with the old philosophical conscience of their times. Through fierce criticism of the German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism of their times, by resolving the contradictions that were inherent to European thought, they gave birth to the philosophical outlook of dialectical materialism. We Indian communists have to deal similarly with Indian thought.

Two and a half centuries of British colonial rule systematically plundered the wealth of India and laid waste

to our country. But this was not all or even the most important damage that was done to Indians. The greatest damage that was done to Indians was to make Indians who were educated in the colonial education system believe that there is no such thing as Indian philosophy, Indian economic or political theory. Educated Indians have been made to believe that to be modern means to borrow the philosophy and theories of the Anglo-American imperialists. It can be argued that such an approach might be justified as suitable for the Indian big bourgeoisie, the class created and groomed by British colonialism. But such an approach was and is certainly not suitable for the Indian proletariat, the class born to be the gravedigger of capitalism on Indian soil.

Euro-centric theories and ideas were smuggled in and imposed on India by the colonialists in collaboration with the Indian bourgeoisie. The Congress party, the party of the Indian big bourgeoisie, was profoundly influenced by European social-democracy, in which it saw salvation for the Indian bourgeoisie. Communism came to India from outside. This in itself was not the problem. The problem was that for communism to flourish on Indian soil, it was and remains necessary to study this soil and fight and eliminate poisonous weeds like European social-democracy as well as others hostile to the progress of Indian civilisation. It is necessary to nourish the soil through the development of Indian theory.

India's soil, especially the soil of rural India, was and remains fertile for the growth of numerous petty-bourgeois and bourgeois versions of "socialism" as well as all kinds of charlatans talking about the "revival of India's past glory". It is also fertile for the growth of communism, provided that the poisonous weeds are eliminated. It is in such a soil that the Indian big bourgeoisie—a class which is a product

of colonialism and colonial institutions, a class that arose on the basis of the destruction of all the achievements of Indians in five millennia in the fields of philosophy, political theory, political economy, culture and civilisation—is now able to float the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with its revanchist outlook of *Hindutva* as its political mascot!

The BJP keeps referring to India's past glory but has no solution to offer to the problems of the present. It is enamoured of the past, especially its most backward and reactionary elements such as the concepts of *Ram Rajya* and *Manusmriti*. The BJP is also enamoured of capitalism and the colonial legacy, of which it is one of the by-products. Capitalism has long reached the stage of moribund capitalism, parasitic to the core, and this parasitism is seen in every pore of the Indian State and society.

There is nothing progressive in Indian capitalism, either today, or when it was introduced into Indian society under the aegis of the colonialists. As capitalism flourishes, it is relentlessly eating away the healthy core of Indian society. Indian philosophy and Indian economic and political theories will be useless unless they address the burning question of the day, unless they show how to overthrow capitalism, and build a socialist society of which every Indian can be proud. *Manusmriti* and *Ram Rajya* are not going to enable the Indian bourgeoisie to fool the Indian people of this day and age for too long. The task facing Indian communists is to expose these charlatans who are laying false claim to the rich heritage of Indian philosophy and Indian theory, by modernising and developing Indian thought to serve the cause of Indian liberation.

To fight the ideological offensive of the BJP does not mean that communists should embrace the European social-

democratic ideology and “secularism” of the Indian bourgeoisie and its State. Communists defend the right to conscience of every individual, including one’s right to religious conscience, and hence demand that the State should stand guard against any violation of this right of any member of society. Communists defend the equality of political rights and oppose any attempt to communalise the polity in the name of “tolerating” this or that religious sentiment. Conciliation with the “secular” policy of the Indian State or with the “secularism” of the Congress(I) constitutes conciliation with social-democracy and the bourgeoisie. Such conciliation has done great damage to the prestige and name of communism.

While resolutely opposing all forms of conciliation with social-democracy, our Party has initiated the important work of settling scores with the Indian philosophical conscience, without which the communist movement will not be able to defeat the reactionary and revanchist forces in the ideological sphere.

**T**he First Congress in 1990 affirmed the necessity to make a clean break with the sectarianism that had come to characterise communist work in India. And in the course of implementing this important decision of the First Congress, our Party has elaborated how the question of restoration of communist unity poses itself at the present time. It has reaffirmed the unity of the communist movement, whose aim is to create the conditions for the complete emancipation of labour. Objectively speaking, independent of whether any party likes it or not, there is only one communist movement. Yet this movement lacks ideological and political unity or cohesion today. The reason lies in the retarded state of revolutionary theory and in the conciliation of some within this movement with social-democracy.

The unity of Indian communists can and must be restored through an all-encompassing differentiation of what sets a communist apart from a social-democrat or conciliator with social-democracy. The CGPI has always cautioned that this differentiation cannot be done on a factional basis. On the contrary, it has been emphasised that the CGPI must work for uniting all the Indian communists in one party. The work for the creation of Indian revolutionary theory, the elaboration of the general line for this period and raising the ideological and political level of the working class will greatly contribute to the restoration of communist unity. Indian communists have to ensure that the bourgeoisie is not able to sustain the disunity of the working class and communist movement on the basis of imposing social-democratic positions such as the need to defend “national unity and territorial integrity”.

The main roadblock to communist unity has come from the line of conciliating with and creating illusions about capitalism, about liberalisation and privatisation, and about social-democracy. We have waged a sharp and ongoing struggle against conciliation with the “free” market reforms under the guise that there is no alternative. We have pointed out that this is a continuation of the conciliation in the earlier period with the Nehruvian “socialistic pattern of society” and will lead to disaster for the communist movement and for the working class and people, as it had done in the earlier period.

We have fought with all our might against conciliation with the imperialist ideology and politics of the Indian big bourgeoisie carried out under the slogan of “defending national unity and territorial integrity”. We have elaborated how “defending national unity and territorial integrity”, the nuclear initiatives of the Vajpayee government and the “war against terrorism and extremism” are all directed

against the same foe. They are directed precisely against the fighting forces of India, against the working class, peasantry and the oppressed nationalities, against communists and all those who challenge the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

We have fought against conciliation with the bourgeois system of multi-party democracy. We have fought against the conciliatory line that the working class and the communists must defend this form developed by the bourgeoisie to exercise its dictatorship, allegedly because it is being threatened by the BJP. Our Party has waged the ideological and polemical struggle sharply and without let up, without any sectarianism, with the best interests of the restoration of communist unity at heart and with the lofty aim of freeing the working class and people from the chains of bourgeois ideology. We have waged this struggle without fear or favour.

**B**ourgeois ideology still casts its shadow on the communist movement in India. Within these conditions initial successes have been achieved, and advances have been made. Indian communists, not just those in our Party, but in other parties and groups as well, are beginning to shake off the weight of old prejudices and dogmas. They are beginning to recognise that the dogmatic rendering of our science is as fatal to the cause of communism as the revision of its fundamentals. A lot of work is being done to seriously analyse what things and phenomena are revealing in India and the world.

Communists from different parties and groups are increasingly discussing the problems of theory and practice of the class struggle. The CGPI has played no small role in facilitating such discussions among communists. These are healthy signs for the future of communism and

for the future of Indian society. The Second Congress of our Party, by summing up this work and setting the basis for its next stage, will unleash renewed and multiplied energies for the restoration of communist unity on Indian soil, by making a clean break with bourgeois ideology and practice.

The main shortcoming in our work which, if not overcome, could destroy our entire Party, is the reluctance to pay first-rate attention to the work of building party basic organisations in the ranks of the working class. Communist unity will not be restored through understanding at the top, between leaders of different parties. Communist unity can and will be restored only through the unity in action against the class enemy, in the fire of the class struggle, by constantly strengthening the party organisations in the working class.

Comrades, the most precious weapon to build the unity of communists is the communist party, whose foundation lies in the basic organisations, the organs of class struggle in the ranks of the proletariat and its allies. It is in the course of collectively planning, implementing and monitoring the work of leading the class struggle that the unity of communists gets affirmed.

The most important aspect of the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat today, the cutting edge of this struggle, is the work for the triumph of the collective, the power of collective human consciousness. The mechanism for ensuring the continuous defence and development of collective human consciousness is the communist party, which is a system of communist collectives. Any tendency to underestimate the role of the collective and replace it with the role of individual heroism must be fought and overcome.



Individualism is bourgeois ideology. Collective decision making and individual responsibility constitute the proletarian principle of organisation, which finds its concrete manifestation in every organisation of the communist party. Hence it is essential to wage the struggle to overcome all shortcomings in the democratic centralist functioning of our Party organisations. We must ensure that every member of the Party, without exception, pays first-rate attention to the strengthening of democratic centralism and the work to build party organisations in the ranks of the working class and its allies.

**W**hen we look at the work of our Party since the First Congress, it fills us with pride. The Party has been tempered in fierce class battles against the class enemy, be it in the arena of theory, ideology, or the arena of practical politics. We must preserve the unity of the Party like the apple of our eye. We must overcome the shortcomings in our work and plunge with renewed energies into the work for the forging of the revolutionary united front of the workers and peasants around their own program. We must carry on relentlessly with the work of developing Indian theory and the work to restore communist unity. The signs are pointing to decisive moments ahead, when Indian communism will have the opportunity to make a significant breakthrough. Let us prepare ourselves to seize this opportunity.

Over 73 years of the communist movement in India have amply confirmed that merely offering incense to the classics of Marxism-Leninism will not lead the communist movement any closer to realising its mission. Nor has the glorious self-sacrificing work of so many communist martyrs over the decades led to the realisation of this mission. Indian communists must ponder over the important question of the need for Indian revolutionary theory.

Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma, a bunch of rules and regulations that can be applied here and there. Lenin fought against the dogmatic rendering of Marxism. Lenin developed Marxism in the conditions of Russia, settled scores with Russian philosophical conscience, and led the Bolshevik party in the triumph of the first socialist revolution of this century. What Lenin contributed had both significance for Russia and for the whole world and came to be known as Marxism-Leninism. Stalin led the Russian communists in the construction of socialism by addressing the problems posed by the revolution at each new stage in its development. The failure of communism in the land of its first triumph was the result of the refusal by those who followed Stalin to deal with new developments in their time, with what things and phenomena were revealing, in the fields of philosophy, political theory and political economy.

Communism has not taken firm roots in the soil of India despite heroic sacrifices by millions of workers and peasants, because of the revision of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism and because of its dogmatic application. And in the final analysis, the communist movement has marked time in India because of its failure to develop the theory of Indian liberation.

Our Party has recognised that contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought has to be the guide for the development of the theory of Indian liberation, just as it is the guide to all communist work. And in turn, the development of Indian revolutionary theory will be a contribution to the development of contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought, just as Marxism has been continuously developed and enriched since the time of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

The theory of Indian liberation, which Indians are now developing and will have to further develop, must be the

light that illuminates the path the people of this subcontinent will have to traverse to overthrow capitalism, the remnants of feudalism, imperialism and colonialism, and usher in socialism. Modern Indian political theory will be a continuation and further development, on the one hand, of all the achievements of Indian political thought since the period of the Rig Veda to the present, and on the other hand, it will be an application and enrichment of contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought.

Theory must develop as things and phenomena reveal themselves, or else it will stagnate and become useless as a weapon. Political theory develops in the course of addressing the political problems posed by the development of society. In the conditions of class society, political theory develops in the course of addressing the problems posed by the class struggle. Once the Second Congress of the CGPI adopts the program for the renewal of India and begins to organise the working class to take this up as its own program, new problems will be posed which our theory has to solve. This is an exciting prospect for the entire Party.

**O**n January 24-25, 1998, the Central Committee (CC) of the CGPI convened an enlarged plenum, which concluded that the work of our Party to establish the General Line and restore the unity of Indian communists has met with key successes. It pointed out that the necessity of restoring communist unity was entering the consciousness of the working class and progressive forces. However, it also pointed out that the Indian communist movement has not yet emerged as the leader of the Indian working class movement, and that the working class is yet to emerge at the head of the movement of the Indian people for thoroughgoing

transformations. It concluded that the next step towards restoring the unity of the Indian communist movement needs to be taken. It began the discussion to chart out the form and content of the ideological struggle so that the entire Party is fully prepared to engage all communists and progressive forces in taking the next step.

Assessing the conditions that prevailed in India and on the international scale following the debacle of the so-called "Asian tiger" economies, the enlarged plenum of the CC pointed out that the objective contradictions of the capitalist-imperialist system are intensifying on the world scale. Referring to the resurgence of social-democracy within the conditions of the anti-social offensive of the bourgeoisie, it drew the conclusion that while the objective contradictions are intensifying, in the absence of the revolutionary alternative emerging on the scene, the bourgeoisie continues to be able to manipulate the class struggle. The opposition to capitalist reforms ends up as a contest of social-democratic forces to win the trust of the bourgeoisie to run the state, reconcile the class struggle and implement policies favouring the bourgeoisie, as happened in India in the period 1996-98.

Analysing the governmental crisis in India, the enlarged plenum concluded that the bourgeoisie is using this crisis to keep the people in a state of perpetual anxiety and to prevent the working class from setting its own aims. The governmental crisis shows that the old arrangements are no longer working for the Indian bourgeoisie. The development of Indian capitalism has not only enriched the old industrial houses but also given rise to new monopoly groups, which has accentuated the contradictions among the monopolies over the control of various markets. It has also widened the claims and expectations of regional bourgeois groups.

Summing up the entire experience with coalition politics over the past 30 years, the enlarged plenum assessed that the attempts to form different parliamentary coalitions will not end the crisis of bourgeois rule that has become the constant feature of Indian politics. The crisis of the bourgeoisie offers a favourable opportunity for communists to push forward the vision and work for the creation of a new political arrangement. A new arrangement based on the worker-peasant alliance will have to come into being as the precondition for ending the political crisis and opening the door to progress, and as the instrument of the defence of sovereignty.

Addressing the political situation on the eve of the 12<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha Elections, the enlarged plenum of the CC emphasised that the working class and people do not stand to gain from a division of the polity into rightist, centrist and leftist bourgeois coalitions. In the absence of any independent standards by which to judge what the different fronts have to offer, the working class and people are vulnerable to being pushed into one or another of these positions, lining up behind one or another of the bourgeois fronts. The plenum concluded that the prospects in 1998 and in 1999 depend to a considerable extent on what the communists will offer to the people in these conditions, and on what standards the movement will set for itself.

The decision of the enlarged plenum to publish and widely circulate its deliberations and decisions in the form of the pamphlet *Breaking the Barriers to Unity*—laid the basis for stepping up our work for the restoration of communist unity. With its thorough critical evaluation of the major trends in the Indian communist movement, this pamphlet served to ideologically arm the members of CGPI as well as other communists who joined the discussion and have

taken up the ideological struggle against the conciliators with the bourgeoisie.

The analysis of the situation and prospects in the Indian communist movement, presented as Part II of the pamphlet *Breaking the Barriers to Unity*, served to clarify the focus of the ideological struggle for communist unity. It demonstrated with powerful arguments that the continuation and perpetuation of the myth that the Indian state is secular while some other communal forces pose the greatest danger to the Indian people, serves only to postpone the revolution and prolong the suffering of the people. It showed that for communists to support the demand for redistributing privileges on a caste basis means to compromise with the status quo and undermine the struggle for the new society. It presented an ideo-political critique of the national-chauvinist position of justifying state terrorism in the name of defending the unity and integrity of India. It also elaborated the views of the CGPI on other important questions such as the forms of struggle, the stage of revolution and the nature of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The enlarged plenum of the CC decided in January 1998 that the most crucial immediate task confronting the Party was to establish the Party paper in the languages of the working class and peasantry, as the scaffolding with which the Party is built among the masses. It decided to focus all the energies of the Party on the Indian language Party press, beginning with the regular publication in Hindi. It decided to set up a special Party branch to bring out the Hindi fortnightly of the Party, *Mazdoor Ekta Lehar*, and to assist the different regional committees of the Party to do the same in other languages, to serve the work in their respective regions.

The Party Press will soon be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

With 20 years of experience in dealing with the key political problems of the times, armed with the General Line and our advanced theory, the Party Press is poised to develop further in content and form, to scale new heights as the central organ of the Party's work of forging political unity and restoring the unity of Indian communists.

**O**ne of the most important decisions of our First Congress was the decision to build the political unity of the working class and people against the bourgeoisie. This political unity had to be forged without allowing any ideological consideration to divide the people. The First Congress enjoined upon all of us to build the fighting mass organisations of workers, peasants, women, youth and other toiling and oppressed sections of the people. It called upon us to further develop the open face of the Party.

Comrades, the very first act of the CGPI after the First Congress of the Party was the bold unfurling of the public face of the Party in Mumbai in December 1990. In front of over ten thousand workers, and in front of fraternal delegations from many parties around the world, the decisions of the Congress were publicly announced. This was the challenge we threw, on behalf of India's communists, to the Indian and world bourgeoisie, that no force on earth could break the determination of India's workers and communists to uproot capitalism so as to lift India out of poverty, ignorance, hunger and slavery to a new world free from exploitation of any kind.

These have been the years in which the bourgeoisie has escalated the use of state terrorism, and of communal and fascist violence to an unprecedented level, to divide, crush and disorient the fighting forces. These have been years in which the bourgeoisie has used the ballot and the bomb to paralyse and disorient the working class and oppressed

masses, the communists and the revolutionary forces. These have been years in which a massive assault on the livelihood and rights of the workers and peasants has been unleashed under the slogan of liberalisation and privatisation. Chauvinism and hysteria and the backlash have been unleashed against the peoples fighting for their rights, on religious minorities, the dalits and others oppressed by the caste system, and the workers and peasants at large. Our Party, together with other communists and progressive forces, has been in the front ranks of the struggle in defence of the working class and people against these attacks.

In the course of organising the working class and people in defence of their interests, our Party has elaborated the political positions around which the unity of the people can and must be forged. In the course of fighting against state terrorism and the violation of rights by the Indian State, our Party has elaborated the modern definition of rights. It has steadfastly defended the rights of women and other collectives in society. It has defended the sovereignty of the nations, nationalities and tribes of India.

The destruction of the Babri Masjid and the ensuing reign of terror and massacres unleashed by the Indian State against people of the Muslim faith brought communists and progressive people of India to their feet. Powerful demonstrations were organised against the criminalisation and communalisation of politics, in Delhi, Mumbai and other towns of India. Our Party participated actively in this common struggle in defence of the Indian peoples and their unity. We fought against the pressure within the movement to label the people as communal. We pointed out and elaborated that it was the Indian State that was communal. We organised rallies of thousands of workers in Mumbai in 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1997 in the midst of



the propaganda that Mumbai's working class had become communal. Through our actions we proved the opposite.

Our Party fought against the pressure in the movement to exonerate the state and the Congress party of responsibility in organising the massacres. Emphasising that both the Congress(I) and BJP bore the major responsibility for the state-organised communal slaughters, our Party pointed out that as long as people were deprived of power, such massacres could not be prevented and therefore the movement must place the empowerment of the people on the agenda.

Our Party has been playing a pro-active role in the movement for the empowerment of the people. We have elaborated the key problems of modern Indian political theory. We have elaborated how the present political system deprives people of power. We have elaborated what kind of political process and mechanisms the Indian people need to ensure that power vests with the working class and people. Through this broad field of theoretical work and ideological struggle, we have safeguarded the movement for empowerment from the pressure to conciliate with bourgeois political theory and ideology.

In the course of fighting the capitalist offensive against the livelihood and rights of workers and peasants, our Party has elaborated that without the overthrow of the capitalist system, security of livelihood will remain a mirage. We have established that liberalisation and privatisation are a continuation of the Nehruvian model of socialism in different conditions with the same aim—that of ensuring the maximum profits for the big bourgeoisie through the savage exploitation of the land and labour of the Indian peoples. We have been critically exposing the content of the programs and policies of all the major parliamentary combinations as

nothing but one and the same class program of the bourgeoisie—the defence of the capitalist system. The experience of these eight years has been confirming this in the eyes of the masses of workers and peasants.

Based on the analysis of the developments in India, in the context of the developments on the world scale, our Party has developed the revolutionary alternative. It has been elaborating the requirements of an immediate program that would enable the working class to arouse the masses of people and turn the situation around. Not only in the consultative conferences, but also on a regular basis through the Party press, the CGPI has explained the immediate necessity for the reorientation of the economy to provide for the needs of human beings. It has affirmed the need to demand an immediate halt to, and complete repudiation of state terrorism, and to work for the renewal of the political process and the reconstitution of the Indian Union and its fundamental law based on modern definitions. It has explained the necessity to demand and propose such reforms that will further deepen the crisis in the ranks of the bourgeoisie and lead to the further exposure of the arbitrariness and incoherence of bourgeois rule. It is around such a program that the political unity of the working class and people, their revolutionary front, can be built.

The program for the democratic renewal of India—for the reorientation of the economy, empowerment of the people, reconstitution of the Indian Union and renewal of its international relations—is a program that is not coming from the drawing board of armchair intellectuals. It is a program that emerges from the demands and aspirations of the fighting forces of the country and from the persistent work of communists to provide leadership to the class struggle. It is a program that emerges from the women and youth, the dalits, the tribals and the oppressed

nationalities, the people fighting against state terrorism and communal and fascist violence, the forces fighting for the empowerment of the Indian people.

The program for the democratic renewal of India is a program to unite all the Indian peoples against capitalism, imperialism, remnants of feudalism and the colonial legacy. It is an immediate program to lift Indian society out of the crisis, consistent with the strategic aim of overthrowing capitalism and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, replacing it with the dictatorship of the proletariat and building a socialist society. The Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India will reaffirm and adopt this program around which the political unity of the working class and all the oppressed can and will be forged.

**C**omrades! How have we succeeded in preserving and strengthening the Party and its unity? There is no magic wand that has ensured it. It is hard work, untiring work, the sweat and sacrifice of all our comrades. It is the work to develop the theory of Indian liberation, to deal with the abrupt changes that have taken place and to elaborate the General Line of march in accordance with these changes. It is the work to bring out the Party paper regularly to serve the role of the organiser of the class. It is the work to organise and forge the political unity of the working class and all the oppressed around their immediate and long term interests. It is the work to defend and develop the organisational principles of our Party, to strengthen the Party where it exists and build the Party organisations in areas where it does not exist. It is the work to build the mass organisations of the Party.

Pouring all our energies into this work and building a strong and unbreakable link between theory and practice, between the word and deed of the Party, we have built a

Party that no storm, however severe, can destroy, a fortress that no enemy can conquer. We have built a Party that is truly prepared to turn the successes achieved thus far into lasting victory. This, the turning of our successes into lasting victory, is the great challenge facing our Party today.

Our Party is strong and united like steel, vibrant and ever fresh, as we prepare to face the coming storms. Raring with ideas, bursting with revolutionary enthusiasm, with militancy and fire burning in our hearts and in our actions, we communists of the Communist Ghadar Party of India reflect through our words and deeds that communism is an ever fresh doctrine, whose fire and fragrance will destroy and overcome everything rotten and decaying in our society. The greatest achievement of our Party in these eight years is that our Party has come through this difficult period with its members steeled in struggle, with its unity strengthened a thousand fold.

Comrades! Our Party comes to the Second Congress at a time when the crisis of world capitalism has grown extremely acute. The crisis in India has at its base the crisis of the monopoly capitalist system, which keeps growing alongside the increasing misery and widespread poverty and ruin of the rural and urban masses. Events keep confirming and reaffirming our analysis that it is capitalism which operates at the base of Indian society, a fact around which maximum confusion is created by the bourgeoisie and its conciliators within the communist movement. They create the illusion that there is some alternative policy and path of capitalist development that can allegedly improve the situation and ensure capitalist growth with equity. This is a dangerous illusion because capitalism has reached its last and most destructive stage; it has for long been ripe to be overthrown.

Our Party comes to the Second Congress at a time when the crisis of bourgeois democracy is acute and widespread on the world scale. The situation is fraught with danger as well as opportunities for the working class and peoples to advance their struggles. While the bourgeoisie and reaction find reasons to unite against the people and their struggles, the differences in the ranks of the enemy provide possibilities for the working class to push ahead with its demands. The political crisis creates the possibility for communists to make a breakthrough, by hitting at the party system of governance and pushing forward the program for the democratic renewal of India.

Objectively, the vast majority of Indians stand to gain from the revolution and socialism. Subjectively, the bourgeois ideological offensive blocks the way for any coherent alternative to emerge. A constant struggle therefore needs to be waged against the bourgeoisie in the sphere of ideas, in order that communism can capture the hearts and minds of the toiling masses. In the sphere of the restoration of unity of communists, a stern polemical struggle is needed against those in the movement who conciliate with the bourgeoisie and block the possibility of communist unity. It is through ideological and polemical struggle that socialism and communism will grow on the soil of India, turning the working class and its allies into a self-conscious force capable of uprooting capitalism and the entire colonial legacy.

The political program of the CGPI is a program that emerges from the conditions of the time, consistent with the motion of Indian society and the general line of the communist movement in this period. It is a program that is aimed at exploiting the political crisis to turn the situation around, in favour of the working class and people. Adoption of this program will raise to a new stage our work to forge the political unity of the people around the working class and

isolate the big bourgeoisie as a prelude to its defeat.

In step with the program we are undertaking, we have to pay great attention to the training of communists in leading the class struggle. Building groups of writers and disseminators of the Party paper in the ranks of the working class is crucial for the implementation of the program adopted by this Congress. All subjectivism and spontaneity in our work needs to be eliminated. Our entire work needs to be based on collective decisions and individual responsibilities. Carrying out these tasks will prepare the entire Party and the Indian communist movement for the coming storms. The open contest with the bourgeoisie and its vision and the work to restore the unity of communists will create the subjective conditions for the working class to bury capitalism and build socialism, as the ebb of revolution turns to flow.

Come comrades! Let us strengthen our army of commanders, trained in adversity, skillful with the class enemy, capable of leading the working masses through the most difficult twists and turns of the revolution. Victory will certainly belong to such a force. We have now come to the situation when the immediate task is the creation of the fighting army of the workers and peasants, women, youth and all the oppressed under such an invincible vanguard party.

The challenges and difficulties are far from over. The greatest assault on communism continues. Yet, we can declare with the greatest confidence, based on our own work and history of struggle, that nothing that the bourgeoisie and imperialism hurl at us today or in the future can destroy this fortress we have built. We have conquered and will continue to conquer every peak on our way to fulfill our mission of ushering in communism in India and on the world scale.

## **Part II**

### **India on the Eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**





# Crisis of Capitalism

## Introduction

The all-sided crisis of Indian society has its basis in the fundamental contradictions of the economic system, in its inability to provide for the needs of the majority of the population. The analysis of the roots of the crisis of the Indian economy forms the basis for assessing the stage of the Indian revolution and the strategy of Indian communists.

The bourgeois propaganda constantly creates illusions about the economy and its motion. Each bourgeois government blames the previous government for the ills of the economy, and calls for further sacrifices to be made by the toiling masses for the sake of a promised better life in the future. Those who benefit from this system want to hide its true nature, as a crisis-ridden monopoly capitalist system that is ripe to be overthrown. They hide the fact that the economy has its own laws that operate independent of any government or party policy.

Since the birth of the communist movement in India over 70 years ago, the question of the nature of the economic system has been debated many times, at different stages of development of Indian capitalism. On the one hand, the Indian economy has been portrayed by some as a “mixed” economy, as a combination of capitalism and socialism,

and on this basis a peaceful and parliamentary path to socialism has been advocated. On the other hand, the economy has been portrayed as a semi-feudal economy, with feudal relations identified as the stumbling block to social progress. And on this basis, the vision of an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution opening the road to a “vibrant capitalism” has been promoted. However, if capitalism is what operates at the base of the Indian economy, and its overthrow constitutes the necessary condition for social progress, then it is not permissible for communists to create such illusions about a “mixed” economy or a “vibrant capitalism”. The analysis of the motion at the base of Indian society thus has a crucial bearing on the nature and stage of the Indian revolution and the strategy of communists.

The time has come to settle this question once and for all. In order to do so, it is essential to lay bare the facts and figures, the current and historical trends, on the basis of analysing which our Party has come to the conclusion that it is capitalism that is protecting the imperialist and colonial interests; that it is capitalism which defends the remnants of feudalism; that it is capitalism which is the motor behind the drive of the bourgeoisie towards the globalisation of capital and production.

Our Party has always based its work on not just the developments in India, but on the basis of analysing the Indian developments within the context of international developments. This is the approach we have taken to the study of political economy, the study of the motion at the economic base of society. It is also the approach to our study of the political crisis, to what the phenomena in the political superstructure of society are revealing. In the final analysis, there is one struggle between labour and capital, a struggle that is international in scope and national in

form. The program that is adopted to end the crisis and open the path for the transformation of India is the contribution of the Indian working class to the struggle for the emancipation of labour on the world scale.

## Global Economic Crisis

The crisis of world capitalism has grown extremely acute. The current economic downturn is considered one of the worst global recessions since the Second World War, even worse than the crisis that broke out in 1974. It has already had a devastating effect on the economies of South-East Asia, and of Japan and Russia. The crisis is leading to the destruction of livelihood for hundreds of thousands of peoples and to the accelerated destruction of the natural environment. It is also slowing down the growth of capitalism on the world scale. In Japan, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has suffered an absolute decline in 1998, according to the latest estimates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). And the collapse of the Japanese economy is bound to have its impact on other capitalist economies, including the US. Thus, what was initially branded as an "Asian crisis" by the Anglo-American bourgeoisie is now revealing itself as the crisis of the world capitalist system.

The bourgeoisie and its "expert" economists create maximum confusion over the question of the root cause of the global economic crisis. Internationally, the bourgeoisie constantly carries out the propaganda that the problem is only in the sphere of distribution, while the base of production is allegedly doing just fine. Thus, they keep referring to the current crisis as a "financial" crisis and claim that the "economic fundamentals are strong". This hides the fact that the root of the crisis lies precisely in the fundamentals, i.e., the sphere of production, while the

effects of the crisis generally make their appearance first in the sphere of distribution, in financial and other markets. The root lies in the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of property ownership and appropriation of the product—between the socialised productive forces and the exploitative relations of production. The bourgeoisie is hard pressed to hide the fact that capitalism is a crisis-ridden system, and in its final stage of monopoly capitalism, it not only goes through periodic crises, it is also perpetually caught in a general crisis.

The destructive wave that has swept through South-East and East Asia, Russia, Brazil and other countries of Latin America is now threatening Canada and the US and has created an extremely dangerous situation in the global contention of the imperialist powers. At the heart of the current crisis is the inability of the capitalist system to provide for the people in spite of all the euphoria that was created when the bipolar division of the world ended in 1991. The immense defence expenditures of the preceding decades had created a net decline in the surplus available for deployment for extended reproduction of goods and services for the people. Driven by the need for making maximum profit, international capital undertook the tested path of destruction of productive forces worldwide so as to create the possibility of expanding business through reconstruction, especially in Eastern Europe, Russia and other countries that had large public sector assets. Speculation and fraud became the main means of realisation of capitalist super-profits as the productive capital was systematically decimated in country after country in the name of economic restructuring. The notorious stories of wealth amassed by international financiers like George Soros and the Russian mafia, and the speculative loot of Harshad

Mehta and company, are all reflections of the same parasitic tendency.

The crisis once again confirms the conclusion of Lenin about the parasitism of this stage of capitalism. As the debt burden of countries and banks increased without any corresponding rise in the production of goods and services on the world scale, the financial crisis set in. It appeared first in the form of the flight of capital from risky places to "secure" places and finally led to defaults, as has happened with Russia. Several big Japanese banks and security dealers have either collapsed or are on the verge of bankruptcy, such as Daiwa Bank and Long Term Capital Management. Their counterparts in Europe and the US are manoeuvring to escape ruin, with some manipulating to take advantage of the crisis and become bigger. The entire world faces the danger of catastrophe, wiping out of the life savings of hundreds of millions of people in the form of their bank deposits, pension funds and other savings, besides the job losses and plant closures.

The fall in currency values of many countries has made the raw material and finished goods from those countries cheaper in the export market. Some of them, such as Russia and Korea are flooding the raw materials market and finished consumer goods market respectively, with cheap stocks. This is putting immense pressure on the exports of other countries, including India. In Canada, regions of the country like British Columbia have gone into recession because of the steep drop in the price of products they sell in the world market, such as wood and paper. With the majority of people having no effective social security in this period of the broad anti-social offensive, the working people are faced with an impending disaster that will further erode their living conditions. This crisis is bound to assume worldwide proportions, far

deeper than what has been seen so far. This is the reality, contrary to all the self-serving assurances being given by the finance ministers and other captains of commerce and industry in India and abroad.

The imperialist states are making out as if the raising or lowering of interest rates and other such “fiscal disciplinary measures” can control this global crisis. But they have no control over the laws of monopoly capitalism and the inevitable uneven economic development that is evident in the increasing gap between the rich and poor countries. They are hard pressed to hide the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few within the capitalist countries, the inability of the technical-scientific revolution to benefit humankind and the severe competition between old established sections of finance capital and new emerging sections. The capitalist crisis is being aggravated to unimaginable proportions by the ruthless pressure of international finance capital to sweep aside all restrictions on its free entry and predatory activities, including the poisoning of the environment and the people to increase speculative profits. These years have witnessed the biggest onslaught of world imperialism, with US imperialism in the lead, against all barriers to the entry of their capital into all regions of the world, and particularly that of the economically developing countries. The facts show that the severe crisis in South-East Asia has been a time of mega take overs, of further concentration of capital on a transnational scale.

The G-15 summit held in Malaysia in November 1997 voiced the concerns of the economically underdeveloped countries about the predatory nature of speculative finance capital, unequal terms of trade and the conditions imposed by the IMF and the World Bank. Since then the criticism of these Bretton Woods institutions as factors for

the current economic crises have increased, spearheaded by a section of the imperialist bourgeoisie itself. In the US, for example, the fight for and against further funding of the IMF bail-out efforts in Russia, Brazil and Asia has divided the US bourgeoisie deeply.

The scandals in the White House reflect the internal contradictions of the US imperialist bourgeoisie. Such scandals also serve an ideological and political purpose, namely: to keep the attention of domestic public opinion diverted from the crimes of the US monopoly bourgeoisie, at home and on the international scale. The contending sectional interests are colluding to work out their initiatives against "terrorism" as well as to restructure the international financial mechanisms. The US is proposing to create a "new global financial architecture" to oversee and regulate the "orderly" deployment of finance capital in the world, just like the Federal Reserve does in the US and central banks do in other countries.

After some years of stagnation in output, Japan, the second largest economy in the world and the biggest in Asia, is experiencing negative growth in 1998. It has a trade surplus of \$111 billion because of a sharp decline in imports fueled by the steep fall in domestic consumption. The US has run up a trade deficit of \$220 billion in the past 12 months, accounted for by cheaper imports and a fall in its exports. Japan's currency has depreciated significantly and the government has officially admitted that its economy is in the midst of a severe recession. The rout of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party in the recent elections to Japan's upper house of Parliament, leading to the resignation of the Prime Minister, was the immediate fallout of this economic crisis. The new Prime Minister, Obuchi, is wrangling with the opposition to find a mutually acceptable package to bail out the failing banks and

security houses, and also appease the US by removing various laws and regulations that protect different sectors of the Japanese economy from foreign penetration. This shows that the capitalist crisis poses grave dangers not only to livelihood but also to the sovereignty of countries and peoples.

Severe cutbacks in social spending are being effected in the countries of the European Union as a precondition for economic integration and a single currency as specified in the Maastricht Treaty. The adoption of a single currency by 11 of the countries of the European Union means not only a common monetary control mechanism but also common social welfare legislation in these countries. This has brought to the fore the surrender of the sovereignty of the peoples of these countries to their financial oligarchies, in order to maximize their potential to compete in the global market against the US, Japan and other imperialists. The mergers and acquisitions in aerospace, banking, automotive and other sectors inside Europe and transatlantic mergers such as Daimler-Chrysler in the auto industry are a sample of what is to follow in the coming years. Such trends, which bring overnight riches to the stock-holders because of speculative appreciation of stock values, are bringing rationalisation, job cuts and benefit cuts, wherever the monopolies operate. The birth of the Euro as a currency to challenge the domination of the US dollar in the international financial market is going to lead to sharp dogfights among the big powers of Europe and the US in the coming years.

Germany has positioned itself as the dominant power within the European Union (EU). German industrial and finance capital now dominates the markets of the EU, perhaps exceeding the proportions that were achieved during the occupation of the countries of Europe by Adolf



Hitler's forces in the early years of the Second World War. At the same time, the living conditions of the working masses are becoming worse as a result of years of jobless growth. Recent estimates are revealing that unemployment in Germany has risen to a post-war record high. Since January this year, unemployment has risen by half a million to a staggering 4.6 million people. The unemployment rate is 12% in Germany as a whole and 19% in eastern Germany. Considering the fact that in February 1996, the unemployment level was at 4%, recent developments point to the depth of the crisis in the German economy, supposedly one of the strongest capitalist economies in the world.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union and the triumph of the capitalist system and its "rule of law" with Boris Yeltsin's *coup d'état* in 1993, Russia has been in the grip of the most severe crisis of capitalism. Since August 1998, in less than a month, the value of its currency has fallen to less than half, from eight roubles per US dollar to 16 roubles. Unpaid wages for months and mass unemployment are a characteristic feature of the Russian economy. Russian coal miners are camped outside the Kremlin because they have not been paid their wages for nearly two years. According to news reports, Russia is in the midst of a massive 10-year depression. Collective farmers are reportedly paid very little for their harvest. Medical services outside the largest cities have been practically eliminated. Industrial investment is nonexistent and factories have been unable to retool. Agriculture has not been able to get new machinery, fertilisers or pesticides. Famine is looming. Grain production in 1998 is 50 per cent lower than under Mikhail Gorbachev, and the numbers of cattle, dairy cows and chickens are down by about 75 per cent. Life expectancy for men has fallen to 57 from over 70 since the collapse of the former Soviet Union.

In his recent visit, US President Clinton demanded that Russia stay on the course of reforms and meet the demands of the international money lenders. It is these same reforms, shock therapy and the Yeltsin constitution, pushed as solutions by imperialism, that have worsened the crisis and devastated the life of the broad masses of people of Russia.

### **Crisis of Indian Capitalism**

After having achieved seven per cent rate of annual capitalist growth in the period 1994-97, the Indian economy was hit by a crisis of overproduction in 1997-98. Production has slowed down or declined in various sectors, and unsold stocks of goods are piling up because of the lack of effective demand or a market for the produce. It is a typically capitalist phenomenon, where a decline in the general rate of profit is followed by cutbacks in production itself. Indian capitalism is part of the worldwide capitalist-imperialist system, hence the domestic economic crisis is inseparably tied to the worldwide crisis. Exports have slowed down drastically since two years ago.

While Indian exports grew faster than world trade during the period 1992-96, India's global market share actually declined in 1997. The global recession has led to the decline in the value of the rupee, and to the intensification of imperialist pressure to open up the Indian markets even further for domination and plunder by the biggest monopolies of the world. With the Indian big bourgeoisie bent on achieving big power status through any means, the consequence is the further aggravation of the crisis of Indian capitalism.

The crisis of Indian capitalism has led to massive destruction of productive forces, the most important among which is

the productive labour force which is being forced into partial or total idleness. The working class suffered super-exploitation when the bourgeoisie boasted of record rates of growth in the 1992-96 period. In spite of these record rates of the capitalist economy, the growth of industrial employment slowed down. Old jobs were destroyed at a rapid rate even as new jobs were created. Now when the economy is slowing down as a result of the periodic crisis of overproduction and the deepening of the general crisis of the worldwide capitalist system, the condition of workers has become even more terrible. The crisis has thrown and is threatening to throw lakhs of employed workers out of jobs.

Side by side with the quantitative and qualitative growth of poverty among the workers, the capitalist crisis is leading to the bankruptcy and ruin of millions of small producers, swelling the ranks of the proletariat and the unemployed. Not only are poor peasants being driven to suicide, but even small capitalist companies are being ruined on a massive scale. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), "only the large companies have been able to maintain their profit margins ... small companies were unable to survive the turbulence of the year 1997-98" (Monthly Review, June 1998, p.106). It is becoming more apparent than ever before that the economic system in India simply does not serve the needs of the majority of the population. It is a system that is geared to the super-profits of an extremely small minority in society.

The crisis in India has at its base the crisis of the monopoly capitalist system, which keeps growing alongside the increasing misery and widespread poverty of the rural and urban masses. Our theoretical and practical work has confirmed and reconfirmed that it is capitalism that operates at the base of Indian society—a fact around which maximum confusion is spread by the bourgeoisie

and its apologists in the communist movement. They spread the idea that the problem lies only with foreign capital, an external factor, while the economy in India is allegedly not capitalist but is feudal or semi-feudal. They spread the notion that the problem lies only with a particular government policy such as privatisation and liberalisation, not with the system of economy itself. Such notions feed into the illusion that there is some other policy, an alternative path of capitalist development that can allegedly improve the situation and end the crisis. Some call this “vibrant capitalism”, others call it “capitalism with a human face”, yet others call it the policy of “growth with equity”. But whatever name is given, it is a dangerous illusion because capitalism has reached its last and parasitic stage and is over-ripe to be overthrown.

### Relations of Production

India is largely an agrarian society. More than 70 per cent of the population still lives in the countryside in an economy that is agrarian-industrial. Colonial privileges and feudal property relations also still exist. Capitalist relations of production dominate both in the city and the countryside. Small property is still the most prevalent form of land ownership, within which there is petty commodity production as well as individual property for the purpose of subsistence living. At the same time the Indian economy is characterised by very high levels of concentration of production and capital in all the vital sectors, aided and abetted by state monopoly and state controls. Concentration is highest in the financial sector, with a high degree of control of the state by the monopolies and oligopolies. It is also characterised by ever increasing penetration of foreign capital and, to a lesser but growing extent, the penetration of some external markets by Indian capital.

According to the official Census data, the productive labouring population in India amounted to about 26 crore (260 million) in 1991 (excluding two crore government employees, three crore marginal workers and four crore unemployed). Of this working population that was employed in creating the national wealth, 67 per cent or two-thirds were engaged in the primary sector, i.e., agriculture and allied activities, while 33 per cent or one-third were engaged in industry and services. According to the National Sample Survey (1990-91), of the total labour force (employed and unemployed, adding up to 35 crore), about 30 per cent were females and 70 per cent were males.

In terms of the relation in which a labouring individual stood with respect to the social process of production, in the primary sector about 57 per cent were peasants, mainly owner-cultivators and some tenants, and 43 per cent were agricultural labourers or the rural proletariat. Of those engaged in industry and services, 68 per cent or over two-thirds were wage labourers and 32 per cent or less than one-third were small propertied or self-employed commodity producers. The Census does not provide any data on the non-labouring families—the capitalists and landlords who live off the labour of others. This class, collectively called the bourgeoisie (including those in the industrial, agriculture and service sectors), accounts for only a small proportion of the population.

To sum up, the exploiting class, the bourgeoisie, constitutes a small minority. The working people, the exploited and oppressed, constitute the vast majority. Of the working population, the class of wage workers or proletarians constitute a little more than half with urban wage workers constituting 22 per cent of the total labour force and rural wage workers making up 29 per cent. The class of small propertied toilers or petty-bourgeoisie

constitutes 49 per cent of the labour force, 11 urban and 38 rural. This was the position in 1991. By now, the proletariat—the class of those who own no means of production and have nothing to sell in the market except their own labour power—would be significantly more than half the labour force. Of this huge working class, only a tiny part is employed in organised large-scale industry, agribusiness and services. Only 6 million out of 175 million wage workers are members of registered trade unions. This is the most organised detachment of the working class.

If one looks at the product of the economy, the value added by the total social labour in one full year, then industry and services produce two-thirds of the gross national product while agriculture produces only one-third, according to the official National Accounts Statistics. All the main means of production—including industrial and agricultural machines, basic goods like steel and cement and intermediates like fertiliser and oil—are produced by the large-scale capitalist sector. The value added per worker is several times higher in industry and services than it is in agriculture. This is because capitalist production is more productive than petty commodity production and semi-feudal production. While the major portion of domestic industrial products and services come out of the large-scale private and state capitalist sectors, the major portion of agriculture still remains small and tiny scale cultivation by the self-employed and by tenant cultivators, poor peasants and semi-proletarians, partly for subsistence and partly for the market. This is in spite of the fact that large-scale capitalist agriculture has developed to different degrees and made inroads into various regions.

The uneven development of capitalism finds its reflection in the acute differences among the various regions of the country. For instance, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh

(UP) are agrarian states, exporters of agricultural products and net importers of industrial products from the rest of India and the world. Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, are net exporters of industrial products to the rest of India and the world, and net importers of food grains as well as cotton and other agricultural raw materials. The states of the north-east have neither a developed industry nor large-scale capitalist agriculture.

Looking at the Indian economy from all sides, it can be characterised as an agrarian-industrial economy on its way to becoming industrial-agrarian—that is, an economy which is in a stage of transition. But this transition is extremely slow, painful and prolonged, apart from being extremely uneven, as it is driven by the greed of the monopolies and oligopolies. Entire generations of tillers of the soil have perished, remaining poor or becoming poorer all their lives and driven to an early death. With the monopolies and oligopolies controlling the market, both directly and through the State, small producers are at their mercy; they survive and perish according to whatever serves to maximise the profits of the monopolies. The surplus generated by the toil of the workers and peasants is concentrated and placed at the disposal of the capitalist monopolies, to deploy as they please in pursuit of the maximum rate of private profit through maximum exploitation and plunder of the land and labour of the people.

## **Genesis of Indian Capitalism**

The painful process of coming into being of Indian capitalism, its growth in colonial conditions and in the Nehruvian era, as well as its further development today towards becoming a global imperialist power, is one single process. It is this process of development of Indian

capitalism which forms the basis of the colonial conquest and subjugation, as well as the continued enslavement of the Indian people in the post-colonial period. Indian capitalism is part of the colonial legacy. In order to understand the nature of this system, it is necessary to examine also how it came into being and how it has become what it is today.

The Indian economy was in the main an integration of village economies before the British colonial conquest. It was not primarily a market oriented economy. Production in each village was oriented towards fulfilling the needs of the village and towards producing a modest surplus which was appropriated in the form of revenue by the king who provided political protection and the public works required by agriculture. A portion of the surplus that took the form of revenue also became exchanged with imports from other lands. The royal palaces and forts had their bazaars for manufactured consumer products. Overall, commodity circulation was restricted to the periphery of society, as only the surplus was bought and sold.

The British colonialists introduced new property relations in India so as to establish a new system of colonial plunder for the global business interests of British capital. The main aim of the various land settlement legislations enacted in the 18th and 19th centuries was to establish market oriented agriculture, to establish a stable base of surplus extraction to sustain the looting and plunder that was carried out by the East India Company. The zamindars and other middlemen, the new class created by these land settlements, acquired the power to direct what was cultivated by the tillers of the land. Production became oriented towards whatever the global trade of the British bourgeoisie demanded, driven by the greed of the plunderers to maximise their rate of private profit.



Thus, the first major changes that were introduced following the colonial conquest were new land relations suited to the commercialisation of agriculture. The Indian economy was forcibly reoriented towards the market. But this did not immediately lead to capitalist agriculture. It led to commodity production, but the level of productive forces in agriculture remained low, largely small-scale and bullock powered with the exception of the plantations, where collective labour was employed. However, this sowed the seeds of capitalist development, alongside the preservation of all the old relations wherever they did not come in the way of the aim of maximising colonial plunder. It was to take nearly two full centuries before commercial agriculture could mature into capitalist agriculture through the Green Revolution that was launched in the 1960s.

In the systems that prevailed before colonialism, the land did not exclusively belong to the king or to the tillers of the land. Each enjoyed a certain right that was secure under that system. The tillers had the right to till and be fed, the king had the right to claim revenue from the land. What the British land settlements did was to create classes of people who enjoyed exclusive rights over the land, including the right to evict the tillers, as well as to buy and sell land. The tillers were separated from the land they tilled. Land and labour power became commodities in the market. The seed was sown for the capital-wage labour relation.

In the Indian communist movement, it has generally been understood that in place of the old feudal system, or what Marx and Engels called the "Asiatic" or "Oriental" mode of production, the British colonialists established a semi-feudal system as the base of colonial rule. But it has not been grasped by all communists that the very act of transforming a feudal system into a semi-feudal system is the act of opening the door to capitalist transformation. If it

is only semi-feudal, then it is no longer feudal in the old sense. To call it half feudal obviously means that it has to be half something else. That something else is nothing but capitalist private property, the relation between capital and wage-labour, the basis for which was sown by the British and which has been spreading in India from colonial times and continuing after 1947, sometimes more rapidly than at other times.

In the 19th century, Indian capitalism developed further, especially after the suppression of the First War of Independence in 1857 and the formal usurpation of sovereignty by the British Crown. It developed with the blessings of the British colonial bourgeoisie, as the base for the plunder of the Indian subcontinent. There emerged the textile mills sector and the iron and steel works, and with it, the class of industrial capitalists and its counterpart, the industrial proletariat. The Indian bourgeoisie, the exploiters who exercised hegemony in the Indian National Congress (INC) and whose representatives were the Gandhis and Nehrus, consisted of the big capitalists and big landlords, classes who owe their origin to the system of colonial plunder.

### Post Colonial Evolution

While the British colonialists directed the Central State and the plunder of the economy before 1947, this right to direct the plunder was transferred into the hands of the Indian monopoly bourgeoisie, the creation of colonialism, after 1947. Once in control of the Indian State, the big bourgeoisie implemented a two-pronged strategy for the development of capitalism and the consolidation of its own domination of the Indian economy. *First*, it arranged for the creation of the state monopoly sector of heavy industry and infrastructure, i.e., the Central State in control of the

“commanding heights of the economy”, which was carried out under the Nehruvian slogan of building a “socialistic pattern of society”. Public savings were concentrated and combined with external aid and debt, supplemented by taxation and inflation—all to finance the base for the Indian big bourgeoisie to emerge as a major industrial power. *Second*, land reforms were implemented to lay the foundation for capitalist agriculture to flourish on the basis of the technical-scientific revolution, thereby expanding the market for modern industrial products in the villages of India. This entire strategy for the development of monopoly capitalism was passed off as a “socialistic” strategy, thanks to those in the communist movement who conciliated and collaborated with this social-democratic platform, led by the Soviet revisionists and their followers within India.

The land reforms implemented by the Indian National Congress in the 1950s and 1960s enabled a minority among the hitherto oppressed peasantry to acquire full private property rights over their land, after paying handsome compensation to the landlords who were willing to sell some or all of their land. These new entrants into the ranks of the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, along with a section of the big landlords who took to modern large-scale production, became the social base for the expansion of capitalism in rural India.

The majority of those who toiled on the land remained exploited and oppressed. They remained poor or became poorer. The poor peasants gained precious little in the form of redistributed land, which was generally of the poorest quality (the good quality land in excess of ceilings was simply divided into plots under various names by the landlords). Tied to such miserable plots of land, poor farming families began to suffer even more intensely than

the landless families who could at least roam anywhere in search of jobs. Intensification of family labour on one's own land and others' land in the village if possible, minimisation of family food consumption, especially of the women and girls—such is the lot of the poor peasantry as a result of the capitalist transformations that have taken place and continue to take place in agriculture.

Following the successive droughts and mass revolts of the mid 1960s and India's growing dependence on food aid from the US via the PL480 scheme, the Indian big bourgeoisie responded by establishing and expanding a Public Distribution System as a safety valve and security provision. It also strengthened the Indo-Soviet alliance as the main weapon to deal with the pressures of US imperialism in international relations. In the 1970s, the Indian bourgeoisie went further on the road of state monopoly capitalism and state-sponsored modernisation of agriculture. The major commercial banks in the country were nationalised to facilitate the expansion of banking to rural areas, to advance credit to promote the adoption of modern technology and use of modern inputs, as well as to concentrate the savings of those who grew richer in the countryside and place it at the disposal of the biggest monopolies.

The Nehruvian strategy of development of Indian capitalism reached its limit in the 1980s. It was beset with repeated crises and the State was too bankrupt to bail the bourgeoisie out of the crisis. The parasitism and decay of the system and the wholesale loot of the State Treasury had reached unbearable limits. Much more was being drained out of the productive forces than was being invested in them. This led to the deepening financial crisis of the central and state governments as the burden of public debt mounted at a rapid pace, and to repeated balance of

payments crises. These internal factors combined with the changes on the world scale, the end of the bipolar division, meant that the time had come for a strategic shift.

The response of the Indian big bourgeoisie to the crises of the 1980s was to accelerate the globalisation of production and capital and reorient the economy towards capturing foreign markets. In order to realise the imperialist ambitions of the big bourgeoisie, an enormous amount of capital investment and the latest international technology were required to modernise the economic and military infrastructure in India. The Indian bourgeoisie understood that in order to realise its own global ambitions, it had to loosen control over imports and give greater space to foreign capital in the joint plunder of India, in return for the required capital and technology. This is the logic that drove Rajiv Gandhi to launch his modernisation campaign in 1985, and later drove Narasimha Rao to launch the liberalisation and privatisation drive in the midst of the acute balance of payments crisis of 1991, just when the Soviet Union disintegrated.

The main pillar of the power sharing arrangement in the early post-colonial decades was the alliance of the industrial houses with the big landlords. As the class composition of the rural population underwent changes, the alliance had to be broadened to include the rural middle bourgeoisie or rich peasants in the states where the Green Revolution made advances, as in Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and selected districts of Tamil Nadu in the 1970s, and other parts of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, coastal Andhra and parts of Rajasthan and Bihar in the 1980s. Adjustments in the power sharing arrangement have not always been peaceful, as evidenced by the violent conflicts in Punjab in the 1970s and 1980s, and the continuing clashes in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The old basis of power sharing with the landed interests is now under threat, with the big bourgeoisie and the international financial monopolies jointly demanding that subsidies should be cut—including food, fertiliser, irrigation and rural electricity subsidies—as the precondition for intensified exploitation and plunder of the natural and human resources of the country. The agrarian question has become extremely acute in the 1990s, with mass organisations of the peasantry from all over the country up in arms against the drive of the big bourgeoisie towards the globalisation of capital and production, and the consequent accelerated imperialist penetration. The intensification of the contradiction between monopoly capital on one side, and the non-monopoly and small producers on the other, objectively creates favourable conditions for the worker-peasant alliance to be forged.

### **The Agrarian Question**

The peasantry was the backbone of the anti-colonial struggles of the Indian people. And the slogan of the peasantry was “land to the tiller”. This slogan represented the age-old aspiration to undo the wrong that was committed by the hated coloniser, the act of alienating the tiller from the land he or she tills, and creating a class of middlemen in between. The Indian National Congress had to address this problem in some manner, so as to keep the petty-bourgeois masses aligned to the bourgeoisie and its Nehruvian vision. At the same time, the proletarian revolution had to be avoided at all costs. The INC accordingly implemented “land reforms” in the typically reformist style of social-democracy, inoffensive to the oppressors and unkind to the toiling masses.

While the land reforms of the 1950s had formally abolished the role of the zamindar or other forms of middlemen,

further reforms in the 1960s helped to consolidate land holdings to achieve economic size for large-scale cultivation. This paved the way for accelerated growth of commercialisation or the cash crop economy. It also opened up the possibility of large-scale capitalist agriculture with electric power and mechanised operations. The Green Revolution was a technical-scientific revolution that led to a big boost in the productivity of agriculture in the 1970s, mainly in Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh.

Recent data indicate that the impact of technological change and the growth of commercial and capitalist agriculture did not stop but has in fact spread even wider in the 1980s. The impact of the bourgeois agrarian transformation has been more widespread and can be seen in many more states. The number of registered tractors, one indicator of mechanisation in agricultural operations, shows a fairly rapid growth at an average rate of nine per cent annually, from 5,18,500 tractors in 1981 to 12,21,800 in 1991<sup>1</sup>.

The changes that have taken place as a result of the Green Revolution have not led to the uplifting of the conditions of life for the majority of tillers of the soil. However, that was not the real aim of the bourgeoisie. The Green Revolution strategy has succeeded to some extent in expanding the space for commercial agriculture and capitalist agriculture, which was the real aim. A family with even 1 or 2 hectares of land (2.5 to 5 acres), provided it is located in an area that receives reliable supplies of irrigation water, may now be able to produce for the market and hope to sell a considerable portion of its

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Indian Livestock Census 1991

crop in the market, which could not be imagined in the colonial period.

The productivity of land and labour have multiplied as a result of the application of modern technology. Even the medium-sized peasant hopes to produce a surplus provided he can invest in the modern seeds and package of manufactured inputs, and complement this with intensified labour on the farm to produce multiple crops. But the middle peasant needs credit to buy the package of inputs required for modern commercial agriculture. There is great uncertainty and a high risk of sinking into the clutches of money lenders and ultimately losing one's land—a risk that was unknown in the pre-colonial days.

The Green Revolution not only created the possibility for capitalist agriculture to thrive; it also expanded the home market for Indian industry. Rural markets for industrial products expanded, not only consumer goods but also huge markets for high-yielding seeds, chemical fertilisers, pesticides, tractors, threshers, etc. Indian industry, which grew relatively slowly in the 1950s and 1960s, spurred mainly by the establishment and expansion of heavy industry owned by the Central State, flourished at a faster pace following the Green Revolution. The emergence and growth of the rural bourgeoisie found its reflection in the political sphere in the form of the growth of regional bourgeois parties who spoke in the name of this or that nationality and/or in the name of some dominant caste group.

The growth of capitalism in agriculture has produced, in the main, wealth at one pole and poverty at the other pole. The struggle for livelihood has become more and more difficult for the small peasants and the landless labourers. Migration to the cities has already saturated the footpaths



and slums there, and the prospect of a job in the city has become out of reach for the majority of those seeking work from rural families. The only alternative for the poor peasantry in such conditions is to multiply and intensify the application of human labour to the soil.

Small-scale agriculture can never survive in competition with large-scale mechanised agriculture; hence the poor peasant family becomes poorer, eats less and many go to an early grave, while some lose their land every year. One of the natural results of this process is the decline in the average size of land holding in large parts of rural India, including Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, eastern Uttar Pradesh, non-coastal Andhra Pradesh, etc. While the bourgeois economists recognise the declining size of land holdings as a constraint on the growth of capitalism, what they try to hide is that it is commercialisation and the capitalist transformation of agriculture that has created this constraint. Far from creating space for the development of the productive forces, capitalism is playing an extremely destructive role. It is forcing the large part of toilers of India to eke out a sub-human living on miserably small plots of land.

Given the uneven nature of the development of Indian capitalism, the stage of transformation is naturally different in different parts of the country. In order to pay some attention to the regional specificities, it would be useful to look at at least one state as a case study. The experience in Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state of India, is examined below.

### **Case of Uttar Pradesh**

Uttar Pradesh is considered to be a model state that enacted as early as in 1951 the Zamindari Abolition and

Land Reforms Act. Before this Act was enacted, big landlords—who constituted 1.5 per cent of the population dependent on agriculture—owned 58 per cent of the land in UP. After the 1951 Act, all cultivators were placed in one of two categories: *bhumidars* (owners) or *sirdars* (hereditary tenants). These reforms by and large maintained the domination of the old landed families, who simply divided up their holdings and showed it under various names. At the same time, it also did open the door to a small section of the relatively prosperous among the hitherto socially oppressed peasants to gain full ownership rights over the land they tilled (by paying compensation to the landlords).

When the Zamindari abolition reforms were carried out, some of the landlords began to shift their attention to non-farm businesses such as brick kilns, flour mills or rice shelling, while continuing to lease out their land to tenants and share-croppers. But when and where the productivity of agriculture rose as a result of the Green Revolution in the 1970s and later, where the value of land rose consequently, the opposite tendency also has been witnessed, that is, the landlords have invested in their land and taken to modern methods of farming after evicting the tenants and share-croppers. In some places, hitherto non-cultivating families have taken to cultivation, using tractors, employing both family labour and hired labour.

Alongside the old landlord class, and in some regions in place of them, has emerged a relatively more numerous class of rich peasants or capitalist farmers. In UP, they do not constitute a homogenous class with one political leadership. They are divided on a regional basis and fight each other on a caste basis. They compete with one another for greater share of political power at the state level. Much of the expansion of commercial farming in UP,

especially since 1980, has been driven by the expansion of ground water pumping, with electric or diesel sets. To invest in such pump sets and regularly undertake modern methods of commercial agriculture typically requires a certain amount of capital and/or political connections to get bank loans, power supply and other inputs.

One of the consequences of the Green Revolution is the mushrooming growth of small towns in Uttar Pradesh, first in the west and later spreading to the central and eastern parts of the Gangetic plain. As prosperity grew in various districts where modern methods of farming took root, incomes and surpluses were generated, creating new and expanding demand for consumer goods as well as for agriculture-related commodities and activities such as fertiliser distribution, processing of foodgrains, repair of implements and so on. Along with such light industry, the number of towns in UP increased from 244 in 1961 to 293 in 1971, and then to 659 by 1981 (a town being defined in the census as having at least three-fourths of its working population dependent on non-agricultural pursuits).

It is striking that the emergence of new bourgeois farmers from among the feudal remnants did not lead to any fundamental democratic transformation, even though it has led to the end of Congress dominance in the state and the emergence of various other parties. The rich peasants of western UP, for instance, are notorious for their muscle power and known to generally cast all the votes of the low caste labourers. In place of the old class alliance and the reign of the Congress Party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is desperate to establish a new alliance to consolidate its hold in this most populous state with maximum electoral significance. At the base of the clash between the BJP and the Samajwadi Party lies the conflict over land, water and state power between different sections of the bourgeoisie.

Capitalist transformation of agriculture, however uneven, undemocratic and criminal a form it has taken in UP, has changed the class composition of the rural population. The different sections of the bourgeoisie, central and regional, the big bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, as well as those from different regions within UP, collide with each other and collude against the toiling masses. The petty-bourgeoisie or the small property owners of town and countryside, including the middle peasants who rely mainly on their own family labour and the poor peasants tied to miserable plots of land producing little or no surplus and eking out an inhuman existence, constitute the most numerous class. The working class exists in smaller numbers in the towns and in larger numbers in the countryside.

When we look at India as a whole, we are looking at a capitalist society in which the ruling class is the bourgeoisie, including the industrial, agricultural, service sector, financial and trading bourgeoisie. At the head of this ruling class stand the big business houses—the Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis and others, including some new entrants from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. In different regions, this biggest and most influential section of the bourgeoisie has an alliance with regional bourgeois groups. In Uttar Pradesh, the regional bourgeoisie consists mainly of capitalist farmers and owners of brick kilns and flour mills; in other words, it is predominantly a rural bourgeoisie.

In the 1990s, the Uttar Pradesh economy has experienced a major slowing down. While the rate of capitalist growth **accelerated** in all of India following the reforms of the Congress government in 1991, in UP it **decelerated**. The bitter rivalry between different factions of the regional bourgeoisie and the pursuit of extremely short-term and narrow-minded goals have had a disastrous impact on the

decay of public services. Officials get transferred all the time and corruption is blatant and all pervasive. The amount being taken out of the Uttar Pradesh economy has outstripped investments or putting into the economy to such an extent that the state government is facing a serious financial crisis and is looking to the Central Government and the World Bank to bail it out.

### **Solution to the Agrarian Question**

The experience of the agrarian transformation in Uttar Pradesh, as in other parts of India, confirms that the capitalist path will not liberate the peasantry from old and new oppression and exploitation. The vision of vibrant growth on the basis of individual peasant proprietorship, *a la* Europe, has already been achieved as far as one minority of rich peasants are concerned. It will never be achieved as far as the majority of toiling peasants and workers are concerned. There can be no solution to poverty and the immiseration of the majority within the framework of capitalist property relations.

Collectivisation—and collectivisation alone—can deliver the toiling peasantry from the stranglehold of sub-human existence on sub-optimal plots of land, provided it is backed up with liberal assistance from the State and the people of the towns, in the form of modern technology, cheap machinery and free technical assistance. The Indian working class must call upon and offer unstinting assistance to the peasantry to restore collective ownership and control over the resources in each village and each district, to revive in modern form and shape that which was destroyed by the colonial conquest. Needless to say, to implement such a transformation requires a new political power, the combined power of the labouring masses of the country.

The main issue that has to be recognised by Indian communists is that in the conditions of our subcontinent, expanding the space for capitalist production and market orientation in agriculture is not associated with democratic transformations. It is associated with enslavement in old and new forms. Capitalism grows not by confronting the remnants of feudalism and everything backward in society, as it did in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. In India, capitalism is part of the colonial legacy. Both during and after the period of direct colonial rule, capitalism has grown by preserving and utilising the remnants of feudalism and everything backward and oppressive in Indian society. Till today, new capitalists emerge in the market and grow into big ones, not by upholding universal rights of any kind but by participating and benefiting from the privilege distribution system and by extending their influence and special connections in the political establishment.

The main message that the communists need to carry to the toiling and oppressed masses in rural India, on behalf of the working class which has the greatest potential to lead all the oppressed in a revolutionary struggle to lift Indian society out of the crisis, is that capitalism cannot and will not solve their problems. The road promised by social-democratic parties, the road of private property and bourgeois land reforms, the road of seeking caste-based privileges or subsidies from the State through special connections—is a dead-end road for the vast majority of toiling peasants and labourers.

The communists must openly tell the peasants: “Yes, we shall defend your individual right to the land you till and wage war against any encroachment on this right by the capitalist monopolies or the feudal remnants. At the same time, small-scale individual farming will not take you very

far. The road of restoring collective ownership of the land, the road of modern communism on Indian soil, is the real solution. Only communism can save India! Only communism can save you!" The objective conditions favour the desertion of the big bourgeoisie by the petty-bourgeoisie and the establishment of the worker-peasant alliance as the back bone of a revolutionary front.

The objective conditions are creating favourable conditions for the working class to make a decisive advance. But the working class cannot realise this potential if Indian communists do not even recognise this much, that it is capitalism that is the motor behind the increasing imperialist penetration and the preservation of the remnants of feudalism and colonialism. The facts show that Indian capitalism has developed all the main features of monopoly capitalism, the last and moribund stage which is the prelude to its overthrow and replacement by socialism.

### **Concentration of Production and Capital**

Capitalism, in this era of imperialism, as analysed by Lenin, is characterised by the ever increasing concentration of production and capital, leading to the merging or decimation of small enterprises by big ones. These big capitalist enterprises concentrate in their hands huge productive capacities, energy and raw material resources and grow into monopolies. The Indian economy is characterised by a very high degree of concentration, with production in the hands of a few giant enterprises which dominate all the vital sectors of the economy. By virtue of their growing economic dominance over markets and control over the Central State and its policies, the monopoly corporations regulate the production and fixing of prices, control the supply of finance, of raw materials and energy resources. In other words, the monopoly

bourgeoisie exercises its dictate and imposes its will in all spheres of life.

According to a Financial Express survey<sup>2</sup>, the biggest 1,100 companies had a sales turnover of Rs. 2,91,000 crores in 1996, amounting to nearly 30% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India. And within these companies, the top 10 companies cornered 49% of the total sales and fixed assets. According to more recent estimates by Business Line Research Bureau, the total sales of the biggest 590 companies amounted to 29% of GDP in 1997-98, indicating that the degree of concentration is increasing rapidly every year. Post-tax earnings of these companies increased from Rs. 29,000 crores in 1996-97 to Rs. 33,300 crores in 1997-98. The magnitude of this profit can be understood if we compare this with the plan allocations made by the government in social sectors. The profits of these companies are about 40% more than the entire plan allocation in this year's budget for the ministries of education, agriculture, health, rural areas and employment, social welfare and women and child development. Of this sample, 11 companies—Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), State Bank of India (SBI), Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL), Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), Reliance Industries, Gas Authority of India, Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Indian Tobacco Company (ITC) and Bank of Baroda—registered a 38% rise in their profits.

The largest monopolies and multinationals in India are vast conglomerates. They do not restrict their activities to one

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<sup>2</sup> Financial Express 1100: India's complete corporate dossier, The Financial Express, January 1997



sector of the economy but have interests and investments in several sectors. With respect to a particular product, their activities include all stages of production, from extracting and processing raw materials right up to the manufactured finished product. In other words, they are integrated both horizontally and vertically. Moreover, the largest monopolies are themselves often grouped together and owned by families, who exercise common ownership and control over them.

Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata family, controls several group companies which are themselves monopolies in their respective fields, such as Tata Tea, Tata Steel, Tata Electric and Locomotive Company (TELCO), Tata Infotech, and so on. The Essar group is a clear example of horizontal integration, involved in diverse spheres such as shipping, steel, telecom and oil refining. Reliance Industries is an example of a vertically integrated company producing Purified Tere-phthalic Acid (PTA) which goes into the production of polyester, which in turn serves as raw material for fabrics. Companies such as Tata Steel have control over large tracts of iron ore mines which provide the raw material for their huge furnaces. Some private and public monopolies such as Tata Steel and Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) own entire townships and have the entire population dependent on them for a livelihood.

One indication of the stranglehold which the largest corporations in the natural resource based sectors have over the country is the monopoly rights they have over the land itself and the resources found on and below it. Coffee and tea plantations belonging to monopolies cover huge tracts of land in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and other states. Oil and gas monopolies have secured exclusive exploration rights from the government

in land and sea. The metal and mining monopolies own mineral rights to vast tracts of land. In the interest of the monopolies, the government is amending the Land Acquisition Act to make it easier for peasants and tribal peoples to be expropriated whenever their land is needed by capitalist monopolies.

The handful of powerful monopoly groups is interconnected with thousands of corporations across the length and breadth of the country. With increasing concentration, the tendency to the liquidation of small and medium-scale capitalist enterprises becomes more widespread and pronounced, further strengthening the process of concentration and monopoly. "This transformation of competition into monopoly is one of the most important phenomena, if not the most important, in the economy of present-day capitalism"<sup>3</sup>, said Lenin.

There is no level playing field as far as small and medium-scale enterprises are concerned. Small and medium-sized enterprises are directly dependent on the monopolies. They receive orders from the monopolies and work for them; they rely on the monopolies for raw materials, technology and credit. They have no choice except to become appendages of the monopolies or be pushed out of the market place.

Corporations in India have been growing not merely by diversifying and reinvesting their surpluses, but also through take overs and mergers. In a period of crisis, when many medium-sized and sometimes even big enterprises become bankrupt, mergers and take overs become greater both in number and size, immensely accelerating the process of concentration. In 1991, the Indian Government

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<sup>3</sup> V.I.Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 22, p.237 (Alb. ed.).

removed many of the hurdles in the way of take overs through the Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices (Amendment) Act. The need for prior approval of the Central Government for mergers and acquisitions was abolished. The availability of cheaper funds from Euro-issues further spurred this activity. During 1988-92, as many as 121 mergers and acquisitions occurred. Since then, they have been growing at an even faster pace.

The MRTP amendment has further accelerated the process of concentration of production and capital through mergers and take overs. The victims of concentration are not just small and medium enterprises, but even big financial enterprises and groups. As a result of the insatiable appetite of the monopolies for the maximum rate of profit and the extreme sharpening of competition among them, this process is assuming colossal proportions.

Some recent examples have been the merger of Brooke Bond, Lipton and Ponds with the consumer products giant Hindustan Lever which in turn is controlled by the Anglo-Dutch Unilever Group; the take over bid of Raasi Cements by the cement monopoly in south India, India Cements; attempts to take over several smaller hotels by the Tata group, Indian Hotels; and the attempt to take over Shree Digvijay cement by the A V Birla group. Other examples are the take over of Ashok Leyland and Ennore Foundries in Chennai by the Hinduja group and the take over of Ceat Tyres, Herdillia Chemicals and Polychem in Calcutta by the Goenkas.

Many more examples can be given to illustrate the magnitude of this process. Most often these mergers and take overs are effected after prolonged and bitter fights in the boardrooms, "hostile" take overs by buying shares of the victim company surreptitiously and through agents,

no-holds-barred price wars, and corporate spying. In 1995, the Torrent Group made an open offer for Ahmedabad Electricity Company (AEC). Initially, the take over of AEC appeared a mere formality until Bombay Dyeing made an unprecedented competitive bid. It finally lost out but not before making the take over twice as costly for Torrent. The Central State is constantly pressed into action to redraw rules and regulations regarding mergers and take overs so that severe dog fights between corporations can be prevented. It is also called upon frequently to scuttle "hostile" take overs of Indian controlled enterprises by foreign multinationals.

The Indian state has also removed the restrictions on government controlled banks and financial institutions to fund take overs. The Khaitans could take a short-term loan from the public financial institutions and American Express to buy off Union Carbide, the killer company in Bhopal. Asset and share swaps are also becoming common. Manu Chhabria, the liquor baron, for example, sold off Tezapore Tea and used part of the proceeds to take over half a dozen breweries. Hindustan Lever Ltd (HLL) took over the Tata-owned Tata Oil Mill Company (TOMCO) by offering two HLL shares for every 15 TOMCO shares that shareholders held.

Government-owned financial institutions are playing an increasingly proactive role on behalf of the monopolies to fund take overs. In India, a good part of the shares of giant enterprises are in the hands of state-owned financial institutions, which place their nominees on the board of directors of these companies and favour this or that group. Often, the might of these financial institutions is used by the big bourgeoisie in India to ward off threats of take over or control of management by foreign multinationals over their partly-owned Indian joint ventures or subsidiaries. Such is

the case of the attempt of British American Tobacco (BAT) to gain managerial control over its subsidiary Indian Tobacco Company (ITC), or the on-going feud of the Suzuki Motor Corporation of Japan with its partner, the Indian government, over acquiring managerial control of the automobile monopoly, Maruti Suzuki.

There is nothing patriotic in the feuds among the monopolies. There are many cases where the Indian partners or the financial institutions have openly favoured the buy-out or acquisition of managerial control of their Indian ventures by foreign monopolies. Recent examples include the mutually agreed pulling out of the DCM group from their joint venture with the Daewoo Corporation of South Korea after sufficient compensation, the take over of the Indian-controlled beverage monopoly Parle Ltd. by Coca Cola, of Kwality Ice Cream by Brooke Bond, etc.

All these illustrate the fact that the concentration of production and capital in the hands of a few giant enterprises in no way leads to stability, to a lessening of the dog-eat-dog contradictions of capitalism, but rather intensifies these contradictions. The current crisis of capitalism has further aggravated inter-monopoly contradictions.

Several of the country's top profit-making firms pay little or no tax. The list includes several private and public sector monopolies such as SAIL, Reliance Industries, SBI and TISCO. Reliance never paid corporate tax for two decades. Several other companies paid very little tax. For example, ONGC paid only Rs. 13.72 crore as corporation tax on a profit of Rs. 2,386 crores in 1994-95, less than 1% of its profit. While corporate tax rates amounted to 45% in 1994-95, due to various concessions and tax holidays given to big capitalists, the average tax incidence

for a sample group of 1730 companies was only 14.5%.<sup>4</sup> After popular uproar, the central government introduced a Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) in 1996.

Agriculture, one of the most important sectors of the economy, is also characterised by the growing concentration of capital—of land, of access to water, electric power, bank credit and other inputs, as well as access to markets to sell the output. The process of concentration has been accelerating ever since the Green Revolution. With the recent changes in the land ceiling acts and lifting of restrictions on corporate ownership of agricultural land in several states, concentration and monopoly is poised to increase to a higher level.

The drive towards cash crops at the expense of coarse cereals and pulses has served to intensify and exacerbate the deep crisis in Indian agriculture. The crisis is seen in the mass impoverishment of the peasantry and their sub-human existence in various parts of the country, the severely skewed development between states and between districts within states, the instability and unending fluctuations in prices of agricultural commodities manipulated by multinational food processing companies, grain trading middlemen and commodity exporters. The crisis is also seen in the relentless destruction of prime agricultural land for construction by land speculators and real estate agents.

The farm machinery and equipment monopolies further exacerbate the plight of small and medium farmers, by imposing high monopoly prices on the farmers. The entry of large food processing and retailing monopolies such as

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<sup>4</sup> As reported by CMIE, reproduced in *Business Today*, Dec. 22, 1995-Jan. 6, 1996

Pepsi Foods, Cargill, etc., and the increasing domination of the grain trade by big exporters will further depress farm-gate prices of grains, while bringing super profits for the monopolies through soaring retail food prices.

The operation of the laws of monopoly capitalism is such that it constantly gives rise to and constantly destroys a large and increasing number of small-scale and medium-scale units. In the case of manufactured exports, for instance, thousands of small and medium enterprises supply to the big trading monopolies and when prices crash on the world market, the monopoly trading houses simply change their commodity mix, while the small producers go bankrupt. In agriculture, export orientation and the increasing penetration of monopolies have accelerated the ruin of the peasantry.

The spate of suicides by peasants in Bidar district of Karnataka, the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh, the Vidharbha region of Maharashtra, Bundelkhand in Uttar Pradesh, as well as in Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana in recent months, constitute a damning indictment of the monopoly capitalist system. These states include those touted as frontrunners in capitalist development in agriculture, showing what capitalism has in store for the vast majority of peasants. The suicides have been mainly due to the failure of *toor dal* and cotton crops and the tightening of the noose by the local moneylenders to whom the peasants had to go because of their inability to access institutional credit. The suicides were committed by small farmers who switched over to cash crops without having access to modern inputs, credit and marketing clout.

In response to such devastating conditions, the budget for 1998-99 has announced further measures to spur the growth of capitalism in agriculture. Controls are being

reviewed for export of agricultural products; futures trading is to be introduced in edible oil seeds, and a national agricultural policy is to be announced to address constraints of capitalist farmers and traders relating to production, marketing and movement of agricultural commodities. Inviting more private investments, Finance Minister Sinha said that the farmers should “reap the benefits of access to wider global markets”. It is obvious that he did not have the masses of India’s peasants and agricultural labourers in mind.

### Finance Capital

The concentration of capital in India is highest in the financial sector, where a handful of banks control the bulk of the huge financial resources of the country. The majority of big banks are owned by the central government, while there are a few foreign banks with huge global operations, such as Citibank, Bank of America and Hongkong Bank, that also operate and have been expanding in the Indian market.

Market oriented reform of the financial and banking sector is one question on which there still is contradiction and conflict between the Indian and international bourgeoisie. The Indian big bourgeoisie does not want to fully give up its control over the financial resources of the country and let foreign capital take over. Central government ownership and control of the majority of banks remains intact, while various other liberalisation measures have been taken including the deregulation of interest rates.

International financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, meanwhile, continue to push the idea that India cannot become globally competitive without efficient private banks and



that hence the public sector banks ought to be privatised. The World Bank has given a credit of \$150 million to six public sector banks—Allahabad Bank, Syndicate Bank, Indian Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Dena Bank, Bank of India—to attain international standards in banking operations and systems. However, the Indian State did not agree to dilute its share holding in these banks as one of the loan conditionalities. The Indian monopoly bourgeoisie prefers a gradual process of privatisation, where the central government will continue to own the majority of shares for many years to come.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central bank exercising enormous powers over finance capital. The commercial banking system in India consists of nearly 300 scheduled banks and four non-scheduled banks. Of the scheduled banks, most are in the state sector—about 30 regular commercial banks and 200 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)—accounting for over 80% of total banking assets. Among these banks, the State Bank of India is the largest with 8,925 branches in 1997-98, deposits of Rs. 131,000 crores and advances of Rs. 74,000 crores.

The rapid growth of bank assets can be seen from the fact that in 1969, before the nationalisation of commercial banks, total deposits were Rs. 4,600 crores, which grew to Rs. 4,33,800 crores by March 1996—an increase of more than 90 times. Bank deposits as a percentage of GDP has grown from 15% to 52% between 1969 and 1994. Recent estimates show that 38 commercial banks increased their deposits from Rs. 393,423 crores in 1996-97 to Rs. 472,964 crores in 1997-98, an increase of 20.2 per cent.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Monthly Review of the Indian Economy, CMIE, June 1998.

The biggest of the Indian Banks, such as State Bank of India, are considered large even by international standards. They have opened branches abroad to mobilise deposits from non-resident Indians to arrange loans for big corporations and handle their export financing and formalities at the receiving end. As of March 31, 1994, more than 100 branches of nine Indian commercial banks were operating in foreign countries. These branches are spread over a number of countries and located in major centres like London, New York, Paris, Tokyo, Singapore and Bahrain.

Since 1992, the central government has been implementing some of the key recommendations of the Narasimham Committee on the Financial System, which are intended to further orient the banking system towards maximum profits. The Committee recommended reduced barriers to entry of private sector banks, liberalisation of branching regulations (which will enable public sector banks to close down "unviable" branches and merge smaller branches with larger ones), partial deregulation of interest rates on deposits and advances (which will enable such banks to take advantage of speculative trends in money markets) and allowing public sector banks to raise money by selling their shares in the market.

Before the reforms, the Indian big bourgeoisie did not mind relatively low rates of profit in the government-owned banking sector, as long as the banks facilitated the reaping of maximum profits by the monopolies elsewhere. The state-owned banks were required to lend a large proportion of their assets to the Central Government at less than market rate of interest. They were also required to lend a minimum quota to the priority sectors of agriculture and small-scale industry. Such regulation was aimed at ensuring a captive source of cheap finance for the central government, as well as cheap financing in

support of the Green Revolution. The main aim of the market reforms that are currently being implemented is to orient the banking sector towards the maximum rate of profit through lending and investment activities. The result is a tremendous squeeze on small and medium-scale producers in industry and agriculture. This is leading to the further concentration of resources in the hands of the big monopolies who enjoy the highest rates of profit, and to the further strengthening of the position of parasitic finance capital in the economy.

An analysis of several indicators shows that due to these market oriented reforms, the oligopolistic dominance of public sector banks has actually increased.<sup>6</sup> The motive of maximum profit has been made the sole criterion in the banking sector, driving peasants and other small producers further into the clutches of the "informal" sector, i.e. money lending sharks. A measure of this drive for super profits can be seen in the reduction of priority sector advances from 40% in 1995 to 29% in 1996.

A high level Committee on Indebtedness among farmers of Punjab and Haryana, constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture, reported in February 1998 that the ongoing financial sector reforms have led to further impoverishment of small farmers. Banks and financial institutions are more willing to advance long-term loans for tractors, pump sets, etc., which serve a small percentage of capitalist farmers. Small and marginal farmers are left to depend on *arthias* or the local moneylenders.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> India Development Report 1997, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Oxford University Press, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> It is estimated that against a total credit requirement of farmers in Punjab of nearly Rs. 4000 crores in 1996-97, the loans disbursed by official credit institutions was only around Rs. 1500 crores, leaving a gap of over 60 per cent.

While credit for the majority of borrowers is being tightened, a good part of the assets of state-owned banks is siphoned off by big capitalist companies and written off as “non-performing” assets. Recently, the central government has used money raised from the public to write off these bad debts so as to improve the balance sheets of these banks. In 1993-94, the average percentage of non-performing assets for 27 public sector banks was estimated at 22%.

The high level of concentration in the financial sector is also reflected in the insurance sector. The insurance business, closely held by the Indian State till now, is attracting the attention of the global monopolies because of its high deposit mobilisation base. The monopoly state-owned insurance companies—the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and the General Insurance Corporation (GIC) and their subsidiaries—have enormously increased their asset base over the years and compete with banks and financial institutions. The number of insurance policies with LIC rose from 5.67 crores in 1992-93 to 7.78 crores in 1997-98, and the sum assured from Rs. 178,120 crores to Rs. 344,619 crores (\$90 billion).<sup>8</sup> With the capital that they accumulate through plundering the people in the name of security, these insurance companies advance enormous amounts of money to the industrial monopolies. In this way, they are merged and interlocked with the industrial and banking monopolies and are an organic constituent of finance capital.

The insatiable thirst of the monopoly bourgeoisie for the maximum rate of profit forces it to turn every source of money into capital. Pension funds, provident funds, post office savings and national savings scheme funds are

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<sup>8</sup> Monthly Review of Indian Economy, CMIE, June 1998.

used by the state of the big bourgeoisie to bridge its deficits. Plans are on the anvil to throw open the management of even these funds to private monopolies and remove any restrictions on their end use so that the financial oligarchy can derive maximum profits from people's savings. In 1995, the Rao government forcibly converted monies in the provident fund accounts of workers into a "family pension scheme" which reduced the workers' retirement benefits while increasing the government's access to such funds.

Lenin explained that "Finance capital concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of the monopolies."<sup>9</sup>

Stock market reforms have opened the way for corporations to mobilise a huge amount of capital from small investors through primary issues. A whole system of stock exchanges, brokers and issue managers mobilise cheap money for the monopolies through this route. No interest needs to be paid on this money by the monopolies and neither are there any compulsions to pay dividends to stock holders. The growth of many big monopolies such as Reliance, Essar, banks and oil monopolies has been fuelled by these equity investments in this decade.

The financial oligarchy has been increasingly manipulating the financial markets in its greed to accumulate more and more finance capital. According to CMIE, between 1990 and 1996, the amount of assets intermediated by banks

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<sup>9</sup> V.I.Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism", Collected Works, Volume XXII, p.232.

increased from Rs. 1,670 crores to Rs. 4,223 crores while the assets intermediated by the stock markets grew at a much more rapid rate from Rs. 554 crores to Rs. 4,710 crores, overtaking that of the banks. The secondary capital market, where shares are bought and sold, has been turned into a fertile ground for mutual fund monopolies and big capitalists to make windfall profits through speculation. Thousands of individual small investors have lost their life's savings in the treacherous share markets that give the illusion to the shareholder that he is a part owner of a company. The currency and stock market crises that are raging throughout the world have driven out many of the smaller operators and strengthened the hold of the biggest monopolies.

The entire economic life of the country is controlled by the financial oligarchy, consisting of a few thousand individuals who control the largest corporations in the country. These individuals sit on the board of directors of the largest corporations—the banks and financial institutions, manufacturing and trading companies. Each individual sits on the board of not one but several monopolies and through their network of subsidiaries, branches, dealers and component suppliers, control thousands of other big, medium and small companies in every sector of the economy. All the banks and financial institutions have their representatives in the board of directors of the largest monopolies of which they are part owners, and vice versa.

Besides giving loans to big corporations, banks and financial institutions, both Indian and foreign, own a significant percentage of shares. They have so much clout in some corporations that they can take away managerial control from one Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and entrust it to another, to maximise profits. At the same time the big corporations, financial and non-financial, have direct links

with the central and state governments. They hire retired high-ranking government officials to their board of directors. The financial oligarchy also has direct links with the World Bank, IMF and other international financial agencies. Trained personnel from such institutions are inducted into the higher echelons of the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India.

The above facts fully confirm Lenin's point that "At the same time a personal link-up, so to speak, is established between the banks and the biggest industrial and commercial enterprises, the merging of one with another through the acquisition of shares, through the appointment of bank directors to the Supervisory Boards (or Board of Directors) of industrial and commercial enterprises, and vice versa."<sup>10</sup>

The financial oligarchy has subordinated the state apparatus and has transformed it into a tool in its hands to serve its own interests. Its hand lies behind the dismissal and appointment of governments; it dictates the internal and external policy of the country and backs the most archaic and reactionary forces that defend the capitalist order.

Considering that a majority of the Indian people eke out a bare existence and are growing poorer, banks in India play a vital role for the financial oligarchy in protecting their consumer base from total extinction. The availability of consumer credit is the very foundation of the "consumer society" of the bourgeoisie. The concept of credit cards and selling of consumer goods on term payment, especially durable consumer items, has been increasing rapidly in

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p. 220.

recent years. The provision of such credit ensures the industrial monopolies a growing market for their products. At the same time, the credit companies such as the banks, credit enterprises such as Countrywide and credit card monopolies such as Citibank and Standard Chartered make colossal profits from the high interest rates charged, while the debtors are bound hand and foot to the creditors and capitalists. Now credit cards are being issued in the rural areas as well.

In addition, the financial oligarchy has extended its tentacles through the non-banking finance companies, chit funds and micro-credit institutions run by governmental and non-governmental agencies. Some of these are monopolies in their own right, such as Sundaram Finance, Peerless and Sahara. Others operate at the town or village level, to convert the savings of the working people into finance capital. By extending credit and charging huge rates of interest they also serve to make inroads for capitalism into the remotest of villages. The vanishing of fly-by-night operators and the bankruptcy of these enterprises, taking with them the entire life's savings of the people, are daily happenings in India.

### **Export and Import of Capital**

J.V. Stalin characterised the main features of the fundamental economic law of present-day monopoly capitalism as "the securing of the maximum capitalist profit through the exploitation, ruin and impoverishment of the majority of the population of the given country, through the enslavement and the systematic robbery of the peoples of other countries, especially backward countries, and, lastly, through wars and militarisation of the national economy, which are utilised for the obtaining of the



highest profits.”<sup>11</sup> These are precisely the features of Indian capitalism as well.

At the head of the second most populous country of the world, rich in natural resources and human potential, the Indian bourgeoisie has always been an imperialistic bourgeoisie with expansionist ambitions and dreams. With the collapse of the bipolar division of the world and the realignments that are taking place to redivide the world in this period, the Indian bourgeoisie is impatient to fulfill its ambition of becoming one of the big powers of the world. In order to realise such an ambition, enormous amounts of capital investments and latest international technology are required to modernise the economic and military infrastructure in India. The Indian bourgeoisie has decided that in order to realise its own global ambitions, it has to loosen the control over imports of capital and of commodities, and give greater space to foreign capital in the joint plunder of India, in return for the required capital and technology.

Restrictions and regulations on imports of various commodities and on foreign investment served the big capitalists very well in the past, to maintain their monopoly position in the Indian market (which still continues in the case of consumer goods). In 1991, the import controls were liberalised to a great degree, opening the country's doors to foreign capital and allowing imported machinery and intermediate goods to flow more freely into the Indian market. In its June 1998 Budget, the BJP has slightly closed the sluice gates in the name of providing a “level playing field” for Indian capitalists in their competition and collaboration with foreign companies. At the same time,

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<sup>11</sup> J.V. Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR.

they have also promised to accelerate the privatisation of several profitable state owned monopolies and open up the urban land market for private monopolies.

The Indian bourgeoisie, weaned by colonialism and raised in its cradle, had long ago made peace with foreign capital. Even in Nehru's model of the "socialistic pattern of society", foreign capital was allowed to make inroads into several sectors of the economy, plunder the resources and labour of the Indian people and repatriate huge profits. At the same time, the big bourgeoisie used the intervention of the Central State to create a captive home market for its products and strengthen itself before it was prepared to take on the foreign multinationals.

The slogan of "*swadeshi*" has been the preferred slogan of the Indian bourgeoisie for a long time. It had some revolutionary potential at the beginning of this century during the anti-colonial struggle. As the bourgeoisie perfected its relations of collaboration with the colonial power and competition with foreign capital, with the Congress Party as its political mascot, the "*swadeshi*" slogan was revived on and off to extract concessions from the British colonialists for Indian capital. Since 1947, the "*swadeshi*" slogan has been used to protect and strengthen the interests of the big bourgeoisie while giving it an anti-imperialist veneer. The party in power today, the BJP, is now trying to revive this slogan, again in the interests of the big bourgeoisie.

Using its domestic market as a springboard, the Indian big bourgeoisie is pursuing its plan of capturing markets outside the country. Some large Indian business groups such as the Mittal group, United Phosphorus and Essel Packaging have taken over firms abroad, to strengthen their presence in their respective areas of activity. The

Kumaramangalam Birla group recently bought out a pulp manufacturing company in Canada and formed a joint venture out of it. The acquisition, which cost around \$ 24.3 million for the Indian promoters, was part of the group's strategy to strengthen the profit making viscose fibre segment of Grasim. This is because Grasim, which has an annual requirement of more than 2.5 lakh tonnes of pulp to produce viscose, will be comfortably placed on the raw materials front, as a result of the cheaper import of pulp which it has now started making from the Canadian joint venture.<sup>12</sup>

While Indian capitalism is developing its capacity to export capital to others, it remains a net importer of capital as the inflow of foreign capital into India is much larger than the reverse flow, i.e., from India to other countries. The inflow of capital takes place in several forms including direct investments, portfolio investment, long-term and short-term loans to government and private companies, etc.

A study of 1,755 listed companies<sup>13</sup> indicated that as of the end of 1995, foreign companies held 13 per cent of the equity, Indian promoters held 35 per cent and financial institutions held 21 per cent. The remaining 31 per cent was held by individual shareholders as well as enterprises owning shares in other companies over which they had no managerial control. In 79 of the 1,755 listed companies, foreign firms had majority control. In another 157 companies, they held a shareholding between 25-50 per cent. Thus foreign firms had a dominant shareholding in about 5 per cent of the sample companies. Another study of the top 1,000 Indian companies<sup>14</sup> found

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<sup>12</sup> The Economic Times, 20 July – 26 July, Internet Edition.

<sup>13</sup> The Economic Times, April 4, 1996

<sup>14</sup> Business Standard: Top 1000 listed companies in India, January 1996.

that 72 of them could be classified as foreign controlled. Of these there were 53 subsidiaries with foreign holding of 51 per cent or more. The foreign firms had a market share in sales of about nine per cent, slightly higher than their proportion in numbers. And these proportions have risen further in recent years.

While multinationals such as Coca Cola and IBM have made their re-entry in India, new foreign monopolies have been invading the Indian soil with each passing year. At the same time, a few foreign corporations have also lost ground to Indian monopolies. Foreign tyre multinationals such as Dunlop and Ceat have sold out to the Goenka group. Indian Aluminium, which was once the sole monopoly in aluminium production, has lost its market share to other Indian monopolies. Considerable inroads have been made by the Indian bourgeoisie into the once foreign dominated drugs and pharmaceuticals sector, with Ranbaxy and Reddy's Lab being prime examples.

Foreign multinationals have wrested new markets from Indian monopolies in the white goods sector, beverages, soaps, automobile, and food products. In the 4-wheeler automobile sector, foreign monopolies such as Daewoo, Ford, Hyundai, Honda, General Motors, Fiat and others control a huge market share. The biggest monopoly in this sector, Maruti Suzuki, is jointly owned by Suzuki Corporation of Japan and the Indian government. Vespa of Italy made inroads into the 2-wheeler market through a collaboration with the Singhanias, who are now attempting to take over total control from the foreign monopoly. In this same sector, the south Indian monopoly TVS has a joint venture with Suzuki and the Hero group with Honda, both Japanese multinationals. Contention and collusion between the Indian and foreign monopolies have been increasing over who should get what share

**Private Capital Flows into India (in US \$ million)**

	Foreign direct investment	Portfolio investment
1991-2	129	4
1992-3	315	242
1993-4	586	3649
1994-5	1343	3579
1995-6	2133	2661
1996-7	2714	3310

*Source: Economic Survey, 1997-98*

in the profits accumulated by sucking the blood of Indian toilers.

Direct foreign investments have been increasing particularly rapidly in this decade and the Indian state has been offering special concessions in certain sectors such as infrastructure. With more foreign capital entering India, domination of foreign capital in the power, telecom and automobile sectors is expected to increase, particularly in what the Indian bourgeoisie views as priority sectors for its growth. The recent US sanctions against the Indian state in the wake of its nuclear explosions is an arm-twisting measure to extract further concessions for foreign capital.

All these facts show that the Indian bourgeoisie is the base for the foreign penetration and domination of India in the political and economic sphere. It has compromised on defending national sovereignty and independence, by accepting all the restrictions and limitations which the penetration of foreign capital entails, always putting its own narrow class interests above the national interest. Indian capitalism, a tool created by British colonial rule without which the British would not have survived in India even for a day, has retained all the features of colonialism and imperialism. It is the same in terms of its content as

**Sector-wise Break-down of Foreign Direct Investment,  
August 1991-July 1996**

Major sectors	Amount (Rs. bn)	%
Infrastructure: roads, ports, telecom, energy, fuels	375.20	48.0
Basic engineering industries, metals, capital goods, electricals, chemicals and fertiliser	138.90	17.8
Food and agro (incl. cut flowers)	62.33	8.0
Consultancy: technical and marketing, and banking and non-banking services	54.60	7.0
Automobile and other transport	37.76	4.8
Tourism	19.47	2.5
Textiles and garments	16.25	2.1
Software	12.18	1.6
Others	64.66	8.2
Total	781.35	100.0

*Source: SIA newsletter*

was left behind by the British colonialists in 1947. The land, labour and resources of the Indian people, of the different regions of India, are considered to be the private property of those who were created by British colonialism.

Along with the big bourgeoisie, the regional bourgeoisie has also become more and more impatient to invite foreign capital into its region and, with the full approval and co-ordination of the former, further intensifies the plunder of the resources in its region. This regional bourgeoisie has been inviting both official aid from the World Bank and other financial institutions as well as foreign direct investments from foreign monopolies. Thus, the space for imperialist domination in India is being increased with dire consequences for the people.

The capitalists of Andhra Pradesh are a clear example.

They are now jubilant following the approval by the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank of the multi-sectoral Andhra Pradesh Economic Restructuring Loan worth over \$500 million. Along with other loans and credits that are in the pipeline from the World Bank, the Government of Andhra Pradesh is expected to receive some \$2 billion (Rs 8500 crores) over the next few years. Similarly, in July, the World Bank promised to give Rs. 1000 crores to the Haryana government as a second instalment for restructuring and privatising the power sector. Over the past few years, the World Bank has been realigning its lending strategy in India to focus on selected "reform oriented" states.

Chief Ministers of various other states such as West Bengal, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, etc., have been aggressively shopping for foreign capital and using all the connections they have with finance capital abroad. A strategy they have been adopting is to invite non-resident Indians abroad, belonging to their respective nationalities, to tie up joint ventures with foreign multinationals and direct the investments into their states.

The Tamil Nadu government has been using its links with Tamilians in Singapore and Malaysia and other South-East Asian countries to interest the capitalists there in investing in Tamil Nadu. The recent huge investments by the Korean automobile giant Hyundai and the US automobile monopoly Ford, have been tied up directly by the Tamil Nadu government. This has been done at the behest of the automobile accessory monopolies in Tamil Nadu such as the TVS group and the Rane group who control the greatest market share in this sector in the country. Similarly, the Karnataka government has been vigorously pushing for the Tata-Singapore Airlines project to build a mammoth

international terminal at Bangalore, which will benefit the construction industrialists there.

These phenomena reflect the growing importance of the regional bourgeoisie in various regions as the base for increasing imperialist penetration. The big bourgeoisie and the regional bourgeoisie have been contending and colluding in their drive to align with foreign capital in order to increase their profits. In this contradiction between the big bourgeoisie that controls the Central State and the regional bourgeoisie that controls this or that state government, it cannot be assumed that the regional bourgeoisie is more progressive or democratic or anti-imperialist or anti-feudal. Both sides can be equally reactionary.

The imperialists do not invest even a single dollar without first ensuring maximum profits on their investments. Each year foreign capital extracts millions of rupees as interest and dividends from its investments in India. At the same time Indian monopolies have also been increasing their investments abroad and exploiting the working people of other countries. The table on Investment Income gives details of profits and interest earned by Indian capital abroad, alongside the interest and profits paid to foreign capital. The net outflow in this decade has been consistently more than \$3 billion every year. This net outflow is bound to increase because the more the Indian big bourgeoisie steps up its own imperialist drive, the more intense does the stranglehold of imperialist finance capital on India become.

The outflow of investment income includes the enormous amount of interest on foreign debt. Imperialist powers resort to the practice of giving credits in order to disguise the export of capital from their countries. In fact, this is even disguised further as multilateral aid from financial



## Investment Income (US \$ million)

Year	Inflow	Outflow	Net outflow
1990-91	368	4120	-3752
1994-95	886	4317	-3431
1995-96	1429	4634	-3205
1996-97	1073	4323	-3250

*Source: Reserve Bank of India, Monthly Bulletin, March 1998*

institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, Asian Development Bank and so on. Through these so-called credits or aid, the big capitalist enterprises and the imperialist states bring great pressure to bear on the recipient governments, to make changes to their laws and policies to permit freer flow of capital and commodities, negating any consideration of sovereignty.

As is well known, the "aid" to the under-developed countries actually originates from the plunder of the wealth of these countries, as well as from the exploitation of the working masses of the developed countries. This aid only fattens the wealthy of the poor countries. So, when US imperialism gives credit either directly or through the World Bank, the source of this credit is actually the blood and sweat of both the American people and other peoples. On the other hand, these credits which are provided allegedly to uplift the poor in the so-called third world, actually serve the bourgeois classes which rule these countries, and those of the elite who have allied with the ruling classes.

The aid that the Indian government has received so far is exactly of this nature and has fattened the Indian bourgeoisie. By accepting these credits, the Indian bourgeoisie has actually strengthened the imperialist chain around the necks of our people. According to the Economic

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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Survey, external debt amounted to Rs. 1,50,765 crores in March 1998, an average of over Rs. 1500 on every Indian. India is the eighth largest debtor country in the world. Most of the new debts that India is raising are used to pay the principal and interest of old loans, leaving very little for investment. According to the annual report of the World Bank, between 1992 and 1997, aid flow to India was negative by an amount of \$249 million, meaning that amortisation and interest payments made to the World Bank were more than new loan flows.

Indian private and public sector monopolies have also been raising loans from foreign markets through external commercial borrowings. The recent sale of Resurgent India Bonds by the State Bank of India at rates of interest up to two per cent more than prevailing interest rates in the US and Germany will increase the debt burden by another \$4 billion and consequently the burden of interest payments. Another form of foreign finance capital entering India is portfolio investment, that is, investments in stocks and shares of Indian companies for immediate or long-term speculative gains.

The high levels and ever growing share of foreign finance capital in India—in the form of official “aid”, corporate debt, direct foreign investment and portfolio investment—is an

### Top Foreign Financial Institutions in India

	Investment (in \$ billion)
Capital International	1.8
Morgan Stanley	1.5
Jardine Fleming	0.8
Schroders	0.6
Templeton	0.5

*Source: The Economic Times, Dec. 8, 1997*

indicator of the extent of domination of the Indian economy by international finance capital. This all-sided domination has sharpened the national question in this country, the striving of the people to defend their sovereignty and avert imperialist aggression and the danger of war.

In the light of the increasing domination of the Indian economy by international finance capital, and in the light of the active pursuit of its imperialist ambitions by the Indian bourgeoisie, it is the proletariat which has to take up the banner of the nation, consistent with its own class interests and aspiration of transforming capitalism into socialism through the revolution. Thus the question of national, economic and political sovereignty and independence, i.e., the national question, is ultimately a class question. What is being revealed and needs to be driven home to all is the thoroughly reactionary, anti-people, anti-worker, anti-national character of the bourgeoisie as a class, in India and internationally. Only the working class, by constituting itself as the nation in alliance with the peasantry, can lead the way to settle this question in favour of the toiling masses and in favour of opening the door to social progress.

## **Stage of Revolution**

In objective terms, the door to the progress of Indian society cannot be opened without overthrowing the capitalist system. The agrarian problem cannot be solved without getting rid of capitalism from the base of Indian society. The increasing imperialist penetration of India cannot be halted or reversed without uprooting capitalism from the soil of India, nor can the remnants of feudalism and colonialism be eliminated, such as the hated caste order and the system of elite accommodation through privilege distribution. In other words, taking the anti-colonial struggle

to its logical conclusion means to put an end to capitalism and commence the construction of socialism through the proletarian revolution.

Production has become highly socialised and is becoming increasingly globalised every day. The technical-scientific revolution, especially with respect to information and computer technology, has enormously accelerated the pace of flow of finance capital by the hour and by the minute, to wherever it sees the best prospects for maximum profits. The potential leap in the productive powers of human labour, which the information revolution makes possible, is blocked by the relations of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, leading to massive destruction of the productive forces. The capacity of human society is being forced to adjust painfully downwards to suit the interests and claims of one small minority—the financial oligarchies of the dominant powers in the world. There is no clearer proof that capitalism cannot provide for society and hence needs to be overthrown in order to open the door to social progress. Thus, the stage of revolution is established mainly on the basis of studying the internal situation within the context of the international situation.

There are a large number of tasks of a democratic and anti-imperialist character that have to be carried out at the initial stage of the Indian revolution. Putting an end to poverty is an urgent task that brooks no delay. Putting an end to caste discrimination and oppression is another. So is the elimination of gender-based discrimination and oppression. In order to accomplish such tasks, the enslavement of Indian labour has to be put to an end. The working class has to lead the class struggle because the working class cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the masses of peasants, women and youth from all forms of oppression, new and old. The weight of

monopoly capitalism—alongside the perpetuation of feudal and colonial oppression and increasing imperialist penetration—has to be lifted from the shoulders of the women of India, from the backs of our youth, and of the working men in the towns and villages.

The objective laws of development of monopoly capitalism and the efforts of the big bourgeoisie to expand the space for the monopolies are leading to the intensification of all the class contradictions in Indian society. The concentration of capital and the anti-social offensive in the name of liberalisation and privatisation are leading to the further aggravation of the contradiction between capital and labour, between the exploiters and the exploited of town and countryside. Contradictions are also being accentuated between the capitalist monopolies, on the one hand, and the regional bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie on the other hand, as well as between the monopolies and the peasantry. So are the contradictions between imperialism and the reactionary bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the oppressed nations, nationalities and tribal peoples on the other hand. And finally, contradictions are intensifying among the different imperialist powers and monopoly groups. The combined result is the perennial political crisis and the increasing discontent among ever broader sections of the population.

What the crisis of Indian and global capitalism reveals, above everything else, is the necessity and possibility for the revolution. The transition from capitalism to socialism and communism is not merely a future prospect for the Indian working class. It is a problem that the working class must take up for solution. The challenge facing Indian communists is to provide the leadership to the class so that it takes up and fulfils its historic responsibility to lift Indian

society out of the crisis, by playing its role as the grave-digger of capitalism.

### Tactics in the Period of Retreat

While the strategic aim of the working class movement is determined by the stage of revolution, tactics of the proletarian class struggle depend on the ebb and flow of the movement. Tactics that may have served to advance towards the strategic aim during a period when the revolutionary movement was in flow will no longer serve the purpose today, when the revolution is in a period of retreat on the world scale. Such tactics need to be adopted that will effectively contest the claims of the bourgeoisie and block the anti-social offensive, enabling the political unity of the middle strata with the working class and the isolation of the monopoly bourgeoisie, as a prelude to its defeat.

With respect to the economic form of class struggle, communists have to contest the claim of the bourgeoisie that there is no alternative to capitalism and market oriented reforms, except to try and give a "human face" to this inhuman system through social-democratic government policy. With the strategic aim of overthrowing capitalism and the entire colonial legacy, the working class wages the immediate struggle against the attacks on the livelihood of the people by insisting that society must fulfill the claims of all its members. The economy must ensure *sukh* (prosperity) and *suraksha* (protection) for all! This is the slogan of the proletarian class struggle on the economic front today.

The working class insists, as a matter of principle, that every member of society has rights by virtue of being human. Such rights include the right to livelihood, to

education, health care and culture. Such rights are inviolable. From this principle it follows that it is the duty and obligation of society to ensure prosperity and protection for all its members. By upholding and defending this principle, the working class and communist movement must push forward the claims of the vast majority of toilers as the highest priority to be addressed on an immediate basis, on an emergency footing.

The easiest way of establishing whether any economic system, i.e., mode of production and its stage of development, are spurring the productive forces or retarding them, is to measure the extent to which that society satisfies the claims of its members. In India, Prime Minister Vajpayee openly declares that he is satisfying the claims of the monopoly capitalists and international capital. The claims of the workers, peasants, teachers, nurses and other toiling masses are suppressed by the batons of the police and armed forces. Finance Minister Sinha, presenting the first Union Budget of the BJP-led government, announced special measures to protect the monopolies in various sectors that were facing a decline in profit margins. While handing out favours to the monopoly bourgeoisie, he preached "fiscal restraint" as far as the workers, peasants and middle strata are concerned. This "fiscal restraint" is nothing but the arrogation by the big bourgeoisie of what does not belong to it, namely the right to make claims on society. This is a right that belongs to every member of society, which the monopoly bourgeoisie has arrogated to itself.

Fiscal restraint means to de-recognise the claims that people have on society. The bourgeoisie claims that this is necessary in order to deal with the economic problems. But how can a society throw millions of its own members into the depths of poverty and sub-human existence, drive

several of them to commit suicide, all in the name of solving the problems of the economy? The destruction of the productive forces of society and the super-exploitation of labour are being presented as the condition for the progress of society!

The working class and communist movement cannot afford to go on the defensive on the question of the economy. The anti-social offensive of the bourgeoisie can and must be combated by boldly putting forward the alternative orientation of the economy—of fulfilling the claims of all its members—and fighting for an immediate emergency program consistent with that orientation.

At the present time, the communists must organise the working class and broad masses of people to demand those measures that would immediately halt and reverse the attacks on livelihood, and at the same time demand that any private entity that does not fall in line with this emergency program should be expropriated without compensation. This is the way to throw the bourgeoisie on the defensive, by demanding that the claims of the masses of people take first priority, above the claims of money lenders and other parasites. It is the way to prepare the working class and its allies to take political power in their hands and launch their own offensive to bury capitalism and build a new society, as the ebb of revolution turns to flow.

The program of reorientation of the Indian economy is not some future policy objective but an eminently realisable plan. The basis to renew the Indian economy on the basis of the principle of satisfying the claims of all its members, i.e., satisfying the condition of prosperity and security for all, already exists in Indian soil. It exists in the form of the proletariat, the Indian working class, which already makes up over half the working population, a class that cannot



emancipate itself without emancipating the whole of society. It exists in the close links of the workers with the poor and middle peasants. It exists in the tradition of collective organisation of economic life and political affairs. All these material conditions constitute the objective basis, while the subjective force will be provided by the communist party, armed with modern Indian philosophy and the theory of Indian liberation.

# Political Crisis and the Renewal of Democracy

## Introduction

The crisis at the base of capitalism finds its reflection in the political sphere, in the form of the contradiction between the political power as it is constituted today, and the struggle for the empowerment of the people that the conditions are giving rise to. The discrediting of the parliamentary process and the party dominated system of democracy, in India and on the world scale, has its basis in the economic crisis. The illegitimacy of power and incoherence in the polity reflect the inability of capitalism to fulfill the needs of a growing majority in society.

The struggle for livelihood finds its concentrated expression in the struggle for political power. The working class and the middle strata will be unable to reorient the economy in their interests as long as they are excluded from political power.

Political power, as it is constituted at present, excludes the vast majority of the toiling and oppressed in society. The deepening of the crisis of capitalism has further aggravated social contradictions, leading to the further alienation of the State from the broad masses of people. In all the capitalist countries, political power appears to be in perpetual crisis. The crisis of bourgeois political power

presents a golden opportunity for the working class to make an advance by championing the cause of the renewal of democracy so as to empower the people.

The entire period since 1990 has been marked by intense crises of bourgeois democracy on the world scale. In India, it has been marked by continuing political uncertainty and minority coalitions at the centre, escalation of communal and sectarian violence, growth of state terrorism and individual terrorism.

The nineties has been a period marked by the discrediting of parliamentary parties, and of the political system and political process dominated by such parties. It is a period that has seen six Prime Ministers in India. It has seen the spectacular growth of some parties and the equally spectacular destruction of others, alongside the mushrooming of numerous new parties. In India and on the international scale, it has been a period of increasing incoherence on the part of the bourgeoisie in terms of presenting a vision for society on the eve of the 21st century.

Eight years ago, at the First Congress, our Party assessed that with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the weakening of the camp led by the Soviet Union, the world was entering a period of disequilibrium. As the subsequent developments have proven, the Soviet Union collapsed soon afterwards and world imperialism, led by US imperialism, launched a massive ideological and political offensive against communism and the progressive forces.

Beginning with the First Congress and continuously since then, our Party analysed the significance of these developments as they unfolded and came to the conclusion that the tide of the world revolutionary process

had turned from flow to ebb. With the disintegration of the socialist camp, the political situation shifted in favor of the bourgeoisie and the world had entered a period of retreat of revolution, with initiative in the hands of imperialism and reaction. Our Party pointed out that the retreat of revolution was not the same as the end of revolution, nor can it be assumed that the program and tactics of the communists could remain the same.

Consistent with the decisions of the First Congress, our Party took up the challenge to define the character of the changes and work out the program consistent with those changes. The program which the Second Congress will adopt is one that has emerged from the conditions and from the work carried out since the First Congress. It is a program that is consistent with those conditions and with the level of consciousness of the movement of the working class and people at this time, and will open the path for the transformation of these conditions.

## **Contradictions on the World Scale**

With the intensification of the crisis of capitalism at its last stage of monopoly capitalism and imperialism, all the major contradictions on the world scale are being aggravated. These include the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat within each country, the contradiction between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the oppressed nations and peoples striving for sovereignty, as well as the contradictions among the imperialist powers and monopoly groups. The fundamental contradiction between capital and labour, between the capitalist system and its opposite, continues to intensify and thereby deepen the general crisis of capitalism on the world scale. But the conflicts between class interests continue to be played out in favour of

imperialism and reaction, confirming that it is still the period of retreat of revolution.

The disequilibrium created by the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar division of the world was exploited by US imperialism, which organised the Gulf War against Iraq and arrogantly declared its "New World Order". However, in a period when the economic power of the US was on the decline, its dream of establishing a unipolar world was challenged by the big powers of the Security Council of the United Nations (UN) as well as by newly aspiring powers such as Germany, Japan, India and Brazil.

Unity and struggle have characterised the developments in the relations among the big powers, as the period of disequilibrium continues and the danger of a world war as the means of redividing the world looms large on the horizon. The unity among imperialist powers is expressed in the adoption of the anti-social offensive and the common anti-communist offensive to exterminate socialism from the consciousness of the peoples. The struggle in their ranks is expressed in the sharp division that exists among the big powers claiming their respective "spheres of influence".

The imperialist coalition headed by the US has been pushing the demand that every country must have a free market economy, a multi-party system and "human rights" based on protection of private property within which "each one is to fend for himself". Any country that did not submit to this dictate has been declared a "rogue state" and made the target of ruthless economic sanctions, bombing and war. The assault on countries such as Cuba, Libya, North Korea, Iraq and Iran has been driven by the fact that these countries assert their right to determine their own economic or political system.

The Indian bourgeoisie, eager to emerge as a big power in the post Cold War world, spared no time to dismantle its “socialistic pattern of society” and launch the program of liberalisation and privatisation. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi provided the opportunity for the Indian big bourgeoisie to abandon its old course and accelerate its integration with the world imperialist system, colluding and colliding with the other big powers to carve out its position in Asia and the world. Besides the economic restructuring program, the launch of the “Gujral Doctrine” and the weapons modernisation programs, including the Pokhran II tests, show the dangerous path that the Indian bourgeoisie has adopted to accomplish its aims. The search for alliance with Iran and China under the Rao government, the projection of the image of being a responsible power in South Asia through its “unilateral” initiatives with respect to its immediate neighbours under the “Gujral Doctrine”; the program to enter the weapons bazaar as an exporter of arms in Asia and the Middle East; and the current show of strength with respect to Pakistan and China—are all products of the search for big power status by the Indian bourgeoisie in the post Cold War world.

The latest US missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan, which have been presented as a new chapter in the US imperialist “war against terrorism”, demonstrate the dangerous situation created by the contention of various powers for the redivision of the world, in general, and the danger of the offensive of the Pentagon in particular. After these attacks, Clinton has taken this “war against terrorism” to the floor of the UN General Assembly. The military interventions by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the Balkans and the constant threats of US military intervention in Iran, Iraq and many other countries of the world continue. The US has come to rely more and more on its military prowess to establish its

supremacy in the post Cold War world in view of its weakened relative economic prowess, expressed so graphically in its inability to finance the Gulf War. Its military actions in West Asia, its sanctions against Libya, Cuba and North Korea, its intervention in the Balkans using the "Dayton Accord", and its continued intervention and subversion in Nicaragua, El Salvador and other Latin American countries, all reveal its increasing reliance on brute force and fascist logic.

Besides its unilateral initiatives, the US has worked through the UN and other international bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Commission, the arms control bodies, commission on human rights, etc., to oppose any challenge to its hegemony. The contradiction over nuclear treaties such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) between the US and India has revealed the policy of the US to isolate India by keeping the old coalition of nuclear powers intact. It is similar to the manner in which it had isolated Iraq at the end of the Cold War by cobbling together the Gulf War coalition.

The engagement of the US with China and Russia in recent years has been driven by its South Asia policy as an integral component of its overall policy. The US has also declared its intentions for engagement in South Asia to create a security arrangement in the manner it has done with Japan. In sum, South Asia has emerged as an important arena of imperialist contention and collusion, to redivide the post Cold War world.

Massive upsurges and militant student demonstrations brought down the US backed dictatorial regime of Suharto, the executioner of communists who ruled Indonesia with an iron hand for the past three decades. But the ruling

bourgeoisie has managed to install one of Suharto's cronies as his successor, thus preserving its rule. The Indonesian people are regrouping under these conditions to mount a fresh assault.

Resistance struggles of people to the market reforms have arisen on an increasing scale after an initial lull in the early part of this decade. Massive strikes and shutdown of big cities have taken place in Europe and North America. The hardships of the people in Russia, Albania, Poland and other countries which embraced the free market reforms have laid bare the false promise made by capitalism that its prescriptions of free market and pluralism will bring prosperity to them.

The efforts of US imperialism to dominate the world by dominating Asia are meeting fierce resistance in West Asia and Afghanistan, by the Islamic states and by the peoples of Asia. The struggle of the Korean people and the Government of North Korea in defence of unification of the nation of Korea is an important factor that frustrates the US imperialist plans for a new round of military conflict in Asia. The interests of China are also clashing with the interests of the US and the European powers to impose their dictate and values on Asia. Iran has carried out its policies in defiance of the US led imperialist alliance. Russia has its own ambitions to re-emerge as a major power and is trying to revive its links with the Indian ruling circles that existed during the Cold War period. Within these contradictory developments, the threat of local war, regional war or internal civil war in the manner of Balkan states has greatly increased in South Asia, as the predatory powers seek out clients, funnel money, weapons and mercenaries, and find surrogates.

Other imperialist powers such as Japan, Germany, France and Britain are maneuvering to increase their space. The



formation and consolidation of various regional blocs such as the European Union, North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and others reflect mutual rivalries and contention for space between the big powers of the post-Cold War era. The opposition of France and Russia to the eastward expansion of NATO and the contention between the pan-European security organisation and NATO for military supremacy are other manifestations of the inter-imperialist conflicts. The European powers have not forgotten the founding principle of NATO in the Cold War period, succinctly expressed by its first Secretary General Lord Ismay: "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in and the Germans down in Europe".

Thus, the contradictions among the imperialist powers are intensifying side by side with the contradiction between the old and the new, between imperialist domination and the striving of the peoples for sovereignty, i.e., the right to determine their own destiny. The economic collapse of the "Asian tigers" and the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism on the world scale is leading to the further intensification of contradictions between the exploiters and the exploited within each country.

The approach of the Indian bourgeoisie today is part of the problem, not part of the solution to imperialist domination and plunder. The Indian big bourgeoisie asserts India's right to be a nuclear power, while it also defends the "right" of all the imperialists to penetrate and plunder India. The bourgeoisie is thereby exposing the fact that it is driven not by the need to defend sovereignty but by its own imperialist motives. On the one hand, the Prime Minister of India lectures to the US government about how India does not need the American lectures on India's security matters. On the other hand,

he does not object to their economic lectures on market oriented reforms.

For the last fifty years, the Indian bourgeoisie has presented itself in the colours of anti-imperialism even as it has become fully integrated with the imperialist world. It has facilitated the plunder of India by imperialist powers and at the same time pocketed a part of the super profits as well as the profits from its own imperialist adventures abroad, especially in the countries of this region.

For the working class, opposition to imperialism is a matter of principle, which includes opposition not only to the US but also to all imperialist powers, not only in the military but also in the economic and political spheres. The working class has to defend the sovereignty of India and all its constituents as a matter of principle. It has to raise the banner of sovereignty as the decisive weapon in the struggle to keep the resources and surplus of our country within our borders and deploy it to raise the living conditions of our people.

The struggle against economic restructuring, social spending cutbacks, against the dictates of the IMF and the World Bank, and the struggle for the right to livelihood are merging with the struggle for sovereignty and sovereign political power. The inability of the ruling class to defend sovereignty, provide for the people's livelihood and defend the most vulnerable sections of the population have created the conditions for the working class and people to raise the banner of revolt and take their struggle to its logical conclusion. The logical conclusion is to create a new political power in the hands of the working class and all the hitherto oppressed sections of society.

India's Pokhran nuclear blasts followed by those of

Pakistan have been acts of defiance by the bourgeoisie of these countries to the nuclear domination and blackmail by the big five. At the same time, these explosions have been carried out under conditions of extreme deprivation and want in these countries, completely ignoring the basic human needs of the people and to divert the people from finding a way out of the severe economic and political crisis. The ruling classes in these countries have been using this act to whip up chauvinism and promote the vision of India or Pakistan emerging as a big imperialist power in the style of the 19th century empire builders of Europe.

What is clear is that the 21st century cannot be a repeat of the 19th century; hence India cannot use the model of the European colonial powers to fashion its agenda for the 21st century. Far from appealing to the sentiment of the people of India, who detest the colonial and imperialist stranglehold on our economy, culture and outlook, far from striving to transform India into a bastion of democracy, progress and prosperity by empowering people on a modern basis, the present day rulers are whipping up a revenge-seeking mentality. It is like a slave wanting to become a slave owner if somehow freed from the condition of his own slavery! Life experience teaches us that such a backward notion is incompatible with the interests of the vast majority and the general interest of society. Unless this aim to build India as a colonial power is abandoned, it will bring violence, bloodshed and backwardness for the people and the country.

The developments in India and on the world scale during this period reveal that all the major contradictions of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, are becoming acute but imperialism and reaction continue to hold the initiative in their hands. The situation is fraught with danger

as well as with opportunities for the working class and peoples to turn the situation around.

While the bourgeoisie finds a reason to unite against the people and their struggles, the differences in its ranks also provides possibilities for the working class to push ahead with its demands. In this period of unprecedented pressure on the fighting forces to challenge the bourgeoisie and imperialism, every possible space deserves to be captured to present the vision and program of the working class for discussion, using the fact that the imperialist powers themselves are divided over their policies. They are divided on issues such as attacking Iraq, bailing out Russia, bombing Afghanistan, choking Cuba or North Korea, etc., and are advancing contradictory prescriptions.

### **Continuing Crisis in India**

Our Party analysed that the economic reforms program unleashed in 1991 by the Congress Party under the leadership of the Narasimha Rao-Manmohan Singh combine was a turning point in the Indian economy. We also analysed and concluded that the destruction of the Babri Masjid was a turning point in Indian politics.

The destruction of the Babri Masjid and the communal violence that followed, in Mumbai and other places, exposed the criminality of Indian democracy. It exposed very clearly in the eyes of the electorate that the two biggest parties in the parliament are capable of organising the most heinous crimes including the organising of communal violence against masses of people. It exposed that the electorate could do nothing except to watch helplessly. The collective consciousness of the working class and all the oppressed advanced at one stroke, especially about the fact that they had no power

whatsoever in this so-called largest democracy of the world.

In strategic terms, the Indian big bourgeoisie has been building up the BJP as the most suitable vehicle to implement its program in the new period. The Congress party has been systematically weakened, through the politics of character assassination and physical assassination, through splits and divisions. On the other hand, the BJP has been built up in the eyes of the masses as the saviour of Indians, as the restorer of their pride, as a "disciplined" party that is "corruption-free", a party which has the guts to defy the Americans, and so on. The BJP is a party with a revanchist (revenge seeking) ideology, with anti-communism as its war cry, known for its open espousal and open advocacy of militarism and despotism and an imperialist approach to our neighbours. Systematically, the BJP has been built up from a marginal political party in the eighties, to the single largest party in the parliament.

However, the turning point in December 1992 upset the plans of the bourgeoisie. The BJP lost its momentum after the destruction of the Babri Masjid. It took six years before the BJP could be established as the ruling party at the centre, and that too at the head of a coalition with many regional parties. The political crisis continues because the rulers are neither able to rule in the old way nor establish a new arrangement that would stabilise their rule.

The 1996 elections saw the emergence of the BJP as the single largest party and the establishment of three short-lived minority governments. The 13-day BJP government, the 10-month United Front government led by Deve Gowda, and the six month United Front government led by I.K.Gujral, followed quickly one after the other, finally leading up to another mid-term election in 1998 and the

emergence of a BJP-led coalition government. The political crisis continues, but the big bourgeoisie continues to implement its program of globalisation of capital and production through privatisation and liberalisation, in spite of the political crisis.

The Indian big bourgeoisie has remained in power by preserving and perfecting the Central State and by means of establishing a power sharing arrangement. The preferred arrangement throughout the period of the Nehruvian strategy of industrialisation, bourgeois land reform and capitalist development of agriculture was the alliance between the industrial houses and the big landlords, with the Congress party heading majority governments. The Congress party promised all things to all classes and sections of society while it carried out the program of the big bourgeoisie, in the typical style of social-democracy.

Starting in the fifties and reaching a crescendo by the mid sixties, mass upsurge among workers, peasants and youth shook the political arrangement of the bourgeoisie. The tradition of Congress rule began to be shaken, a sign that the petty-bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie were beginning to desert the big bourgeoisie. The big bourgeoisie tided over the crises on account of three factors. First, the Communist Party of India was split into two in 1964, giving rise to the Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), and state repression was unleashed on the revolutionaries in the communist movement, thereby ensuring that the working class remained at the tail of the bourgeoisie in political terms. Second, the politics of anti-Congress United Front in West Bengal and other states provided the safety valve, a temporary stop gap arrangement until the big bourgeoisie could regroup its allies and re-establish Congress rule. Third, the Green Revolution, organised to

expand the space for capitalism, also helped to divert the rural masses from the thought of a red revolution.

The seventies witnessed a further deepening of the political crisis, culminating in the suspension of parliament and the declaration of National Emergency in 1975, with one section of communists supporting and hailing the bourgeois offensive as a "fight against right reaction". Throughout this and the next decade, those in the communist movement who conciliated with the social-democratic platform of the big bourgeoisie have played the extremely harmful role of prettifying the bourgeois offensive and reconciling the working class to put up with it. The arrangements of the Congress Party with the CPI or the CPI(M) or both, have served to tone down the class struggle and preserve the status quo. According to this arrangement, those communists who conciliated with social-democracy were given space in the parliament and other organs of state power, in return for which such communists promoted and spread illusions among the working masses about capitalism and its democracy, about social-democracy and about the Indian State.

By the eighties, capitalism had made enormous strides forward in India, in agriculture, industry and services, both for the domestic market and an expanding export market. Within the country, various new monopolies had emerged, as well as regional bourgeois groups fighting for a share of power. Capitalist development in the countryside had given rise to new bourgeois forces also desperate for a share of power. In such conditions, the big bourgeoisie relied more and more on state terrorism to put down its rivals and all resistance to its rule. While the armed forces of the Central State were unleashed against different sections and nationalities within the Indian Union, the working class was once again divided and reconciled to

this offensive by the conciliators in the communist movement, in the name of defending “national unity and territorial integrity”.

As has been noted before, the Indian bourgeoisie needed to make new arrangements in the nineties, with world imperialism and the international monopolies, at the same time that it needed new arrangements at home, a new power sharing arrangement among various propertied interests. The collapse of the Soviet Union came as an opportunity for the Indian big bourgeoisie in such a situation. Although the strategic shift in economic policy was initiated by a minority government headed by the same old Congress party, the big bourgeoisie knew that the new offensive could not be carried out effectively under the old type of arrangement.

While liberalisation and privatisation have progressed in the nineties at the pace set by the big bourgeoisie, on the political front the big bourgeoisie has faced continuing crisis. Spreading mayhem and violence, utilising the Indian State and the major parties in parliament, as well as using the paralysis of the working class created by those communists who conciliate with social-democracy, the big bourgeoisie has managed to implement its program at the expense of the working masses, in spite of the political crisis.

The bringing to power of the revanchist BJP is part of the retrogression that characterises the entire world in this period. Swollen headed by the retreat of the revolution, the Indian big bourgeoisie, like its international counterpart, thinks that the chance has come to roll back all the victories and concessions the working class and people have wrested for themselves in this century. It is launching the biggest attack on the working class and toiling masses,



thinking nothing can stop it in its onward march. Such a course is fraught with dangers for the Indian people. Such a course is also leading to the further aggravation of the political crisis.

To end this perpetual crisis and open the path to progress, it is essential for the communist movement to make a clean break with social-democracy. For communists to continue with the discredited road of "unity and struggle" with the Congress(I) or to once again promote another united parliamentary front with various bourgeois parties means to once again come to the rescue of the bourgeoisie in its hour of crisis. To make a clean break from this dead-end road means to build the worker-peasant alliance as the backbone of a new revolutionary front with the communists at the head.

### Democratic Renewal

The strategic political aim of the struggle of the working class is to replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat, the condition for the revolutionary transformation from capitalism to socialism and communism. Consistent with this strategic aim, the working class must adopt such tactics in this period that would unite the masses of powerless people around the working class and isolate the ruling bourgeoisie. The crisis of bourgeois democracy must be exploited to challenge the fundamental law and the party dominated political process, and to assert the right of the people to govern themselves and determine their own fate. By building the broad political front around the immediate program of democratic renewal, the working class will become prepared to go on the offensive and establish the new power of the toiling and hitherto oppressed people, as the ebb of revolution turns to flow.

The immediate program of the working class emerges from the crisis of bourgeois rule, in India and internationally, and from the striving of the working class and all the oppressed to lift society out of this crisis. The crisis in the Indian polity reached a turning point in 1992. It is the work of the CGPI and other progressive forces to defend and build the political unity of the people in the conditions of the crisis that has given concrete shape to the program for the renewal of Indian democracy—for the reorientation of the economy, political empowerment of the people and reconstitution of the Indian Union.

As noted earlier, the demolition of the Babri Masjid revealed that in spite of parliamentary democracy and periodic elections, the people have no power at all. This powerlessness was felt not just by the working class and toiling masses, but also by many from the intelligentsia and other strata of society, who had hitherto harboured some illusions that they had some say in the polity.

There was enormous popular response from all parts of the country to the historic appeal issued from Ferozeshah Kotla Maidan in Delhi on February 22, 1993 by the CGPI and other organisations of the working class, women, rights activists and others, against the criminalisation of politics and the party system of governance. This revealed not only the extent of dissatisfaction among the people with political parties like the Congress(I) and BJP. More importantly, it revealed disgust with the political system as a whole, with the political process which brings such forces to dominate the polity.

How is the recurrence of sectarian violence to be prevented? How can it be ensured that parties of vested interests cannot play havoc with the polity? What kind of political parties does society need? How can it be ensured

that the masses of people are able to exercise their will in such matters? These were the burning questions that posed themselves for political theory to solve, questions that the CGPI began to deal with in earnest. We elaborated the Marxist teachings on these questions afresh according to contemporary conditions, taking into account the experience of India and of the world including the Soviet Union, both in the twentieth century and from the earlier period. We paid attention to the thought material from our own past, to Indian political thought. These burning questions of the empowerment of the people continue to pose themselves today, as the crisis of bourgeois democracy grows more acute in India and on the world scale.

The bourgeoisie hailed the collapse of the Soviet Union supposedly because it symbolised the victory of "democracy". According to the bourgeoisie, democracy is synonymous with the multi-party system of government. However, there is maximum disenchantment among the people of the world today with precisely this system in which political parties rule and exclude the people from any role in governance.

In Eastern Europe and the former republics of the Soviet Union, as well as in many of the classical capitalist countries that are supposed to be the models of bourgeois democracy, the discontent of the broad masses with the political system is manifesting itself in varied forms. There has been a mushrooming of new political parties and remoulding of old parties to divert the discontent of the people. For instance, in Britain the old Labour Party has resurrected itself in the name of a New Labour Party. In the US, the majority of the electorate did not vote in the last general election because of its disenchantment with the two main parties of the establishment. Various proposals to

rewrite the Constitution, to redefine democracy, are hotly debated issues in many countries. Referendums have been held on such questions in Canada and Australia. The problem that is crying out to be solved is the creation of new forms of governance, consistent with the political situation in each country, wherein the people will govern themselves.

## **Political Theory**

Recognising what the conditions are revealing, the CGPI has paid first rate attention in this period to the work of developing political theory. We have elaborated the modern definition of rights and of sovereignty, to arm the working class to spearhead the movement for the people to emerge as the rulers and the ruled, in the role of the governing and the governed. The people of India have no role in governance today, not merely because those who are elected are not sincere, but because the party dominated system of governance does not provide the people with any role except that of being vote banks.

The subject matter of political theory is political power. Political power is that which effects changes or blocks changes in the social conditions; it is the intervention of human consciousness in shaping the course of history. The task of theory in this field is to unravel how political power came into being, how it has transformed itself over the ages, how the existing power will go out of being and what kind of power is to take its place. The bourgeoisie tries its best to block the development of political theory by creating the impression that the existing political power and political process are the final word, the best of all systems and models of democracy. And the bourgeoisie lowers the level of political discussion into merely debating which party or coalition of vested interests should be voted to manage the existing political power.

Communists approach the question of political power on the basis of appreciating that behind every political power and political process, there exists a political theory that justifies that power as it is constituted and exercised. Any new political power will also have to have its political theory. This new political theory has to establish itself by resolving the contradiction inherent in the existing political theory, which in turn is nothing but the reflection of the fundamental contradiction in class society today. It appears in the form of the contradiction between the collective right of people to determine their own destiny, or the right to sovereignty, on the one hand, and the arbitrary rule of a minority of exploiters, on the other hand.

The problem of sovereignty belongs to the realm of rights in general and to political rights in particular. As with other rights, its origin lies in the recognition that human beings have rights by virtue of being human. Human beings exist in society, and society is both the product of human activity as well as the environment in which human activity takes place. The collective affairs of society are matters of concern for all its constituents, who have a right to participate in all aspects of its life, including the right to set its direction and its aims.

Sovereignty or the supreme power over a society is a right that belongs to every people, although it is the level of political and economic development which determines the form in which this right is affirmed. At one stage of development, supreme power was vested in the tribal council and the tribal chiefs. At another time it was vested in the king and the royal courts. And in recent times it has been vested in institutions such as Parliaments and Presidents. The conditions are demanding, however, that the collective right of the people over their own fate is affirmed, by vesting sovereignty in the polity as a whole.

The demand for the renewal of democracy on the basis of modern definitions is clashing with the authority of the supreme power as it is constituted. This is the reflection, in the political sphere, of the conflict of class interests which has its basis in the capitalist economy.

### Theory of the Royal Prerogative

The political power that exists in India today has its origin in the power established by the British colonialists, on the basis of the theory of James I, the theory of the Royal Prerogative or the "divine right of kings". According to this theory, political power was conceived as an entity that stands above the people. The notion was created of the "division of power" between the executive, the legislative and the judiciary, with the executive power placed above legislative power and the judicial power acting as an umpire, to ensure that conflicts between the executive and legislative powers do not spill over into the polity. Through such a mechanism, supreme and undivided power was usurped by the "king-in-parliament", while creating the impression that power was divided and there were "checks and balances" to prevent arbitrariness. It is this same theory and mechanism of political power that was established by the British colonialists in India, and further perfected by the Indian bourgeoisie in the form of the Prime Minister-in-Parliament.

It was considered the "divine right" of the British to rule over the Indian subcontinent and "civilize" the natives. They imported their theories, institutions and laws to rule India. As the contradiction between colonialism and the peoples of this subcontinent became intense, the colonialists further perfected their State and power sharing arrangement through privilege distribution and elite accommodation. The same process continues to this day

in South Asia, with the difference that it is the native bourgeoisie and not the colonialists in the driver's seat. Thus, the Indian President could declare a National Emergency in 1975, at the advice of the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister, suspend parliament and put opposition leaders behind bars. And more recently, the President of Pakistan could remove the Premier in 1996, annul the elections, install an interim government to implement the measures demanded by the IMF, and later legitimise these arrangements through an electoral exercise. In both cases, these arbitrary actions were in conformity with the "rule of law", which clearly shows that the "rule of law" provides for the Royal Prerogative or the "divine right of kings". The theory of the divine right to rule lies at the heart of all arbitrariness in South Asia. It is the basis of all politics that is promoted under the banner of multi-party democracy today.

Emanating from this alien and outdated theory of the Royal Prerogative, the Preamble and the Directive Principles of the Constitution of India create the conception of the State as an entity standing above the society, in the form of a trustee. The declared aim of the State is to provide "the greatest good for the greatest number", but supreme power is vested in the hands of the Parliament, the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister, and the President who acts upon the advice of the Cabinet. In short, the power to decide what is "the greatest good for the greatest number" is concentrated exclusively in the hands of a small coterie, a ruling elite that is selected and groomed by the rich and powerful classes, by imperialism and the Indian big bourgeoisie. The struggle against this arbitrary power that serves the wealthy minority, the movement to create the new human power that will serve the entire population, has to base itself on the negation of the existing theory and political process that negate the rights of human beings.

The Westminster style parliamentary democracy that exists in India is a process through which the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is legitimised and exercised. In this political process, different political parties compete for the favours of the bourgeoisie, for their chance to administer and manage the power. Universal franchise assists the bourgeoisie to choose that political party or combination best suited at a particular time to carry out the program of the bourgeoisie and divert and deceive the people. Periodic elections also serve the function of sorting out conflicts among the propertied classes and of adjusting the power sharing arrangements among them.

The political party or combination of parties chosen to form the government implements the program of the bourgeoisie until such time as the bourgeoisie decides that a change is necessary. Meanwhile, the ministers and parliamentarians of the ruling party enjoy the loaves of office, while the "opposition" may scream about corruption and scandals, and bide its time impatiently for the same loaves of office. The loaves of office are the commissions the ministers and officials make out of every business dealing of their ministry, with various ministries having a price tag attached to them, the highest commissions being in arms purchases. It is for this reason that different capitalist groupings routinely lobby to get their favourite persons appointed to various ministries. The main representatives of the loyal "opposition" are also provided with various privileges.

The theory of "trusteeship", which includes the provisions of the Royal Prerogative, treats the state and the polity as two distinct domains—the domain of power and the domain of powerlessness. The former is the domain of the rich and powerful, the propertied strata and the arrangements among them, the higher echelons of the state apparatus and its officials. This is a world in itself, sunk in corruption,



money power and pleasure-seeking. The other domain consists of the people as a whole, who make up the polity. The former is imposed on the latter; the polity has to conform to, emulate and facilitate the power.

The theory of trusteeship sanctifies the role of political parties as the intermediary between the two domains, based on the premise that the Indian people are not capable of governing themselves. This theory is outdated and anachronistic at the end of the 20th century, when the polity has not only established universal suffrage but is also striving for the merger of the domain of power and the domain of the polity into one single whole. It is in conflict with the experience of the people even in those countries where this theory originated. The demand of the times is to end the schism between the governing and the governed.

### Rule of Law

The concept of "rule of law" as practised in India is an alien form, imported from 19th century England by the colonial administration. It is a political form comprising of three elements: peace, order and good government. This descriptive form hides the political content that "rule of law" embodies, which is one of extreme arbitrariness. The colonial rule of law meant that colonial plunder, colonial oppression and colonial subjugation were all lawful activities and the legality or illegality of anything could be decided only in the context of defending the economic and political interests of colonialism. Once colonialism was accepted, then one could apply the principle of "rule of law" to maintain "peace", which boiled down to the suppression of revolts in the colonies. Similarly, one could maintain "order" in the ranks of society, and establish obedience and subordination under the existing hierarchies. Finally, the principle of "good government"

ensured that following any election, however fraudulent or limited the franchise, the ruling party and the loyal opposition would dutifully trade places, ensuring that government always remains loyal to the royal prerogative, i.e., the “divine right to rule”.

When this system was adopted in the Indian Republic after formal independence, it gave rise to some grotesque features. In place of colonialism, it was now the capitalist system, the feudal system, oppression based on nationality, gender, religion and caste, that could not be challenged. It meant that continued colonial suppression of the nations and tribal peoples could not be challenged. Once this framework is accepted as given, the “rule of law” begins its operation. In the name of peace and order, every struggle of the people can be suppressed by rendering it “illegal”. Good government is established by protecting capitalist private property and by having elections every now and then and dutifully changing the faces in power.

The struggles for the affirmation of rights emerge objectively through developments in the economy and politics of society. They emerge as political struggles. But when these struggles are waged by the people and their collectives, the European system of “rule of law” can only understand them as a law and order problem, as a disturbance of the “peace” that necessitates the re-establishment of “order”. With the supreme power vested exclusively in the colonial Central State, it is inevitable that all struggles from below are looked upon as a challenge to sovereignty. In India, this system of “rule of law” has emerged as a means of enriching the few who are in power and as a major hindrance to any affirmation of rights.

The imposition of English “rule of law” on India in the 19th century caused a serious rupture in the development of the

indigenous system of rule of law. The thousands of years of development of statecraft in India had given rise to the form of rule of law which had actually provided a role for the people, even within the relatively stagnant socio-economic conditions of India. It is out of the internal developments of Indian statecraft that India had given rise to the theory and practice of sovereignty in 1857—a development which was abruptly terminated by the defeat of the insurgency.

Throughout history, a system of local self-government existed in India where the village and city councils such as *panchayats* functioned as governing bodies, performing both political and juridical tasks. One of the main features of this system was that the political institutions at the centre—of the king and court—had little relationship to the *panchayats* at the base, other than in collecting surplus produce as taxes. The relatively limited surplus wealth generated at the base meant that the *panchayat* structure remained virtually untouched for centuries while the Central State structure expanded and contracted through successive dynasties, kingdoms, and empires. The conception of *rajadharma* was developed and refined over centuries to provide guidance to kings on protecting their kingdoms from the possibility of a rebellious populace or external invasion.

In Indian political theory, there were no abstract or arbitrary conceptions of the rule of law de-linked from prosperity and protection of the populace. Such arbitrariness in modern India can be traced directly to the political and economic considerations of colonisers and plunderers. The point is that India had a system of governance that was not the “rule of law” of the English form, but a highly intricate system that had arisen from centuries of indigenous development. As a result, the new

system introduced by colonialism never entered the popular consciousness of the people, who still view the *firangi* (foreign) laws and courts with extreme suspicion.

## State of the Indian Union

The establishment of a centralised State, an authority standing seemingly above society and guarded by special bodies of armed men, has been the main instrument for the rise of various empires in the Indian subcontinent. The conquest of India was accomplished by British colonialism on the basis of a superior mode of production and a modern central State, established to defend and enforce the colonial dictate. The colonial state, unlike those of the past, was based on the capitalist mode of production and designed to defend and further promote the plunder of India on the basis of capitalist private property and semi-feudal relations of oppression. It relied on the civil service to collect revenue and the armed forces to enforce "order"; both these instruments of colonial rule were headed by officers groomed with British values and norms, trained to stand above the natives and "civilize" them.

The present day State of the Indian Union relies on the same bureaucracy and standing army that were established by colonialism. This is the clearest evidence that this State is a continuation and further perfection of the colonial state established by the British, an instrument to facilitate the maximum plunder of the land and labour of India and to crush any resistance to this on the part of any section of the toiling and oppressed masses. This is the conclusion that the Indian Marxist-Leninists drew at the time of Naxalbari over 30 years ago. This is also the conclusion that several Indian political analysts and theorists have drawn since then, based on their study of the Indian Constitution. They have shown how the 1950 Constitution has its basis in the

Government of India Act of 1935, and all the 80 or so amendments over the past 48 years have not changed the fundamental character of the Indian State as an instrument of arbitrary rule, of oppression of the majority and of territorial conquest.

Comrade Engels pointed out more than a century ago that in a democratic republic, "wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely", firstly by means of the "direct corruption of officials" and secondly by means of "an alliance of the government and the stock exchange". Engels was speaking about America and France of the last century, but now, this is true of all capitalist countries without exception. The scandals that break out every day in our country involving politicians, police, armed forces, judiciary, and government officials bear testimony to the truth of this conclusion.

Lenin pointed out that the democratic republic is the best possible shell for capitalism. In such a republic, the omnipotence of wealth is all the more certain. Once capital has gained control of this shell, it establishes its power so securely that no change of persons, institutions or parties can shake it. Lenin affirmed Engels' teachings that universal suffrage under capitalism is an instrument of bourgeois rule. Lenin incisively pointed out that the opportunists share and instil in the minds of the toiling masses the false notion that universal suffrage "in the present day state" is really capable of revealing the will of the majority of the working people and of securing its realisation.

Lenin summed up that the proletariat needs state power, a centralised organisation of force, an organisation capable of both crushing the resistance of the exploiters and of leading the enormous mass of the population—the

peasants, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the semi proletarians—in the work of organising socialist society. Summing up the teachings of Marxism on the question, Lenin concludes that the proletariat must not perfect the state machine of the bourgeoisie but smash and destroy it. In its place must arise the new state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a state that for the first time in history will be the instrument for the majority of oppressed to rule over the minority of oppressors. This new state will also be the last state as we know it. It will be a unique instrument for presiding over the demise of class distinctions in society, and thereby over its own dissolution. Stalin, in his report to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (Bolshevik) in 1939, drew the conclusion that the state, besides its coercive function as the instrument of class rule, also has to play the role of the organiser and executor of economic plans for the upliftment of the entire society. The role of the state in socialist planning and in raising the level of social services proved to be an advance in the theory and practice of the state.

Political power in India vests with the big bourgeoisie. It has been so from 1947 till today. The Indian State is an arrangement among the exploiters to divide up the surplus produce; the organs of the state are the edifice that defends this arrangement, the instrument of exploitation, oppression and plunder of the land and labour of the broad masses of workers and peasants of all nationalities by the big bourgeoisie. The two key organs of oppression and plunder are the armed forces (including the paramilitary and police) and the bureaucracy. The authority wielded by the bureaucracy and the use of violence by the armed forces of the State are justified and legitimised through a judicial system based on an alien definition of law, and a political process that excludes the broad masses of people.

The Constitution, the fundamental law of the land, sanctifies the "rule of law" based on colonial definitions and defends the inviolability of private property. The "rule of law", enforced by the armed forces and judges selected by the ruling class, legally deprives the workers and peasants and all the oppressed of the means of changing the conditions of their exploitation and oppression. The "authority" and the conditions of the people are in irreconcilable combat today. This combat cannot be ended without bringing a new authority into existence.

The state machinery wielded by the Indian big bourgeoisie at this time is more or less the same colonial state established by Queen Victoria in 1858 after crushing the First War of Indian Independence. The colonial state established in 1858 was in turn the result of over 250 years of development, since the penetration of British commercial and colonial interests into India, beginning with the *firman* issued by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir to the East India Company.

The conquest of Bengal in 1757 following the battle of Plassey enabled the British to introduce private property in land in the conquered regions and destroy the old forms of common property, the old self-sufficient and stagnant village economy. The introduction of British style private property relations in land continued to expand with further conquests. Classes of Indians came into being in whose interest it was to defend colonial rule. These classes of big capitalists and landlords collaborated with the British in the crushing of the 1857 War of Indian Independence and were given a share of power and privileges by the colonialists in the political power and colonial state established in 1858.

The Indian people rose repeatedly in countless revolts in

different parts of the subcontinent against colonialism for national and social liberation. The colonialists ruthlessly crushed these revolts. At the same time they dangled the carrot of a share of political power to the big capitalists and landlords in return for their collaboration in keeping the people subjugated. The development of political institutions, beginning with the Viceroy's Councils and extending to the limited franchise and elections for parliament and provincial assemblies in the 1930s, reflected the increasing accommodation of the Indian bourgeoisie, the big capitalists and landlords, in the colonial state.

The international stance of this political power was colonialist and imperialist. The colonial Indian State was an instrument of British colonialism to expand its territory through annexation, such as the annexation of Assam and the north-east, and this colonialist-imperialist policy continued right until 1947. It was an instrument for British expansion in Asia and throughout the world, used against the Afghan, Burmese, Nepalese, Tibetan and Chinese peoples, and in the inter-imperialist wars waged by Britain in Europe and Asia, as well as in the wars of colonial conquest in West Asia and Africa.

By the time of the transfer of power in 1947, along with the development and expansion of the chief instruments of oppression and plunder, i.e., the army and the bureaucracy, the political superstructure had also developed to include limited franchise for the Indian propertied classes. Legislative assemblies in the provinces gave privileges to these classes in return for their loyalty, while retaining supreme power, including all residual powers, in the hands of the British Crown-in-Parliament. In these legislative assemblies and councils sat the loyal allies of the British from amongst the classes of big capitalists, big landlords and feudal princes.



British colonialism was forced to relinquish power in August 1947 to the Indian big bourgeoisie. This was a result of the weakening of British imperialism after World War II, and of the mounting popular anti-colonial revolt of India's workers and peasants and the middle strata. Neither the Indian big bourgeoisie nor the British colonialists wanted a situation in which political power would go into the hands of the working class and people of India. In such a situation, a deal was struck for mutual benefit between the colonial power on the one hand and the Indian big bourgeoisie to which it had given birth and which it had increasingly accommodated in the state, on the other hand. Along with the supreme power, residual powers were also transferred to the Indian Parliament and the President.

There was and there remains no difference in the outlook of the Indian big bourgeoisie and the outlook of the colonialists on the theory and practice of political power in India. The people were to be kept firmly out of power as before. The sovereignty of the nations, nationalities and tribal peoples was to remain negated. Sovereignty would be transferred from London to Delhi, but not to the people of India who had fought for national and social liberation. The interests of Indian and foreign capital would be safeguarded by the Indian State. The Central State of the Indian Union would continue to be a bulwark of colonialism and imperialism ranged against the peoples of India and the peoples of the world, an instrument of aggression, expansion, plunder and war. The land and labour and natural resources of the peoples of the subcontinent would be open to plunder by foreign capital, as long as it did not threaten the interests of the big bourgeoisie. The country was brutally partitioned by the colonialists and their Indian allies as part of the deal, both to drown the revolutionary struggles of the working class and people in blood and as an insurance policy of the imperialists to safeguard their interests in the sub-continent.

The Indian big bourgeoisie inherited the colonial state apparatus. It inherited the chief instruments of oppression and plunder, the armed forces and the bureaucracy, virtually intact. It unleashed the armed forces to suppress the Telengana armed peasant uprising, and the uprising of other peoples of the subcontinent. Through military aggression, conquest and blackmail, the peoples of Manipur, Nagaland, Kashmir and other regions were subjugated. In 1950, after the new ruling class had subjugated the people by force, the Indian Union was proclaimed as a democratic republic with a Constitution that legitimised the rule of the big bourgeoisie.

Basing itself on the experience of the political institutions of the colonial period, as well as the political institutions in Britain and other capitalist countries of the world, the Indian bourgeoisie adopted universal franchise and the system of multi-party democracy as the best possible shell within which it could exercise complete domination over the state and society. Since 1950, the state machinery has been beefed up and the rule of an exploiting minority has been legitimised and carried out through the parliamentary process. The further perfecting of the colonial state has served both to put down the uprisings of the working class and people and to accommodate new bourgeois interests that seek a share of power.

The Indian big bourgeoisie also inherited the mechanisms of elite accommodation through constituencies reserved on a caste or communal basis. It has further perfected these mechanisms over the past five decades, through legislation and constitutional amendments, with the Bill on creating reserved constituencies for women being the latest tactic in elite accommodation.

The Indian working class and people need a new kind of

state, a negation of the present Indian state. They do not need a further perfection of the colonial state, but a complete break with the colonial legacy. They need a state that will ensure that sovereignty vests in the people, that the inviolability of their rights is defended. They need a state that will be a roadblock to the capitalist and imperialist plunder of India. The new state must be a factor for peace and for the building of a new international order on the basis of equality of all countries and peoples, big or small, and for the right of every people to have their own economic and political system. Such a state cannot be based on the present standing army, the non-elected bureaucracy and judiciary.

The working class therefore has to set itself the strategic aim of eliminating the existing state and creating the new state power, that is, new arrangements among the working people and new instruments that they can use to assert their rights and exercise their will. With this strategic aim of destroying and replacing the existing State, the working class must also set its immediate program at the present time, around which all the oppressed and discontented sections of society can be united and the big bourgeoisie isolated. The immediate program must serve to prepare the working class and its allies to take the next step and establish their own state power.

### Indian Thought and Proletarian Democracy

The theory underlying the existing political power in India is in conflict with Indian philosophy and Indian political theory. In *Darshan Shastra*, the domain of the polity and the domain of power are conceived as part of one *Maya*, as one universe whose mode of existence is *Awaagaman*—coming into being and passing away. And in the long history of the Indian people, intermediaries have

been identified as superfluous on more than one occasion. The *bhakti* movement, the *sufi* movement and the struggle against *brahmanism* through the centuries reveal the superfluous character of the intermediary between the individual and the truth, between the polity and political power. The struggle between the broad masses of people and the Indian State today is a continuation of this age-old struggle to remove the intermediary between the polity and power, to end this artificial separation that is maintained by the force of arms.

In plain terms, the big bourgeoisie and the toiling masses belong to the same polity, but the party system of government ensures that only the big bourgeoisie has control over the state treasury and the rest of the population is looted. Indian philosophy and Indian political theory are confronted with the problem of how the domain of power and the domain of the polity can be merged within the all-encompassing *Maya*, whose mode of existence is *Awaagaman*. The key to solving this problem lies in the recognition that the role of political parties as gatekeepers of power, a role sanctified by the anachronistic theory of trusteeship, is a block to establishing coherence between the polity and political power, in theory and practice.

With the great increase in the concentration of capital in India and the sharpened competition between different capitalist groups, as well as the increasing penetration of foreign capital, the stakes involved in wielding influence over the party in power, over the prime minister and other cabinet ministers, have greatly increased. The domain of power is extremely fluid as a result of the motion in the domain of the polity. But at the same time, the political parties that play the role of the intermediary insulate and protect the domain of power from the motion in the domain of the polity.

An examination of the history of power and polity in the world shows that the Great October Revolution brought forth a political power that did not stand above the polity but was destined to merge with it. The new power, in its origin and development, negated the "Divine Right of the Czar" over the Russian empire. It set in motion the process of the working people creating human power and developing that power to higher and higher forms on a continuous basis. Such proletarian power had its origin in the political theory of Karl Marx, who gave the proletariat the role of the grave-digger of the bourgeoisie. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was the first example of political power passing into the hands of the working people, led by the working class.

At its inception in 1917, the new Soviet power emerged as a representative democracy, with the working people playing a greater role than ever before, but with their representatives constituting the power. The working people did not yet govern themselves on their own behalf. While the Communist Party of Soviet Union (Bolshevik) succeeded in leading the struggle through the first phase of socialism in which the exploiting classes were eliminated, it failed to lead the struggle in the second phase, when power had to pass from the hands of the representatives to the hands of the people, when the domain of power and the domain of polity had to merge further to remain coherent and consistent with the level of productive forces in the socialist economy.

Instead of tackling the problem in the political sphere, the CPSU itself degenerated and became the instrument for the transformation of one form of political power to the other. Instead of advancing to the next and higher stage of proletarian democracy, the Soviet State retreated to a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The domains of

power and polity drifted apart, rather than interpenetrating further till they coalesced into one.

Philosophy is the study of the relationship between human beings and nature and among human beings. Political theory is the study of the relationship between human beings and the power originating from human activity within the natural and social environment. Modern philosophy and political theory in general, and Indian philosophy and political theory in particular, must establish the coherence that the one all encompassing *Maya* demands. A rendering of what the present is revealing, in its apparent state of *Sandhi* or perpetual crisis, is the starting point of all investigation and of conscious intervention to transform the present from *Sandhi* to *Inquilab* or revolution.

A political party whose aim is the capturing of power for itself within the existing Indian democracy can only be a party of the bourgeoisie. Such a political party can only have contempt for the electorate. The communist party, however, does not fight for power for itself. The communist party fights to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of the working class in alliance with the peasantry. Such a party cannot play parliamentary games. If it participates in parliament, it does so to broaden the space for communism and expose parliamentary democracy as a form of bourgeois dictatorship.

The communist party organises the working class and people and makes them conscious, and assists in the development of mechanisms and a process by which the working class can establish its rule. It explains to the working masses why the proletariat cannot ever use the political process and instruments of rule of the bourgeoisie. It works to develop the new mechanisms,

the new State and the new political process through which the proletariat and broad masses of working people can rule themselves.

A communist party that starts fighting for power for itself soon becomes indistinguishable from a bourgeois party. It loses its class character. This is what happened to the CPSU at a particular point in its history. It is also what will happen to any and every communist party that merges with the existing political process of parliamentary democracy in India.

The Bolsheviks led the Russian working class in organising the October Revolution and establishing the first socialist state. The CPSU(B) did not fight for power for itself. It fought for power to be transferred from the bourgeois parliament (Duma) to the Soviets—the revolutionary organisations of workers, soldiers, sailors and peasants that had emerged in the course of the revolution. The work of the Bolshevik Party was to make the revolutionary classes and strata conscious and to establish such mechanisms and political processes through which the working class and its allies could wield the new political power. For instance, one of the first acts of the Bolshevik Party was to encourage the setting up of Soviets of poor peasants. As the revolution spread through the length and breadth of the country, Soviets sprang up everywhere.

The very name of the USSR denoted the creation of power at the top on the basis of power at the base of society. It denoted the inclusive and mass character of the new political power. From the factories and fields, the workers and peasants organised in different collectives exercised their power through the Soviets, to fight against capitalism and organise every aspect of social life to serve their individual and collective needs.

The 1936 Constitution of the Soviet Union established a universal franchise that was qualitatively different from and far in advance of what existed in capitalist countries. The right to elect and be elected was taken to new heights by disallowing any political parties from putting up candidates. Candidates for the Soviets were selected by various mass organisations of the working class and people. A mechanism was established to recall those representatives whom the electorate found unfit for their work. The right of the electorate to initiate legislation was also established at each level.

The 1936 Constitution, which remains to this day the most advanced example of constitutional jurisprudence in the 20th century, pointed the way forward for socialist society to advance. However, the outcome turned out otherwise. The state that was based on this constitution was able to lead the people in the construction of the economic base of socialism, in the war against fascism and in the reconstruction of the country after the war, until the 1950s. But in the subsequent decades, the power in the hands of the polity gradually eroded and began to be usurped by the communist party itself.

The great responsibility to lead the anti-fascist war and, after the war, to put all efforts into overcoming the colossal damage suffered during the war, postponed the addressing of questions of the deepening of proletarian democracy. With the death of J.V. Stalin and the coming to power of the Khrushchevites, this question was put off forever. Instead of the Bolshevik party being the main subjective factor to enable the workers and collective farmers to rule themselves, the party began substituting itself for the class and the people in the state organisation. Within the party, the politburo began to concentrate all powers in its own hands. A retrogressive



process developed through which, over time, the Soviets became lifeless.

The mechanisms established in the 1936 Constitution became a mere formality, while party rule—the hostile conception of the dictatorship of the party as opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat—which had been roundly condemned in the earlier period, now became the reality. Democratic centralism, the principle of organisation through which the working class exercises its control over the state, was replaced with bureaucratic centralism. The class character of the Bolshevik Party began to change. The Party became divorced from the class whose vanguard it earlier was. The state transformed itself from the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The Stalin Constitution of 1936 and the state organisation based on it, where the executive power was subordinated to the legislative power, were subverted step by step after the usurpation of supreme power by the CPSU, along with the KGB and the armed forces. This went on through the entire period from the time of Khrushchev to the time of Gorbachov who presided over the culmination of this process. The Stalin Constitution was finally overthrown by Yeltsin in 1994, when “rule by decree” was established through a new constitution which gave pride of place to the “Royal Prerogative”, the theory of James I.

In other words, a communist party that fights for power for itself, whether in the capitalist system or in the socialist system, is a party that soon becomes indistinguishable from a bourgeois party. The conclusion that the developments of the 20th century point to is that establishing mechanisms and the political process through which the working class will exercise political power cannot be a distant aim of a

communist party. A communist party cannot advance the plea today that it will first fight for power for itself within the status quo, allegedly because the working class is not prepared to fight for political power for itself, and thereby substitute itself for the working class.

Neither Indian political thought nor practical experience in the 20th century suggest that a communist party in the role of an intermediary between power and the polity can succeed in empowering the people. Such a party can never be the instrument for the victory of the revolution and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessary condition for placing power in the hands of the people. Such a party can never be expected to safeguard the dictatorship of the proletariat, once it has been established. A communist party has to organise the working class and peasantry to innovate mechanisms through which they can affirm their rights, so that when the moment for the revolutionary offensive comes, the mechanisms and political process through which the proletariat is to establish and defend its rule are already in place.

The failure of the Bolshevik party to empower the people, and the collapse of the Soviet Union have brought such questions of political theory to the fore. The bourgeoisie, which rejoiced at this development, was at the same time unable to present a modern and coherent vision of a polity that would satisfy the demands of the times. The challenge facing communists in this period has been to take up the problem of democracy for solution, in theory and practice. Our Party has been elaborating the theory of renewal of Indian democracy, the question of a new political process that would empower the people. In the course of this elaboration, we have established a modern definition of a political party as one that does not fight for power for itself, but fights to ensure that power is

transferred to those deprived of power under the present system—the workers, peasants, women and youth of all nationalities and tribes, in all regions of India.

The work of our Party on this front has opened up possibilities for the working class and people to occupy the space created as a result of the political crisis of the bourgeoisie. This proactive work is the only way of ensuring that the working class does not remain a bystander while the bourgeoisie plunges the country into one crisis after another, spreading mayhem and destruction. On the contrary, by developing an alternative vision of political power and rallying the people around such a vision, the work of our Party has opened the path for deep-going transformations to be carried out in the next period, when the tide of revolution will once again be in flow.

### **Sovereignty and Indian Thought**

In order to appreciate the centrality of the question of sovereignty in political theory and practice, it is important to bear in mind that it was only fifty years ago that India's sovereignty, *de jure* and *de facto*, lay in the hands of the British Crown and Parliament. It is the anti-colonial struggle of the Indian people which wrested India's independence and her sovereignty from the British. The British had established their rule over so many different nations and tribes in South Asia that the anti-colonial struggle encompassed forces who had never before risen together against a common enemy at any time in their entire history. For these people, defeating colonialism and achieving national liberation became synonymous with the removal of poverty and backwardness, and the achievement of social liberation. It was this unity, forged in the struggle against a common and powerful enemy, that made it possible for sovereignty to be repatriated back

from Britain. As is known, formal independence ultimately gave rise to a number of countries in South Asia, and sovereignty passed into the hands of various institutions in these countries.

In ancient times, during the period of *pehli jhalak*, when human beings were humanising nature and themselves in this subcontinent, the *praja* gave rise to a *raja* whom they kept under their control. This was the phase of primitive communism, when sovereignty was vested in the *samiti* or the general assembly of the people as a whole. In the period of *dusri jhalak*, when human productivity created a large enough surplus over and above the needs of current consumption, the *raja* usurped the supreme power and placed kingship above the *praja*. People were deprived of sovereign power in their hands and consequently deprived of any control over the surplus produce. On the eve of *tisri jhalak*, when the human productive forces have reached societal and global dimensions, when the vesting of supreme power in the polity is the necessary condition for the progress of society, sovereignty must be restored to its rightful place—in the hands of the people.

India was the prime colonial possession of the British empire for nearly a century. It was the Government of India Act (1858) that unilaterally vested the sovereignty of India in the hands of Britain's rulers, and it was the 90 year-long anti-colonial struggle that forced the British to repatriate sovereignty to India in 1947. The Indian Independence Act (1947) passed by the British Parliament transferred power from the British Crown to India's Provisional Constituent Assembly as well as to the individual *rajās* and *nawabs* of the princely states that comprised British India. As we know, India was partitioned under this Act, and the princely states lost their sovereign power as they decided to or were forced to join India or

Pakistan. Sovereignty passed into the political institutions organised in New Delhi and Karachi. Almost 25 years later, sovereignty over a section of Pakistan passed into the hands of those in Dhaka. But while the sovereignty held by the British before 1947 has been divided into many parts, it still eludes the peoples of all these countries, both in theory and in practice.

India today is very different from what it was when the transfer of power occurred in 1947. In turn, the India of 1947 was also very different from that of 1858, when sovereign power was vested in London. But what is unchanged from 1858 to this day, is that the sovereignty of the people of India remains to be affirmed in theory and practice. The vast majority of people continue to be deprived of any share in political power.

For the first time since antiquity, the First War of Independence in 1857 actually began to transfer sovereignty away from the hands of the king and the royal courts to the hands of the people, in particular to the hands of the insurgents who had risen across the length and breadth of India to evict the British colonialists. The way in which Bahadur Shah was installed as the ruler of Delhi was a measure of the extent to which the people were prepared to wield political power in those conditions. In spite of the political make-up of India and the uneven development of the insurgency in 1857, the principle of sovereignty had emerged very sharply. Bahadur Shah was installed as the ruler by the insurgent forces, men and women in arms, toilers and tillers as well as the nobility of the day, who had taken up arms against a common enemy, and had taken it upon themselves to choose a ruler. Bahadur Shah argued that he had been chosen as the ruler of Hindustan by the insurgents, who had the right and the competence to do so, and that

British law had no jurisdiction over himself or over the insurgents.

During the period of primitive communism, as reflected in the *Rig Veda* and *Yajurveda*, the *Samiti* or general assembly of the people was sovereign. It is the people who created the *raja* and other institutions to protect them from the vagaries of nature and other hostile peoples. This period of primitive communism gave way to a long period of class society, when the theoretical considerations of the earlier period were completely negated.

In the post-Vedic period, the *praja* could no longer establish the *raja*. The king was appointed by divine sanction. At the same time, a king who did not carry out his duty could be overthrown by the people. The notion that the *praja* could overthrow the *raja* was retained from the earlier period, to enable the ruling class to get rid of an unsuitable king through the use of violence, if and when needed. But only the ruling class, not the people at large, could decide who should be the king.

British colonialism introduced the European notion of the State as a trustee that would protect private property while justifying all its activity in the name of the people. The colonialists used post-Vedic writings, the theories of *Bhishma* and others, to reinforce the notion that Indians inherently cannot administer themselves, that they need an intermediary to ensure the smooth functioning of society. And when colonial rule came to an end in 1947, political power was transferred into the hands of the chosen trustee, to ensure that people do not realise their sovereignty.

The struggle for the creation of a new arrangement among the workers, peasants, women and youth of India, for the creation of a new power through the renewal or rebirth of

democracy, is a struggle that emerges from the history and present motion of Indian society. The 1857 uprising made an irreversible break with the past, when the kings and his ministers and advisers held supreme power in their hands. Since then, the kingship conceived in the *Mahabharata* and the *Arthashastra*, that developed through the centuries to the time of Akbar, the Peshwas, Tipu Sultan and Ranjit Singh, could never again be stabilised in any part of India. The only remnants of that tradition were the colonial-era princely states, which were transmuted into vassals of the British sovereign, and that ultimately opted to be protected by British arms from the people of their own kingdoms.

Modern developments point to the fact that the very notion of *raja* and *praja* has become outmoded a long time ago. The rise of social productive forces demands the creation of a power that defends social property. Both capitalist development and the remnants of old common property relations are retarding the development of the productive forces. The times are ripe for modern communism based on the socialisation of property relations.

The key element in Indian political theory, that was born in the cauldron of 1857 was that sovereignty must lie with the people rising in revolt against social and national oppression—without regard for wealth, social status, gender or religion. This development was short lived, as the insurgents were unable to establish the new power and the insurgency itself was suppressed. Today, 140 years after that insurgency, and full 50 years after formal independence, the Indian people are still not vested with that sovereignty and have not been able to affirm that which the events of 1857 gave rise to. The battle for sovereignty today demands that the theory whose roots emerged in the conditions of 1857 be modernised and

developed so as to illuminate the path for the affirmation of sovereignty in the conditions of today.

## Immediate Program

Based on analysing the present political crisis and the weakness of the bourgeoisie on the question of democracy and the sovereignty of the people, the CGPI has come to the conclusion that the immediate program on the political front is to challenge the political theory and practice of the party system of governance. In its place, it is necessary to innovate and bring into being a new political process that is based on the principle of the sovereignty of the people and the inviolability of human rights. Such a program will prepare the broad masses of workers, peasants, women and youth to be organised and conscious in political terms. It will serve to forge the political unity of those who wish to make a break with the past. It will create the embryo, the seeds of the new state power. The implementation of this immediate program of renewal of the political process will contribute to the intensification of the crisis of bourgeois democracy. At the same time, it will enable the working class to go further as the tide of revolution turns from ebb to flow, to smash the bourgeois state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Starting with the principle of affirming the sovereignty of the people, the working class seeks to reform the political process so that people play the decisive role at each level of power. As the present electoral system stands, the leaders of political parties control everything down to candidate selection. If just this feature—the way candidates are selected—is reformed, then the link between the leaders and money power can be weakened. The election process can be expanded to give a role to the people in the selection of candidates. Political parties too, can be transformed from



their present role of electoral machines that bid for power, to a new role of assisting people in choosing their candidates, in setting the agenda for these representatives, in presenting a vision for society and in making the representatives accountable.

In pre-British times, the system of *panchayats* was only minimally controlled by the court of the king. The British did away with the *panchayats* altogether and established in its place a system of district collectors who had absolute executive power. The new system of *panchayats* and *nagarपालikas* that came into being in the post colonial period, and has been reaffirmed in the 1990s with constitutional status through the 73rd and 74th Amendment, facilitates full interference from above. The State Governments can dissolve the *panchayats* and *nagarपालikas* at any time, just as the Central Government can dismiss any elected State Government through a Presidential Order.

The important question of principle is that the institutions at the base must have ultimate control over political power, including all residual powers. All higher legislative bodies, including the state, regional or national legislatures and that of the Union, must have strictly defined powers and duties on specific matters, with ultimate power for any decision always remaining in the hands of the basic organs of power. The selection of candidates and the agenda for higher office then can be initiated at the level of the people directly. A fighting people, waging struggles against their exploitation and oppression, can give rise to a system of government organised at all levels in such a way that the central political institutions will have tasks only for facilitating the realisation of prosperity and protection for all, while no institution in the country will have the power to suppress any popular struggle in the name of law and order.

If all organs of political power are elected on the basis of non-partisan elections, and if candidate selection is done on the basis of the constituency committees, *panchayats*, people's councils or whatever other name by which they will be called, then political parties will be denied the dominating role they currently play. This, coupled with all residual power being taken away from the hands of the central legislature will mean that the politicians will be those selected and elected by the people, and always subject to recall, instead of those chasing or being chased by the power of money, and instead of parties that are just organised electoral machines.

With the powers of the central legislative and executive body so defined that it defends the collective interests of all the peoples with respect to foreign policy and defence, as well as ensures balanced development in all parts of the country, the repressive rule of the Central State can come to an end. The task of safeguarding the collective wealth and security of the people will be transferred to the hands of the people who will have no expeditionary army that will hurl itself against insurgents anywhere in the country or against the people of another country. Similarly, with the end of the European system of "rule of law", no struggle of the people will be turned into a law and order problem. New political mechanisms will be established for the people to harmonise their interests without having to take recourse to street demonstrations for affirming any of their rights.

In this manner, the main problem of Indian political theory—the problem of organising society as a coherent system, with the people having the final say at all levels of governance—can be solved. This problem was put on the agenda in 1857 for solution. The Indian working class now has an opportunity to solve this problem and take India from where it is to the next stage. The next stage is not a

romanticised and mystical *Ram Rajya* or some Anglo-American, Soviet, Chinese or other model, but a very concrete renovation of the political process based on modern definitions.

There already exists a consciousness among the rural and urban masses of India that they should select and elect the representatives from among themselves—among people they know, their peers, friends, neighbours and so on. The alien power that imposes candidates from afar, the hucksters who rise to do the bidding of the invisible hand based in Washington, London, Moscow, Paris or Delhi and funded by Swiss banks can be dealt with, if our people are empowered to select their candidates, elect them, and have the right to recall them at any time. The interests and claims of the people will begin to set the agenda for the society.

People must have the right to select those who have proven their worth, and the right to recall those who have failed to fulfill the people's mandate. It is necessary to fight for the defence of these rights that are being violated by the party system of governance today. The inviolability of the rights of the people could become a reality if such a renewal of the political process is brought into being. At the same time, this struggle will prepare them for the future battle to consolidate the rule of labour and build socialism through the revolution.

For 50 years, the Indian big bourgeoisie has claimed that it is fashioning a new India. The India of today that has been fashioned by the big bourgeoisie is an India of savage class and national oppression, of the denial of rights to the working class and peasantry, to the women and youth, to the dalits and minorities, to all the peoples of oppressed nationalities and tribes. It is an India wherein the majority of people are the victims of poverty and want, hunger and

destitution, illiteracy and ill health, state terrorism, anarchy and violence, insecurity of life and livelihood, and face humiliation on a daily basis. It is an India that is not in harmony with nature or with its own inhabitants.

The Indian working class must embark on a new project of nation-building in which the interests of individuals and collectives will be harmonised with one another and with the general interests of society and with the preservation of the natural environment. India's working class must rally all the revolutionary forces around such a project under the slogan that the emancipation of all is the condition for the emancipation of each.

India's working class has so far been acting in the main as a class in itself or as the tail of the bourgeois class, ever since it came into being with the introduction of capitalist relations in colonial conditions more than a century ago. It has waged many valiant struggles, but under the debilitating influence of European social-democracy and its conciliators within the communist movement, it has not emerged as the leader of the Indian people. It has not emerged as that all-India force that has the broad vision and program for the emancipation of all, a program that can inspire all the toiling and oppressed people and convert them into the force that can turn things around.

One hundred and forty-one years ago, during the glorious 1857 uprising, the modern working class was just being born. It could not at that time provide leadership to the revolution. Today, the working class constitutes about half the population of the country. It must transform itself into a class for itself, that is a class that clearly puts on the agenda the program of democratic renewal so as to vest sovereignty in the people and open the path for the revolutionary transformation of society.

## **Challenge Facing Indian Communists**

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The modern working class needs no king. What it needs is a party that would provide the required consciousness and organisation to the class, so that the entire class can act as one in showing the people how to rule themselves. The schism between the rulers and the ruled can be ended.

The political crisis creates tremendous possibilities for the communists to make a breakthrough and forge the broad alliance of all the oppressed around the working class, by presenting the vision and immediate program for the democratic renewal of India and the empowerment of the people. The political crisis is leading to the further intensification of the ideological crisis, which also creates possibilities to advance towards the aim of the restoration of unity of Indian communists in one vanguard party, the condition for the victory of the proletarian revolution in our country.

# Capturing the Space for Communism

## Introduction

The system, values and ideas of socialism and communism have come under vicious attack all over the world in this post Cold War period. However, the struggle of our Party and of all communists in this period against the onslaught on the ideology of communism, and our analysis of the developments at the base of Indian society, confirm and reaffirm our conclusion that only communism can save India. Only the revolutionary transformation of society from capitalism to socialism can end the crisis and open the path to progress. And only the coherent ideology of communism can bring about the victory of the revolution. However, the conditions also tell us that for communism to take roots in Indian society, it has to identify, occupy and expand the space where it can flourish and grow.

The deep aspiration that burns in the hearts and minds of the workers, peasants and other oppressed in India—the aspiration for liberation from exploitation and injustice, the aspiration to break with the shackles of the past—needs to be provided with a coherent system of ideas. Only then can such aspirations be turned into reality. Objectively, the vast majority of Indians stand to gain from the revolution and socialism; only the revolution can save them from insecurity and the threat of growing poorer and getting

further marginalised in society. Subjectively, the bourgeoisie has spread and continues to spread ideological confusion on a daily basis, to ensure that no coherent alternative to capitalism and the anti-social offensive of the bourgeoisie can emerge. A constant struggle therefore needs to be waged against the offensive of the bourgeoisie in the sphere of ideas, in order that communism can capture the hearts and minds of the toiling masses and turn them into that self-conscious force capable of uprooting capitalism and the entire colonial legacy from the soil of India.

Today, when the big bourgeoisie has brought to power the coalition headed by the revanchist BJP and is stepping up the anti-social offensive to shift the burden of the crisis on to the backs of the working class and all the toilers, there is tremendous space for communism to occupy by waging the ideological struggle. This struggle is to be waged against the ideas that the bourgeoisie is throwing at the working class and people today, to befuddle their minds and make them tow the imperialist line of the big bourgeoisie.

The ideological struggle is to be waged against the fraudulent "Indian" face of the "free market" policies of the BJP, by exposing the true face of capitalism and capitalist reforms and establishing that this plunder is part of the colonial legacy that has subjugated Indians for over two centuries now. It has to be waged by elaborating the content and form of democracy that will actually vest sovereignty in the hands of the people. It is to be waged against the warmongering of the Indian big bourgeoisie, against its reactionary and fascistic "war against terrorism" and its vision of India as an expanding and aggressive imperialist power. It is to be waged against the justification for national oppression and violation of rights in the name of defending "national unity and territorial

integrity". The aim of this ideological struggle is to create that arsenal of ideas that the working class can use in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Preparing for the time that the BJP will become fully discredited in the eyes of the masses, imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie are also preparing the Congress party to stage a comeback. With Sonia Gandhi at the head, this discredited party of Indian social-democracy is refurbishing its image and trying to present itself as the alternative to all extremes. There are not a few within the communist movement who are excited by these developments and are eager to line up the working class behind the bourgeois imperialist slogan of the "Third Way".

The struggle in the sphere of ideas against the offensive of the big bourgeoisie is being undermined today by those in the communist movement who are calling on the working class to unite with other parliamentary parties on the basis of opposition to the BJP. Such communists are calling on the working class to rally behind the bourgeoisie and defend its State and Constitution that deprive the working people of power. Such communists are calling on the working class and people to defend the multi-party parliamentary democracy and the so-called secular foundations of the Indian State. In a word, these are conciliators with the bourgeoisie who are calling on the working class to become the tail of the bourgeoisie and its discredited "Third Way".

At the present time, conciliation with the bourgeoisie within the communist movement takes the form of calling for the establishment of a Congress-Communist alliance or a non-Congress "secular" bourgeois front as allegedly being the only way to avert the threat posed by the BJP. The working class has even been subjected to the spectacle of



Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of West Bengal and a veteran member of the Central Committee and Politbureau of the CPI(M), repeatedly begging the Congress party and its leader Sonia Gandhi to take the lead in reconstituting the "Secular Front" to replace the Vajpayee government in New Delhi. The bourgeoisie and its conciliators in the communist movement are completely mystifying what political power is and how people can take that power into their hands and wield it to transform Indian society.

A very stern struggle against bourgeois parliamentarism, in general, and against its variants in the Indian communist movement, in particular, has become essential today. The struggle in the ideological sphere against bourgeois parliamentarism broke out over 30 years ago, with the spring thunder of Naxalbari. Naxalbari shook the conscience of all Indian communists and enlightened persons, bringing home the truth that Indian society cannot make any progress unless it shakes off the entire colonial baggage through a social revolution. It smashed the illusion that socialism can be achieved through the "peaceful and parliamentary path".

Today, the ideological struggle initiated by Naxalbari has to be taken to its logical conclusion. The conciliators with social-democracy have elevated the parliamentary form of struggle to be the main front of political work, converting revolution into a future prospect or policy objective. They have reduced communist organising to the lowest level of an "electoral machine" which faithfully delivers the people as mere voting cattle. Thanks to them, communist consciousness has become synonymous with the consciousness of the left wing of imperialism and the bourgeoisie, thereby promoting the illusion of India achieving progress without social revolution. Such illusion mongering about the bourgeois parliament, about the Congress party

and about the “Third Front”, has become the main roadblock to the creation of the fighting unity of Indian communists at the head of a politically united working class, attracting all the oppressed to rally around it.

The revolution can succeed only if the roadblocks to communist unity are eliminated. This requires that the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle are all made subservient to one single overall plan of the communist movement to create the subjective conditions for the revolution. Revolution can succeed only if communism is rendered afresh, taking into account the experience of over 30 years of class struggle since Naxalbari, the experience of 73 years of the communist movement in India before and after the split of 1964, as well as the entire experience of the international proletariat in the 20th century and before. This must be done by basing ourselves on contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought and further enriching it through our work.

By undermining the class struggle against the bourgeois offensive in the sphere of ideas, the conciliators in the communist movement are setting the stage for brutal attacks to be unleashed on communists by the class enemies. It has therefore become essential to raise the consciousness of the working class to this grave danger posed by anyone and everyone who is conciliating with social-democracy, either in the form of Congress-Communist alliance, in the form of a secular third front or any other form.

Communists should appeal to all political activists and organisers of the working class and its allies, and to all Indian communists irrespective of party affiliation, to join the struggle to defend the strategic aim of the revolution and socialism and oppose all forms of conciliation with

bourgeois ideology—with liberalism, social-democracy and fascism. We must continue and step up the struggle to win over all communists to the position that no communist party should follow such tactics that create illusions about the Congress party or any so-called secular bourgeois party, or about bourgeois parliamentary democracy and the secularism of the Indian State. All communists should unite to build the revolutionary front based on the worker-peasant alliance with the communist party at its head, so that the working class and all the hitherto oppressed can be empowered.

In expanding the ranks of the proletariat and dispossessed, Indian capitalism is digging its own grave. The intensification of the capitalist crisis, as well as the efforts of the bourgeoisie to shift the burden of the crisis on to the backs of the working class and the small propertied sections of town and countryside, are leading to widespread opposition among the broad masses of people. The political space to be captured for the revolution is increasing rapidly. If the ideological and polemical struggle is not waged around the key questions of the day, the reactionary bourgeoisie will once again manipulate the aspirations and anxieties of the people to drag society further in the direction of retrogression.

The bourgeoisie wages ideological struggle on a daily basis, ceaselessly and tirelessly through television, newspapers and other forms. It is through their control over all that informs and educates that they hold the people in thrall. The power of the cinema to disinform the people and to divert them, to lead them to wage wars, to commit crimes against one's own people, are all too well known. This is not to suggest that the working class is opposed to cinema, television and education being made available to all, but to emphasise the necessity for taking

control of the content of the information that is spread through the media. The working class needs these media more than ever, first to educate and uplift itself and all other toilers who are deprived of education, entertainment and information, and then to deploy them behind the project of building a humane and modern society.

Ignorance is the main weapon which all exploiting classes have wielded to prevent the broad masses of the people from asserting their just claims on society. It is this weapon that they deploy to keep the working class from demanding and taking political power into its own hands. It is by imposing ignorance on the pain of death that *Manuvaad* was able to re-establish the Brahmanical order in India after the rise of Buddhism, Jainism, etc. Subsequently, it is against the imposition of ignorance on the basis of the brahmans' monopoly over knowledge, the suppression of peoples' languages, and the promotion of obscurantism, that the bhaktas and sufis arose. It is by destroying this profound secularisation and enlightenment of society that had begun through the revolt of the masses, and by reimposing religious brahmanical authority and thereby condemning millions to ignorance, that the British colonialists imposed their barbaric rule over the Indian people.

British India witnessed the systematic development of the colonial edifice, based on the premise that Europeans knew best what is good for the natives. The Macaulayan education system was developed specifically to train the class that colonialism had created and to nurture their values and their mores, extending up to the training of the *babus* for the vast parasitic state apparatus. Everything Indian from the past was considered either useless or unscientific or conservative. Everything foreign and especially "western" was considered scientific and modern

and, therefore, the best. This ignorance and slave mentality still prevails, when the Indian bourgeoisie asserts that there is no better system than the monopoly capitalist system. It is a version of the idea of the white man's burden that is being promoted in India today in the form of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation, all for the benefit of the native and foreign financial oligarchies.

A vanguard which does not consistently exorcise the twin devils of ignorance and slave mentality from the Indian psyche, cannot lead the struggle against injustice and bring about the emancipation of labour from all forms of exploitation. The communist party, the advanced section of the working class constituted as an organised collective has to consciously and conscientiously acquire broad and deep scientific knowledge as an integral part of leading the class struggle. They have to master all forms of consciousness and organisation that have arisen in the east and the west. It is by bringing forward in philosophy, theory and politics what is best from our collective global past and making it serve the needs of today that the working class can establish a society which inscribes on its banner "from each according to ability, to each according to need".

Analysing the circumstances that have faced the working class and communist movement in this period, our Party has assessed that in the sphere of ideas, there is a tremendous space for communism to occupy by waging the most stern ideological struggle. In the sphere of the restoration of unity of communists in India and internationally, there is space to be occupied through stern polemical struggle. There is also space to win over political activists by elaborating and defending what kind of party is needed in modern times. It is through this work that socialism and communism will grow on Indian soil. It will also grow as the theory of the liberation of the working

class and the toilers of India begins to take shape and the political unity of the people begins to be established behind the program to lift society out of the crisis. In sum, communism needs to occupy the space of deep-going revolutionary transformation. The work of our Party has been guided by these conclusions and continues to be guided by them today.

## Ideological Offensive in this Period

### The Paris Charter and the Anti-Communist Onslaught

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar division of the world, the essence of the ideological offensive of the imperialist bourgeoisie, with US imperialism as its spearhead, has been the assertion that there is no alternative. Whether it concerns the economy or the polity or the question of values, imperialism and world reaction continue to assert that there is absolutely no alternative to capitalism and market reform, no alternative to the multi-party system of bourgeois democracy.

At the end of the 20th century, imperialism and the bourgeoisie assert that there is no better outlook than the philosophy of the European bourgeoisie that arose in the 19th century, under the conditions of *laissez faire* or free market capitalism. Values that are based on the white man's burden, on tolerance and other paternalistic European notions are pushed as universal values for all to adopt. Irrationalism, which arose in the 19th century as a reactionary trend of bourgeois thought to combat the revolutionisation of social science by Karl Marx, is once again in fashion today. The "post modern" offsprings of irrationalism, such as deconstructionism, which preach

that the world is unknowable, are being popularised today. The aim of spreading such outdated ideas is to justify the capitalist-imperialist offensive and ideologically disarm the working class and peoples of the world so that they are unable to defend themselves.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and its camp, as a result of the manipulation by world imperialism of the revolt of the working class and people against pseudo-socialism, was the occasion for world imperialism to gleefully assert the superiority of the capitalist system over the socialist system and launch an unprecedented offensive against the ideology of communism. It began to push recklessly the ideas of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation, and prepared and financed structural adjustment programs to intensify the exploitation and plunder of the land and labour of various peoples, as the panacea for all the problems of the world. Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost* were final acts of the greatest betrayal of the working class and peoples of Russia and other republics of the Soviet Union, who had once consciously chosen the path of communism as their destiny and had heroically led the rout of the Hitlerite hordes.

The leaders of world imperialism met in Paris in 1991 and in a very demonstrative way armed themselves with a charter—the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. This Charter was the declaration of the bourgeoisie of Europe, US and Canada. It declared that the free market economy, bourgeois pluralism and multi-party democracy, and human rights based on the inviolability of private property, were universal values that need to be accepted by all states and peoples of the world. It is this old, Eurocentric conception of society that was promoted as the most modern progressive path—the path of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation—to solve the problems the world faced in the post Cold War period.

Since the end of the bipolar division and the unfurling of the Paris Charter in 1991, US imperialism has become more ferocious, bombing and threatening to bomb any state or peoples that dare to challenge the so-called universal values of the Paris Charter. The recent launching of Cruise missiles into Sudan and Afghanistan, in blatant violation of all principles of civilised conduct among states, is stark evidence of the dangerous path of imperialism and the reactionary bourgeoisie today.

With arrogance surpassing even that of the colonial powers of Old Europe, the monopolies and financial oligarchies of New Europe, along with those of the US and Canada, have declared war on all the peoples of the world, their history, their thought material, and their very existence. The essence of this anti-social offensive is the negation of collective rights (and along with it the rights of individuals as well) including national sovereignty. It is the negation of the principle that modern society has the obligation to ensure the well-being of all its members, and the principle that every nation and people have the right to establish the economic and political system of their choice.

As far as the working class and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America are concerned, there is no reason whatsoever to accept the Charter of Paris, which is the embodiment of the irrationalism of 19th century Europe. Peoples of North America and Europe also have the right and duty to smash the imposition of 19th century definitions on them to hold back their progress.

The key thing in reactionary bourgeois thought since 19th century liberalism is the irrational notion that all things and relations are immutable. The bourgeoisie is arrogant and declares that its system will last forever. The champions of market reform issue appeals to all that they



should bear no responsibility towards anyone but themselves. Far from being the masters of things and relations, the bourgeoisie asks us all to be the slaves of things and relations, slaves of monopoly capital. It claims that the liberal society is the last act of human beings.

Adopting the style of the medievalists, the spokespersons of the bourgeoisie assert that capitalism is the last word in social systems. This, in spite of the fact that capitalism continues to destroy the natural, material and human productive forces, has led to and is leading to the immiseration of the people on an unprecedented scale, has led to and continues to lead to wars of destruction and devastation. Moreover, capitalist democracy does not even acknowledge the claims of anybody except the biggest monopolies and oligopolies.

The bourgeois ideologues of Europe, US and Canada have gone so far as to openly declare that there is no longer any ideology, any history or any science. Some even deny there is any such thing as society. With this notion of immutability as the kernel of its conscience, the bourgeoisie of the world has proclaimed its globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation program. It claims that there is no alternative but to accept this hell on earth as the last word in the development of society. It wants to have communities based on race, language, gender, religion or life style and rejects the modern definition of society, namely: that it is to society that people are born and hence society is obliged to look after them; and that every person has rights by virtue of being human.

### **Social-Democracy and the “ThirdWay”**

In the conditions of the deepening of the capitalist crisis and the severe political crises that are erupting in all the

capitalist and imperialist countries, imperialism is whipping up all the backward forces of national chauvinism, xenophobia, racism, fascism and revanchism to quell the struggles of the working class and people. It is also pressing social-democracy into service once again, in a revised form, in the post Cold War period, to confuse and divert the struggles of the working class into a class conciliatory path. Recent elections in France, Italy, Britain, Greece and Germany have thrown up "centre-left" coalitions in these countries; indeed, barring Spain and Luxemburg, all of Western Europe today is ruled by left-center governments, distinguished from the Thatcherite wave of the 1980s.

The old social-democratic groups in these countries came under great pressure on the economic front as the bourgeoisie organised the liberalisation and privatisation programs in the eighties. Their instantaneous reaction was to hanker for the past, for state monopoly capitalism giving out large handouts to them for their services towards "class peace". In due course, however, they have adjusted very well to the liberalisation and privatisation agenda as well as the agenda of imperialism and the bourgeoisie for the re-division of the world.

Old social-democracy is changing its colours and is trying to occupy a space in the new political landscape that imperialism is providing, in the form of being the alternative to all extremes, implying that it is an alternative to fascism and to the revolution. The bourgeoisie hopes to have some credibility for its economic restructuring program because even the "left" agrees with this prescription to supposedly fix the crisis-ridden state sector. It hopes to regain credibility for the party dominated political system because the "left" is participating in this anachronism. Imperialism has provided the space to a "left" force that is

committed to the values of imperialism as contained in the Paris Charter.

In September 1998, at a New York forum, President Clinton of the US and Prime Minister Blair of Britain, along with other leaders from European countries, gathered to push their vision of the "third way". This "third way" is being promoted as the alternative that can diffuse the anger and frustration of the peoples against the anti-social offensive. Traditionally, while the Conservative Party (Tories) and the Labour Party have alternately formed the government in Britain, the Republican and the Democratic parties have done the same in the US. Clinton and Blair are credited with having reformed their respective "left" parties to become the champions of "less government", "market friendly government", "enhancing the role of Non-governmental Organisations" and "decentralisation".

The struggle against this line of "third way" as the "alternative to two extremes" is integral to the ideological struggle to establish the independent aim of the working class at this time. The form in which this "third way" is being pushed by the Anglo-American imperialists is that it is the best alternative to Thatcherism and Reaganism, on the one hand, and to the big government and welfare policy of state monopoly capitalism, on the other hand. Our Party considers this as no different from the division in the Cold War period that was imposed on the working class, forcing it to choose between the camps of the two superpowers and abandon its independent aims.

The line of the "third way" is no different from the illusion of a "middle road" that has a long history of reconciling class conflicts in India. It is no different from the illusion of a "third front" that continues to be promoted in the Indian communist movement. All these forms of this line of the

“third way” have one aim—to divert the working class from the revolutionary road. Communists must not budge from the position that there are only two roads—the road of the revolution and the road of conciliation and capitulation to the class enemy. Either one is a slave or one is a revolutionary. There is nothing in between.

Our Party, in its assessment of the developing realignment of forces in the post Cold War world, has made a thorough analysis of the United Front and National Front coalition politics in India and the role of those communists who formed the Third Front. The CGPI has openly called on the working class and people not to be deceived by the slogan of Third Front. The slogan of Third Front, while appearing to be an alternative to the two fronts led by the BJP and Congress party, is in essence the alternative to certain capitalist reforms, on the one hand, and to proletarian revolution on the other. The historical experience of the working class shows that this is no different from the classic “middle path” between capitalism and socialism, whose aim is to reconcile the class struggle and rescue capitalism from the onslaught of the people.

The bourgeoisie creates the impression that by finding the “correct balance” between liberalism and social-democracy, between the market and the State, the present crisis can be overcome. This is a trap of which all communists and class conscious workers must beware. It is a trap because both liberalism and social-democracy are ideological forms of the one essence—the rule of capital under conditions of monopoly and monopolistic competition. The struggle is not between the so-called right and left wings of the bourgeoisie; the main struggle is between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

The main issue is not to strike the “correct balance”

between market and State. The main aim which the working class has set for itself is to transform the quality, the content of the State in order to subjugate the market and all things to the collective will of society. It is to resolve the contradiction between social production and private appropriation by socialising the relations of production. With this strategic aim, the working class fights for an immediate program of democratic renewal, of deep-going transformations.

As far as the content of the policies of liberalism and social-democracy are concerned, they go hand in hand. It is very difficult to distinguish where social-democracy ends and liberalism begins, or vice versa. The bourgeoisie needs liberalism to bring social-democracy to power and achieve class peace, while it helps itself to the state treasury. It needs social-democracy to give credibility to economic liberalism, a system in which "left" and "right" can clash and create spectacles for the people, so that the people remain diverted and divided, unable to challenge the bourgeoisie.

### **Deconstructionism and the Ghettoization of the Polity**

The motion inherent in the current stage of Indian society appears in the political arena in various forms. The movement for the emancipation of women, for the elimination of caste discrimination and oppression, movements for the protection of the natural environment, the movement against state terrorism, for the defence of human rights, the movements of various peoples within the Indian Union for national self-determination and movements in defence of minority rights are all manifestations of the same collective essence. They are all manifestations of the striving of the social productive forces against the outmoded relations of production. They are manifestations

of the demand for the renewal of democracy, for the reorientation of the economy and the reconstitution of the Indian Union on a voluntary basis. However, to prevent such currents from coalescing into one force that is strong enough to challenge the existing authority, to destroy the old and build the new social relations, imperialism and the bourgeoisie are promoting deconstructionism.

Deconstructionism, in philosophical terms, denies the unity of the all encompassing universe of things and phenomena. Rather than investigating to identify the collective essence as it reveals itself through the myriad phenomena, deconstructionism breaks down society into minute parts and promotes the notion of "autonomous" movements of different collectives, independent of the whole. Based on this imperialist philosophical trend, numerous bourgeois sociologists and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have been activated to promote various "autonomous" movements of women, ethnic minorities, of oppressed castes and tribes, whose aim is nothing more than to seek accommodation within the existing power structures for a privileged segment of these sections.

Our Party has consistently fought for equal rights of all members of the polity, while recognising the unequal conditions and the necessity for the state to extend special assistance to various collectives in society, to enable everyone to exercise his or her rights. Thus, the physically handicapped as well as the victims of caste oppression and discrimination need special attention and facilities to enable them to participate as equal members of the polity. Child-bearing and nursing women need special care to enable them to participate in the affairs of society. The struggle for equal rights will be meaningless without struggling to establish the enabling mechanisms for people to enjoy and exercise those rights.

The bourgeois ideologists, on the other hand, exploit the unequal social conditions faced by different individuals and collectives to deny the need for the equality of political rights. In place of a united struggle of all the oppressed against the violation of their rights, the bourgeoisie promotes separate sectarian movements for special privileges and quotas. The striving for special privileges and quotas serves to keep the polity divided and incoherent. It serves to preserve the existing order by diverting the oppressed masses from uniting against the common enemy.

Great pressure has been applied on women's organisations to submit to the bourgeois ideological offensive that appears in the form of a "choice" between seeking accommodation in the existing parliamentary democracy or remaining "autonomous" and disconnected with the political movement, confining their attention to "women's issues". The discontent of women with the existing political power and political process and their disgust with criminalised bourgeois parties have been manipulated by the bourgeoisie to promote the virtues of an "autonomous" movement, disunited with the social force that can bring about the revolution, without which women will not be emancipated from their oppression. The ideological pressure on the women's movement in India today takes the form of the diversionary debate over reservation of parliamentary seats for women. It is diversionary precisely because it dissociates the question of empowering women from the question of the renewal of democracy and the political process so as to empower all the hitherto oppressed sections of society.

The emancipation of women requires the emancipation of labour from exploitation. And in turn, the emancipation of the working class requires the emancipation of women

from all forms of oppression. This is the material basis for the unity of the women's movement and the working class movement. The propaganda about "women's issues" and the debate over gender based reservation of parliamentary seats are aimed at severing this bond, so as to isolate the working class from its natural allies and eliminate the revolutionary essence of the striving of women for their empowerment.

The problems of women are problems facing the whole of society, and in turn, the problems of society are problems that face women. Similarly, it is also true that the problem of caste oppression is a problem that plagues Indian society, and in turn, the problems of capitalist and feudal exploitation, of imperialist and colonial plunder, are problems that weigh heavily on the victims of caste oppression. The problem of protecting the natural environment is intrinsically connected with the question of reorienting the economy to create the conditions for prosperity and protection for all. The bourgeois ideological offensive is directed at breaking this connection, at separating the various trends of opposition to the status quo, so that the polity remains fragmented, the motion of Indian society remains incoherent and the rule of capital is preserved.

Basing itself on contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought and on the best of Indian thought material, the CGPI has consistently waged the ideological struggle against all tendencies that are aimed at dividing and ghettoizing the polity. It has consistently upheld the banner of human rights, encouraging and uniting all those whose rights are violated in the existing system of society. Through our theoretical work, we have elaborated the collective essence of all the struggles against the existing authority. We have developed the program for the democratic renewal of India as the rallying point for political unity against the big bourgeoisie.



The numerous currents of opposition to the status quo provide a broad and expanding space to be captured for communism. Communism can capture this space only by consistently and continuously waging the ideological struggle against all the trends that divide the polity. It must capture this space by elaborating a coherent vision of the new society that will satisfy the claims of all its members.

### Struggle over Values

Taking the cue from imperialism and its anti-social offensive on the world scale, the Indian bourgeoisie has launched its own offensive to negate the rights of the working class and people. The bourgeoisie attacks the rights of collectives in the name of defending individual rights, and attacks individual rights in the name of defending the interests of society. The fact of the matter is that in today's world, it is not possible to defend any individual right when the collective that the individual belongs to does not have its rights defended. The right to conscience or right to free speech has no meaning if these rights are denied to the people and their collectives. Nor can the interests of the collective become a justification to attack individual rights. The right to conscience, for instance, is attacked in the name of the "defence of national unity and territorial integrity", not just in India but in most parts of the world.

The Indian bourgeoisie is drawing on the most backward and regressive ideas both from the "West" and from India's own past to deny individual rights even on paper. Besides branding all struggles of the people in the border states of India as terrorist struggles and using state terrorism to suppress them, the leaders of the present BJP-led government have asserted that Indian values dictate only duties for the broad masses of people towards their

country. According to this logic, all struggles of the workers and peasants to affirm their rights are against “Indian values” besides being “illegal” under the numerous draconian laws that the Indian State has in its books. On the other hand, BJP has no problem in accepting the rights of capitalist private property and all the Euro-centric values that go with the “right” to exploit the labour of others.

The BJP is pushing the same notion that was pushed by its predecessor in power, the Congress party and which continues to be pushed by the imperialist bourgeoisie all over the world—the notion that society has no obligation towards anyone except the monopolies and big business interests. Speaking the language most prevalent in the advanced capitalist countries, the Indian big bourgeoisie is advancing the same slogan that there is no choice but to accept a reformed capitalism, reformed to accommodate the claims of the biggest monopolies and financial oligopolies, and very few others if any.

What is noteworthy is that the “reform” of capitalism which the bourgeoisie is pursuing does not have the aim of restricting the scope of the operation of the law of maximum capitalist profit. On the contrary, the aim is the exact opposite. The bourgeoisie wants reforms to expand the scope of operation of this law through fuller and more thorough exploitation of all sectors of the economy and society. The extreme intensification of exploitation and plunder of the land and labour of India is being promoted as the only solution to the economic crisis.

Today, on the eve of the 21st century, nobody can deny that people are born to society and society must be so organised that it can provide for the well-being and welfare of all its members. This corresponds to the modern definition of rights and is also one of the central aspects of Indian

political thought. However, according to present-day “Western” ideologues and their Indian followers, society has no obligation to anyone except to the financial oligarchies and big monopolies. The imposition of these imperialist theories on the soil of India is creating grave complications.

When large-scale production is the norm and distribution is organised on a global scale, it is not possible for “one to fend for oneself”. It is absurd that production and distribution should be so highly organised but the human beings involved in production and distribution should be left to fend for themselves. To advocate globalisation on the one hand, and cutbacks in public distribution and agricultural subsidies on the other hand, is to advocate that human beings and human society become slaves to things, which, in the present instance means becoming slaves to the drive of finance capital and monopoly capital for the maximum rate of capitalist profit. This demand of big capital that people give up their essential human quality—the ability for cognition and consequent intervention to transform their own environment—is diametrically opposed to the striving of the Indian people.

Values refer to those norms of social life that a nation or people establish and develop in the course of their coming into being and their social development. At the core of any system of values, including the system of Indian values, is the conception of rights and duties of individuals and collectives in society. In the final analysis, it is such values about what is right, what is unjust and what is duty or obligation that determines the political stand that Indian workers, peasants and other oppressed take in the heat of the class struggle. This is a most strategic space for communism to occupy, by elaborating the content of modern Indian values and combating the offensive of the bourgeoisie in this field.

The modern definition of Indian values is based on the striving of the modern Indian working class, the most revolutionary class in Indian society today. It is also based on drawing from the past what is best, namely, the striving of the people to create a society free from injustice and the threat of external invasion.

The values that emerged from the period of the *pehli jhalak*, primitive communism, through the numerous struggles against injustice and the hated caste system, the struggles against external invasions, including the First War of Indian Independence in 1857 and all the struggles in the period of the anti-colonial movement, and especially the struggle of the working class for socialism and communism, continue to stir the hearts and minds of Indians in the present, from north to south, from west to east. In essence, this is the aspiration and striving to rearrange society so that all the blessings of modern society, the advanced productive forces and the socialised distribution can be deployed to uplift the human beings and their collectives. A sharp clash is taking place between the forces trying to impose the value of “one fending for oneself” and those working to ensure that “society fulfills the claims of all its members”. This clash is taking place not only in India but also around the world.

The human beings of today will wage the same struggles as their predecessors have done, but on a new basis, under today’s conditions and imbued with the social consciousness of our time. The consciousness of our time tells us that the struggle today is not only against injustice, indignity, deprivation and aggression, but also for creating a society based on justice, dignity, prosperity and security. With large-scale production and a huge potential social surplus generated by people working together in their millions, society is poised to take the struggle against

injustice to its logical conclusion. This they will do by creating that society based on justice for which they have aspired and fought for so long, and for which the prerequisites have been created.

This will not be the kind of justice that exists on paper as in the case of the “secular” and “democratic” Indian State. It will have a content that is modern in every sense but Indian in its essence, capturing everything that the Indian mind has pondered over in its long struggle against injustice. This work is crucial to the success of the historic battle of our time.

Struggle against injustice has been the core value of Indian society. Its modern definition is that the struggle against injustice is at the same time the struggle to empower the people to create a society free from injustice—economic, social and political. This is a repudiation of the “just society” of the twentieth century through the “social welfare state” because this “just society” is conceived as one that gives handouts and accommodates elites so that the struggle against injustice can be subverted. Establishing the modern definition of rights, consistent with the contemporary conditions and with the best of Indian thought, is crucial to win victory and end the stagnation and decay of Indian society, opening the door for its all-round progress.

It is important to contest the claims of revanchist forces like the BJP to be the inheritors of Indian thought material and expose their one-sided and reactionary rendering of Indian thought. For instance, the brahmanical rendering of *dharma* is that it only specifies duties for the people, while rights are reserved for a chosen few. This is the interpretation being promoted by the leaders of BJP. But in the thought of the Rig Vedic period, *dharma* is constituted as a system of rights and duties in the context of society.

This concept of *dharma* has had a strong influence on the struggle against injustice.

There is an entire period in our history, the period since the ossification of caste division and the emergence of economic classes of exploiters and exploited, when the oppressors defined *dharma* to justify their rule and undermine the struggle against injustice. In concrete terms, the system of rights and duties was rendered as a system of duties for the majority and rights for a privileged few, only to be challenged by the revolts and violent upheavals that dot the Indian historical landscape. Separating rights from duties or vice versa has only caused incoherence and disruption, imposing a system of revenge-seeking, a tit-for-tat struggle that blocks the road to progress.

Today, under conditions of large-scale production and distribution, the modern social force of India, the working class, has to contest outmoded Eurocentric ideas as well as the reactionary bourgeois rendering of Indian thought, as part of preparing to end this status quo. We communists have to clarify and elaborate that it is the right and duty of the workers, peasants and all other small propertied and working people of town and country to carry out the revolution; and that their immediate task is to forge the revolutionary front around the program for the democratic renewal of India.

The BJP defines its vision of India as being based on "*Hindutva*" which it describes as cultural nationalism. By this it means to say that there is only one Indian nation, whose unifying element is allegedly the religious philosophy of "Hinduism", the essence of which is Brahmanism. On the basis of this distortion, the BJP tries to pass off the current imperialist strategy of the big bourgeoisie as something anti-imperialist, something about which Indians

can feel proud. But the “pride” which they are promoting is imperialist and chauvinist pride which goes along with arrogance and aggression against others, just like the pride of the Americans who claim that they have the right to drop bombs on others because “they are America”—the world’s only “indispensable nation” according to Madeline Albright—or because of their “right to retaliate”. This kind of imperialist arrogance has nothing to do with civilised conduct, has nothing to do with modern Indian values.

In the name of Indian thought, the BJP is in fact peddling outdated ideas against which the Indian people have risen in revolt many times. Besides, this is also in contempt of Indian philosophy or *darshan shastra*, which studies how things and phenomena reveal themselves today. The approach of the present ruling class shows its inability to explain the present and put forth how the present can be turned around in favour of the people. Workers and peasants must ask the ideologues of the BJP, “Where in your Hindutva are the ideological weapons for fighting capitalism at its highest stage of imperialism? And why are you debasing the philosophical foundation of Indian thought as contained in the Rig Veda on such cardinal questions as the relationship between rights and duties? Why are you not addressing yourselves to the questions of our times on how to humanise nature and society under today’s conditions of globalisation on the basis of the Indian philosophical foundation?”

Those who have narrow and self-serving aims cannot be allowed to appropriate the heritage of Indian philosophy and political theory, which belongs to the working class and people of India. The working class and people must use Indian theory to humanise and transform today’s society, not as a mirror or caricature of the past but as a personification of their strivings for justice and dignity, on

the high road of human civilisation. The task of establishing through words and deeds what Indian values are, on the basis of definitions that are consistent with the India of today, the India of workers, peasants, intelligentsia, women and youth of all nationalities, must become an important element of the work of communists to lift India out of the crisis.

### **Roadblocks to Communist Unity**

The working class and toilers of India continue to have great expectations that socialism and communism will be established on the soil of India and that they will be emancipated from their exploitation and oppression. So far, emancipation has eluded the working class and all the oppressed. This has happened because the propertied classes have bound them hand and foot to capitalism and the remnants of feudalism. More importantly, the communist and workers' movement has been undermined by social-democracy. The fact is that European social-democracy presents itself in the colours of socialism and communism in India. The aspirations of the propertied classes created by colonialism and imperialism have dug their poisonous claws into the healthy body of the working class movement for emancipation, demanding that real socialism and communism submit itself to social-democracy.

At a time when the conditions are crying out for a united political struggle of the working class and all the oppressed against the imperialist anti-people course of the big bourgeoisie, the conciliators with social-democracy are demanding that communists should submit to their parliamentary program of replacing the BJP-led front in power with a so-called secular bourgeois front. The idea of a Secular Front, with or without the Congress(I), is based on the notion that the BJP constitutes the "main danger",



the danger of communalism and fascism. To subscribe to this notion means to conciliate with the social-democratic notion that there is a progressive aspect to the Indian bourgeoisie and the Indian State. It is to subscribe to the notion that the Indian State is secular and democratic, while it is only some fundamentalists who pose the danger.

Experience has shown and our analysis confirms that this theory of fighting the “communal and fascist danger” to the exclusion of everything else must be abandoned. All confusion-mongering about the “secular fabric” of the Indian State must be abandoned, so that Indian people can calmly deliberate on qualities and features that they desire in their state and government, the role they want the political parties to perform in society, in a way that is consistent with the people being empowered to govern themselves.

Our analysis and life’s experience have shown that the Indian State is an adaptation of the colonial state built by the British to subjugate India. It is an instrument of suppression of the working class and all the toiling masses, an instrument of internal and external aggression in defence of maximum plunder of the land and labour of Indians, an instrument to keep the polity divided through sectarian strife.

In the name of “secularism”, the Indian State tolerates and facilitates the worst kind of communal violence. And in the name of “democracy”, it allows the most anti-democratic forces to thrive. To call on the working class to defend the “secular and democratic foundations” of the existing Indian State means to completely abandon any program for lifting India out of the crisis, renovate its institutions and empower the people. Nay worse, it is to wage the ideological struggle on the side of the bourgeoisie—

because the creation of illusions about the Indian State only serves the bourgeoisie to preserve the status quo.

Those who advocate this or that form of an anti-BJP parliamentary front are conciliating with the bourgeois lie that there is no alternative to capitalism. They preach to communists and class conscious workers that the working class has no possibility to establish and lead its own anti-capitalist, anti-feudal, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist revolutionary front at this time. This in spite of the fact that as early as the beginning of the 20th century, Lenin had analysed that capitalism had reached its final stage, the stage of imperialism and the time had come for the working class to establish its own political alternative and new political power—the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead of revolutionizing thought and action to innovate the new mechanisms of proletarian power, such conciliators repeat the bourgeois assertion that there is no alternative to capitalism and parliamentary democracy.

The times are demanding that the working class stops being the tail of the bourgeoisie in political terms. The workers must challenge those communists who are refusing to break with the path of tailing the bourgeois opposition. They must raise their voices against this pressure that is being exerted on the working class movement by such communists at a time when the bourgeoisie has nothing to offer that can give confidence to the people. History has shown and theory tells us that people can and must reorganise society to resolve the crisis in their favour. The time has come for the working class to build its independent revolutionary front.

In the sphere of the economic struggle against capitalism and the offensive of the monopoly bourgeoisie to globalise capital and production through liberalisation and

privatisation, the conciliators with social-democracy take a two-faced position. On the one hand, they make loud noises in opposition to liberalisation and privatisation. On the other hand, they conciliate with the bourgeois offensive and the notion that “there is no alternative to capitalism”. Where they manage the state power, as in West Bengal, such communists are seen eagerly wooing monopoly capital, both Indian and foreign, in the name of industrialising the economy of West Bengal. This is a position which is not fundamentally different from that of Naidu’s Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government in Andhra Pradesh, the favourite of all the monopoly capitalists and financial oligarchs.

Those who are calling for a parliamentary anti-BJP front, with or without the Congress(I), are calling on the workers and peasants to fall into the trap set by the bourgeoisie. They are mobilising the working class to line up behind one section of the bourgeoisie, to become vote banks in the inter-bourgeois conflict.

At every stage in the process of globalisation of capital and production through liberalisation and privatisation, there have been some among the propertied classes who have lost out as some old arrangements are replaced with new arrangements. The bureaucrat capitalists in the state enterprises that are slated for privatisation, the monopolists in various sectors who now face some foreign competition as a result of liberalisation of import and investment policies, the big business houses who see their competitors grabbing pieces of state enterprises at throw-away prices—such elements constitute the conservative lobby within the bourgeoisie, that also wants to temporarily halt or slow down the market oriented reforms or some aspect of this process. They constitute the material base for the parliamentary opposition to the “liberalisation”, or

“privatisation” or both. By calling on the workers and peasants to rally behind one or other party of parliamentary opposition, the conciliators in the communist movement are in effect demanding that real communism, i.e., the movement for the emancipation of labour, should submit itself to the striving of a section of the propertied classes.

No to this reform, no to that reform—this is what the CPI(M) and CPI have been telling the working class and trade unions under their influence. But what is the alternative? What is the independent program of the working class? Communists cannot get away from addressing this question. The program of replacing the BJP-led front in power by a Congress(I)-led front or a United Front of regional bourgeois parties in which some communists participate, is a program that may be attractive to some sections of the bourgeoisie who are dissatisfied with the present arrangement. However, it does not fulfill the aim of the working class to open the path to the overthrow of capitalism and to the elimination of the colonial legacy.

Once someone has accepted these terms set by the bourgeoisie, that the struggle is between one policy and another, i.e., between different ways to achieve the aims of the bourgeoisie, then it means that one has already fallen into the trap. The struggle of the working class is not between one policy and another, it is to replace one system by another, the monopoly capitalist system by the socialist system, the first phase of communism.

Once conciliation with the class enemy is accepted, whether it is done under the liberal banner or social-democratic banner, the content of such politics will be to defend the rule of the bourgeoisie over the working people. As far as communists are concerned, the fundamental

question of principle is to oppose conciliation with the bourgeoisie. Any vacillation in the opposition to bourgeois ideology in any form is to conciliate with the bourgeoisie. Both in theory and practice, social-democracy practices class conciliation and blocks the development of the class struggle, preventing it from becoming a threat to bourgeois rule. It is the opinion of CGPI that any vacillation in opposing social-democracy is to conciliate with it and in the end merge with it. If history is any guide, such an approach directly assists the bourgeoisie to disarm the working class and pave the way for the victory of fascism.

It is not a coincidence that the line of defending the "secular and democratic foundations of the Indian State" has led the forces doing so to conciliate with state terrorism and the violence of the Indian State. It has led them to conciliate with the colonial definition of the "rule of law" and with the imperialist justification for state terrorism in the name of "defence of national unity and territorial integrity", "restoring peace", "waging war against terrorism", etc. Such communists are sharing the same platform with the Congress(I) and BJP in their stand towards the actions of the Indian army in the north-east or the north-west of India, and on laws such as TADA or variations of it in different parts of India. What this shows is that to conciliate with social-democracy at the present time in Indian conditions is to conciliate with imperialism and world reaction which are plotting to terrorise the whole world with their "war against international terrorism". It is an open abandonment of proletarian internationalism.

The exclusively territorial definition of India is part of the colonial legacy. By definition, it negates nations and national rights. When colonial rule came to an end, to ensure that national rights would remain negated, the polity would remain divided and the plunder continue in the

post colonial period, the gruesome Partition was organised. Out of this emerged two and later three political powers in the peninsula—the states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The bourgeoisie that dominates each of these states has preserved the colonial political institutions, especially the bureaucracy, the armed forces and the British legal system—in short, the “rule of law” remains that which was established by colonialism to subjugate all the nations of South Asia. Communists cannot and must not defend this colonial legacy of national oppression.

The worst crimes, such as those that are daily committed by the armed forces of the Indian State in Kashmir and the north-east, are justified by the Indian bourgeoisie in the name of defending “national unity and territorial integrity”. The Indian working class cannot accept any justification whatsoever under which it will support the slaughter of its own brothers and sisters in any part of India or the world. The politics of class conciliation with the bourgeoisie has driven some inside the CPI(M) even to defend such crimes and turn the national question into its opposite, while throwing the internationalism of the working class to the wind.

The patriotism of the Indian people has been assailed to pit brother against brother and sister against sister in the family of nations constituting India. The people have been called upon to be slaves of the thing called the “territorial integrity of India” whose defence is not a factor for their well-being but a factor for the slaughter of the toilers of India. It is time for the revolutionary class to show its internationalism in practice and reject any justification for state terrorism irrespective of whether it comes from “leftists”, “rightists” or “centrists”.

Communists can never forget that it was social-democracy and those in the communist parties of Europe who

conciliated and collaborated with it, that paved the way for both the First and the Second World Wars. It is by waging an irreconcilable ideological and polemical struggle against the conciliators that the communists in those times, with Lenin and Stalin at the head, preserved and expanded the space for communism, enabling the working class to establish and defend the new political power and economic system and march ahead on the road of the revolution.

Indian communists are faced with a similar challenge today, as the conciliators with social-democracy are applying tremendous pressure on all communists that they must submit to the line of parliamentary communism or be branded as anti-nationals and terrorists and face repression at the hands of the Indian state. They are leading the working class into the trap set by the bourgeoisie, to become the supporters of the alleged lesser evil within the bourgeoisie and fight for the "best policy" for achieving the aims of the big bourgeoisie.

The time has come for all Indian communists to take common aim and wage the ideological and polemical struggle against those in the movement who are advocating class conciliation. Masses of workers and other toiling people have had their movements hijacked by the very forces against whom they have struggled, because of the politics of class conciliation. The main reasons for people not being able to wage their struggles to the end are the rewards the conciliators receive from the state and the ruling circles, on the one hand, and the state repression on the people on the other hand.

The ideological and polemical struggle cannot have the aim of either convincing or discrediting this or that individual or party. If such a thing is done, such struggles will

necessarily degenerate into factional and sectarian strife. Instead of restoring communist unity, it will lead to further splits and divisions on an unprincipled basis, spreading the bourgeois mentality of groupism and revenge seeking within the movement of the working class for emancipation. It is such factional and sectarian strife that led to the split and disintegration of the Communist Party in India, starting with the first major split in 1964.

The problem of disunity among the fighting forces has been compounded by not having a program for the communist movement that can guide all the day-to-day struggles. Waging the ideological struggle in defence of the program of the class and simultaneously exposing the machinations of the bourgeoisie and its left-sloganeering fronts are the order of the day if the struggles of the peoples have to be saved from subversion in future. This is the essence of preparing the ideological conditions for the unity of Indian communists and for the political unity of the broad masses.

### **What Kind of Party?**

Politically conscious activists among the workers, peasants, women, youth and students, recognise two things. First, the broad masses of people have become extremely disgusted with what all the political parties who are contesting for power through the current system are doing to the people and the country. Second, the fighting unity of the masses of oppressed against their oppression urgently requires a revolutionary party to provide leadership in theoretical, ideological and organisational terms so that the people can be victorious. Thus the very conditions in the movements of the broad sections of people against the anti-social offensive of the bourgeoisie, against the criminalisation of politics, against the assault



on Indian values and for the affirmation of their rights give rise to the question: what kind of party?

Contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought teaches us that the growing disgust among the broad masses of people with politicians and political parties, in India and internationally, is a reflection of the fact that bourgeois democracy and its political process have become an anachronism. What people are most disgusted and frustrated about is the domination of the polity by bourgeois parties that push sectional interests and criminalise the polity and lower the political culture. In such conditions, our Party has recognised the importance of highlighting the feature of the vanguard communist party as a party that fulfills the need of the movement to provide the necessary organisation and consciousness so that people can be victorious. It has recognised the need to build the party not as an electoral machine but as an organisation of class conscious workers which can be the instrument of class struggle of the workers and peasants of India.

Our Party wants to raise the prestige of politics and political work, as the highest expression of the culture of the people. It practices and preaches the harmonising of individual, collective and societal interests so that Indian people can have one single aim of building their country as a factor for progress, prosperity and security. Our Party calls on the working class and people of India to build such a party that will be a factor for their empowerment and not a "gate-keeper" to power blocking their empowerment.

There is a notion that is spread among the petty-bourgeoisie and among activists in the movement for people's empowerment and against the criminalisation of politics, that what we must strive for is a "partyless democracy". This notion is unsound both in practice and

theory, and in fact serves the bourgeoisie to lower the level of consciousness of the people.

The institution or mechanism of a political party in class society made it possible to end absolutism as contending parties fought for the interests of their respective classes. The creation and building of the communist party as the vanguard of the working class marked a qualitative advance in the sense that the interests of the masses of people replaced the interests of the wealthy in society. The world is still at the stage of class society struggling to end class exploitation. If the necessity for the vanguard party is eliminated from the minds of the working class and people, the majority of the people constituting the working masses will be deprived of any prospect of ending their exploitation.

The power of the collective, the power of collective consciousness and the power of scientific organisation are the strongest weapons with which the working class can emancipate itself and transform society. The theories of Karl Marx arose at a definite time in history, in Europe when capitalism had been born. Ceaselessly, Marx and Engels worked, basing themselves on the trials and tribulations of the working class, the modern industrial proletariat, to lay bare the laws of capitalist society. The Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin showed to the world in the beginning of this century what this collective consciousness and organisation of the modern industrial proletariat can do to transform society. The Great October Revolution, the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union and its advance for so many years was a material reality that inspired all the peoples of the world suffering from the plague of capitalism in its final stage of imperialism.

What the Indian working class and people, all the political activists who are engaged in the battle against the rule of

the bourgeoisie, need today is a party that is organised to empower them with the arsenal of ideas, and with the organisational cohesion to combat and isolate the bourgeoisie, as a prelude to its defeat. What they need is a party in which all Indian communists militate, as this party leads the class struggle of the working class and people. It has to be a party that takes an irreconcilable stand against all forms of conciliation with bourgeois ideology including liberalism, social-democracy and fascism. It has to be a party that is organised on the basis of the principles of democratic centralism, without which it is not possible to provide leadership to the class and the revolutionary masses of people.

The communist party not only cannot strive for power for itself, but necessarily must lead people to create new forms of power in their hands. Our Party, the Communist Ghadar Party of India, has been built as a party of this kind since its founding in 1980 and can grow as a party of this type in the course of leading the Indian working class and people in their struggle for emancipation. Its basic organisations are built in the work places and residential areas as instruments of class struggle. The party cannot overemphasise the significance of building and strengthening the basic organisations encompassing all the class conscious and advanced workers and communists, in the course of leading the struggle of the people for their rights.

The main aim of the ideological struggle waged by the working class is to arm itself with those ideas, with those forms of organisation and consciousness which will enable it to build a socialist system through the revolution, which will make it possible to protect that system under all conditions and circumstances. These ideas emerge from the class. They come from the activities of the broadest section of the working class. They cannot be seen as the

activity of the vanguard alone. The vanguard cannot develop these ideas in isolation from the class.

The notion of the vanguard racing ahead, without the rear, has nothing to do with communism. It is based on the idea that the broad section of the class is either illiterate or under educated, on the basis of which a minority of "pundits" arrogate to themselves the right to "theorise" and wage "ideological" struggle all on their own, while the workers watch from the sidelines. Such a notion of the vanguard, of the clever and erudite speakers who theorise, while reducing the role of the class to that of a passive audience is akin to that of Brahmanism, of the monopolisation of knowledge by a privileged few.

The ideological and polemical struggle has to transform the status quo, first by removing the pressure of the bourgeoisie on the communists to become intermediaries. Secondly, it must assist in elaborating and defending the General Line and the immediate program, so that not only the communists and advanced workers but also the broad masses of workers and all the oppressed can make this program their own.

## **Part III**

### **Program and Tasks of the Party**



## Program of the Party

Indian society is mired in the deepest crisis. All that is humane, healthy and pure in our society, along with its rich culture and traditions, is being suffocated and strangled by the economic and political system. The rulers of our country are taking us on the path of disaster in the service of narrow vested interests.

It is no secret that the workers, peasants, women and youth of India do not agree with this course. They are showing this disagreement through the countless courageous struggles that they are waging today all over the country in defence of livelihood and rights. However, it must be recognised that without one common plan for the reconstruction and rebirth of India, without one common vision, and unity in action to realise this plan and vision, these struggles will lead nowhere. Without such a common plan and program, our rulers will continue to manipulate, divert, suppress and liquidate these struggles. India's workers and peasants need, as never before, unity in action around a common vision and a common program.

India needs a program for economic and political renewal suited to the needs of the workers, peasants and all the oppressed. A program that will become the focal point for the unity of all the fighting people of our land. A program

that will assist in creating a mighty force that will sweep away all that is moribund and rotten in our society and enable the healthy core of Indian society to flourish. A program that will unleash the bottled-up creative energies of our people for the construction of a new society. A program that has emerged from the conditions of their lives, their strivings and their aspirations. A program whose implementation will give the working class and people confidence in their own ability to build the new society. The Indian working class, peasantry, urban petty-bourgeoisie and all the oppressed must adopt such a program to build India and must fight for its implementation.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India places before you an immediate program for the reorientation of the economy, for the political empowerment of the people and the democratic renewal of India.

- This program is a plan of action for the thoroughgoing renewal of Indian society so that our workers and peasants, women and youth, children and the aged, can take control of their lives rather than remain passive victims of hunger and poverty, illiteracy and ill health, strife, terrorism and war. It is aimed at ensuring that the working people can control our enormous natural and human resources, and prevent them from being plundered by Indian and foreign capitalists.
- This program is a plan of action to ensure that the workers, peasants, women and youth and all the oppressed can reorganise the political system and political process so that they have political power in their own hands. They will then use this power to deploy the economic resources in the interests of the toiling majority so as to ensure security of livelihood for all members of society and the future generations.



- This program is a plan of action to ensure that the peoples of South Asia—of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives—overcome the legacy of distrust, strife and war sowed by the colonialists and their collaborators and together chart a course for the mutual benefit of all the peoples of the region. It is a plan of action to defend the peoples and countries of the world from the military aggression and economic blockade and interference by US imperialism and other imperialist powers. It is a plan of action to fight for a new world order based on equality between all countries, big or small, in which every country will have the right to have its own economic and political system.

The immediate program that the Communist Ghadar Party of India places before the workers, peasants, women and youth emerges from the conditions of India and the world on the eve of the twenty-first century. Its adoption will arm the people in battling the anti-social offensive of the Indian ruling class and world imperialism on all fronts. It will prepare the ground for the working class and people to launch the counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie and imperialism in the future, when the tide turns in favour of the revolution worldwide.

The implementation of this program will assist in developing the subjective factors so necessary for the fulfilment of the strategic aim. The strategic aim of the Communist Ghadar Party of India is the building of a humane, socialist and communist society free from exploitation of persons by persons. The fulfilment of this strategic aim will require the elimination of capitalism, remnants of feudalism, imperialism and the colonial legacy and the thoroughgoing reorganisation of the economic base and political superstructure of society. It will require the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and

the setting up in its place of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a prelude to the creation of a classless society. There can be no illusions that the exploitation or oppression of the people can be ended or that society can be radically reorganised without the overthrow of capitalism. The forging of a revolutionary united front of workers and peasants and all the oppressed is a necessary condition for the triumph of this goal.

Therefore, it is the urgent necessity of the time that all communists and progressive forces, all those concerned with the fate and future of India, take up the task of rallying the workers, peasants, women, youth and the oppressed of all nationalities and tribes in a revolutionary united front to realise this program in practice.

## **The Program on the Economic Front**

### **War Against Poverty in the Cities, Countryside and Hills!**

The CGPI considers the eradication of the curse of hunger and poverty, illiteracy, homelessness, and lack of the most basic civic amenities as the highest priority task. India's workers and peasants produce enormous wealth through their labour, but the minority of exploiters appropriates this wealth. The program put forth by the Party on the front of the economy is aimed at redeploing the enormous natural resources and wealth produced by workers and peasants towards addressing the burning problems.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India proposes and demands:

- The creation of a modern Public Distribution System that

will ensure that all essentials of mass consumption— food grains, milk, cooking oil, fuel, pulses, vegetables— are available in adequate quantity, good quality and at affordable prices to all toilers. No one should have to go hungry or suffer from malnutrition. The wiping out of hunger from the face of India is the number one task confronting us.

- The nationalisation of foreign trade and internal wholesale trade so as to eliminate any role for private middlemen in this sphere. This is the necessary condition for the creation of the above-mentioned supply system.
- A secure roof, sanitation and safe drinking water for every person, in the cities, countryside and the hills. We cannot tolerate that in this day and age, people have to suffer the indignity of living on footpaths and overcrowded and unhygienic slums that millions of our urban poor are suffering in Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi, Chennai and other cities. Likewise, we cannot tolerate that our hardworking peasant women have to go for miles in search of drinking water.
- Livelihood for all. Everyone in the towns and villages must be provided work and a secure livelihood. It is unacceptable that the most precious productive force— the human being—is being relentlessly wasted and destroyed in this society through mass unemployment and underemployment.
- Security of land holding be guaranteed in the hands of those who till it. All buying and selling of agricultural land between private parties must be immediately banned, so that no peasant family can be forced to part with its land. Special assistance and incentives be

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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provided to the poor peasantry to pool together their land holdings and cooperativise, in order to increase productivity through the use of modern machinery and scientific techniques.

- Security of livelihood to those who till the land. We cannot accept that those who feed the whole society and provide inputs to industry should be left to fend for themselves. Credit as well as assistance in the form of tractors and other technical services, fertilisers, water, electricity, seeds and other inputs at affordable prices must be provided to the toiling peasantry. Remunerative prices must be guaranteed for all agricultural produce meant for the market.
- Free and uniform education up to the high school level for every child. Higher education must be subsidised for the sons and daughters of the working class and peasantry with selection based on merit.
- Free and universal basic health care for all people.
- Special assistance for those sections of our society who have suffered from social injustices. A portion of the surplus generated by the economy must be deployed to fulfill the claims of those disadvantaged physically or by historical social injustices based on caste, gender, nationality or on any other basis. Only this can ensure that these sections of our society can participate as equals in the polity.
- A portion of the surplus generated by the economy to be deployed to look after the natural environment as an integral part of investing in the future of society.

To raise resources to finance all the above, the Communist

Ghadar Party of India proposes and demands the following immediate emergency measures:

- Surplus generated from nationalised wholesale trade and foreign trade be deployed for the above.
- Moratorium on all payments of principal and interest to the financial monopolies, Indian and foreign.
- Cutback on the huge expenditures on arms and the armed forces.
- Immediate confiscation of all unaccounted wealth and black money in the economy.

All capitalist monopolies and private property owners who do not fall in line with the above measures must be expropriated without compensation.

## **Program in the Political Sphere**

**Against State Terrorism and in Defence of Individual, Collective and National Rights!**

**For Ending the Party System of Governance, for the Renewal of Democracy and the Indian Union!**

**For Vesting Sovereignty in the Hands of the Workers, Peasants, Women and Youth of all Nationalities!**

Individual, collective and national rights are negated and violated on a daily basis by the present-day state of the Indian Union. We cannot tolerate such conditions where the authority uses force to suppress economic and political

demands of the people. We cannot tolerate the situation where any nation, nationality and tribe within India does not find space to flourish. Defence and realisation of the modern definition of human rights must become the foundation of the new India we are setting out to build.

The working people are deprived of political power in the party system of governance that exists in India today. The party system of governance guarantees that the right to represent the people is confined to a small political elite. In order to take control of their destiny and deploy the resources of this land for their common benefit, the workers, peasants, and other toilers need to put an end to the party system of governance and put in place mechanisms that will ensure that they can govern themselves. Political parties will then play their rightful role as instruments to empower the people, instead of being electoral machines that keep people out of power. Sovereignty will then be transferred from the Parliament to the people; it will be transferred to the chawls, muhallas, and villages of India. It will be transferred to the various peoples who will then reconstitute the Indian Union on a voluntary basis.

The program that the Communist Ghadar Party of India places before the workers, peasants, women and youth of India is a program to realise these objectives. Simultaneously, it is a program to boldly confront the menace of state terrorism and defend the rights of the people.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India proposes and demands that:

- The Constitution of India must explicitly establish that all Indians have rights by virtue of the fact that they are human beings; it must provide for enabling laws for the

affirmation of rights and to make all violations justiciable. The right to conscience, to livelihood, education and health care must be guaranteed as inviolable human rights of every member of society.

- Concrete mechanisms be established to ensure the harmonising of the interests of individuals and collectives with the general interests of society. All members of the polity will have equal rights and duties and all claims of minorities and other collectives which will enable them to fully participate in the affairs of the society will be fulfilled. The rights of nations, nationalities and tribes, the rights of women, of children and the old, the rights of the disabled, the rights of minorities—whether religious or linguistic or ethnic or tribal—must be inviolate. Mechanisms will be established to ensure equality of all members of the polity irrespective of caste, gender, property, lifestyle or any other consideration.
- All draconian laws of preventive detention must be immediately revoked. The armed forces must not be deployed against the civilian population anywhere in the country. Forces presently deployed against the people in Kashmir, the north-east and other regions of India must be immediately withdrawn to their barracks. All those guilty of state terrorism, of organising of communal and fascist violence, caste atrocities and terrorist acts, must be speedily tried and punished.
- Sovereign power must vest with the people. The present talk-shop parliament and talk-shop state assemblies must be replaced with bodies that combine executive and legislative functions. Mechanisms must be established to ensure that parliament and other organs of power will not be above the people but

subordinate to the people. All residual powers must vest with the people through organs of power created at the base of society.

- The right of every citizen to elect and be elected must be realised through enabling legislation to reform election financing and political party affiliation. The right to select candidates for any office must be taken out of the hands of political parties. Organisations of people at work places, in villages and *mohallas*, in educational institutions, etc., shall be empowered to select candidates from among their peers. Elected organs of power must be created at the base of society all across the country on the basis of universal franchise. These organs of people's power along with a reconstituted election commission must have the responsibility to oversee the selection of candidates for election to all levels of government. There will be no election without selection of candidates by the people. Power to ensure accountability of elected representatives and power to initiate recall of unsuitable representatives must vest in the organs of people's power. These organs must also have the power to initiate legislation for all levels of government. The limits of authority of the State organs at different levels must be strictly defined and all residual powers must vest in the organs of power at the base of society at all times. Power at the top and power at the base shall be organically linked, with power at the base controlling power at the top.
- The Indian Union must be reconstituted as a free and equal union of all nations, nationalities and tribal peoples constituting today's India. An appropriate organ of power at the level of nations, nationalities and tribes must be constituted to fulfill the economic, political and cultural claims of the people. All the languages of the



peoples shall have equal status in the polity. The unity of the peoples will be on the basis of mutual benefit and for mutual defence against the imperialist predators. The right to self-determination, up to and including secession, must be ensured through appropriate mechanisms for all the constituents of the union.

- The election commission of India be constituted to oversee the selection and election process to the organs of people's power, to the organ of power for the nations and tribes as well as that of the country as a whole on the basis of universal suffrage. It must also ensure the right of all citizens to elect and be elected. It will also have responsibility to oversee the election of judges at all levels of the judicial system.

## **International Program**

**For Peace in South Asia! For Global Peace!**

**For Democratisation of International Relations!**

The legacy of colonialism, of the partition of the subcontinent, of strife, discord and war amongst the peoples of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and others, needs to be overcome. This bitter legacy is one of the biggest roadblocks today in the way of the economic and political renewal of the Indian and other peoples of the region. The present day ruling classes of India and Pakistan and some others deliberately stoke up the flames of strife and discord in pursuit of extremely narrow interests, in order to divide, paralyse, and disorient the workers, peasants, women and youth of our countries.

The international program of the Communist Ghadar Party

of India is a program that will enable the working class and peasantry to overcome the colonial legacy. The international program of the CGPI will enable the workers, peasants, women and youth of India to build the unity of all the peoples of the subcontinent, including the peoples of South Asian origin abroad.

US imperialism is trying through military blackmail and aggression as well as economic blockade to force its dictate on all countries of the world. It is demanding that all countries abandon their own economic and political systems and accept the US prescriptions on how to run their country. Cuba, North Korea and Iraq are amongst the countries facing the brunt of US imperialism's aggression and blackmail. It is interfering in all parts of the globe—in Africa and Europe, in West Asia and South Asia—allegedly as a “peace maker”, to impose its domination over the peoples. It is trying to turn the UN into an appendage of its imperialist foreign policy. In such conditions, the international program of the CGPI is a program for the democratisation of international relations. Its aim is to end the unequal relations that characterise international relations today and to establish the equality of all countries, big or small, in the international arena. It is a program to oppose imperialist interference anywhere and everywhere, and to uphold the right of all peoples to have their own economic and political systems free from external dictate.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India proposes and demands that:

- The sovereignty of all peoples, nations and countries be respected, irrespective of their size, their political or economic system, or any other consideration. Every country has the right to its own economic and political

system. US imperialism's blackmail of Cuba, Korea, Iraq and other countries must be vigorously condemned and opposed.

- The United Nations be democratised and the special rights of the permanent members of the Security Council be abolished. The United Nations Security Council must be a fully elected body subordinate to the General Assembly of the United Nations.
- All nuclear weapon powers disarm their nuclear arsenals.
- A lasting and close relationship be forged with the peoples of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and other neighbours. Imperialists must be kept out of the region and all imperialist war preparations must be opposed. All efforts of the ruling classes of India and Pakistan to whip up chauvinist hysteria and plunge our peoples into war must be vigorously exposed and opposed. A permanent mechanism should be created to resolve problems between the countries of South Asia through discussion and without the use of force or blackmail.
- Solidarity be affirmed with all the peoples anywhere in the world who raise the banner of revolt against exploitation and injustice, for rights, for sovereignty, for peace and progress. All secret treaties with foreign countries be repudiated and all foreign policy issues be subjected to country-wide discussion and approval.

## Not a Wishful Dream, but a Realisable Program

India's toiling masses have seen many manifestos for the eradication of poverty and hunger, homelessness, illiteracy and ill health, offered by parties of the status quo. However, the noble objectives stated in those programs have turned out to be mere wishful dreams, something dangled temptingly before the toilers, but always out of their reach. Why is this the case? This is because these manifestos do not have a plan to restrict and overthrow the capitalist relations of production and distribution that are responsible for the devastation of our people. They do not have a plan to transfer political power from the hands of the minority of exploiters and vested interests to the hands of workers and peasants, the labouring people of this country. Any plan for the eradication of poverty that does not base itself on restricting the market forces and capitalist relations in society, and empowering the workers and peasants will remain an unrealisable plan, a wishlist of good objectives meant at best to serve as opium for the oppressed masses.

The program that the Party is presenting is an eminently realisable program. It is realisable because it is based on an objective assessment of the existing level of development of the productive forces of our society. It reveals how hunger, poverty, illiteracy and ill health can be eradicated and what is preventing their eradication. It is realisable because it identifies the human force that will achieve this, namely: the workers, peasants, women and youth of our country. And recognising that they today lack the power to effect transformations in their own interests, it presents a plan for the empowerment of the people.

In other words, the program that the party is placing before the workers, peasants, women, youth and other

oppressed people is a concrete plan of action to pave the way for the construction of the new society. Communism itself has been turned into a distant dream as a result of the lack of a program to realise the same in our country. The program that the Party is placing before the working class and peasantry is a program to ensure that communism is actually constructed in India.

## **A Program that Puts Human beings and Their Concerns at the Centre**

India's workers, peasants, women and youth are the real India, the real producers of all the wealth. Any program for the renewal of India must necessarily put the concerns of workers and peasants, women and youth at the centre stage. The programs of the parties of the status quo do not do this. What is instead placed at the centre is the defence of the interests of a parasitic minority. These parties subordinate the concerns of workers, peasants, women and youth to those of the capitalists and moneylenders and other vested interests.

The program that the CGPI is placing before the people is one that puts the satisfaction of the basic needs of all as the primary task on the front of the economy. Our program is based wholly and solely on addressing these concerns; there is no other hidden agenda. Our program openly states that what is good for the workers, peasants, women and youth is what is good for the society at large. The CGPI openly declares that all other concerns must be subordinated to this overriding concern. Nothing and no one will be allowed to create a roadblock in the way of addressing these concerns. Whether it is hoarders or profiteers, middlemen or monopolists, arms merchants or moneylenders, the narrow interests of these sections will have to be

subordinated to the task of providing for the basic needs of the people.

## **A Program that Gives Pride of Place to the Working People as the Force that Will Bring About Transformation**

The CGPI openly states that if the workers, peasants, women and youth want to ensure that their basic needs are fulfilled, they cannot leave it to chance. They cannot leave it to the goodness of this or that political party in power. They must begin to establish mechanisms so that power comes into their own hands. The program that the CGPI places before the people is a program that does precisely that. It shows the way to the kind of changes that the people need to fight for in the political process in order to empower themselves.

The experience of the 20th century confirms that wherever party rule is established in the name of the people, it becomes in fact the rule of definite vested interests, the rule of the bourgeoisie. It is inevitable that a communist party that fights for power for itself will soon abandon communism and the interests of the working class. It will become indistinguishable from bourgeois parties. The CGPI openly declares that it will not fight for power for itself. The program put forth by the CGPI is a program that will enable the workers, peasants, women and youth to ensure that sovereignty in fact vests with them and them alone. It is a program to ensure that the real *maliks* of India—our workers, peasants, women and youth—take their rightful place at the head of society and guide its destiny.

## **A Weapon to Build the Political Unity of the Toilers; a Vehicle to Restore Communist Unity**

There are only two possible programs emerging from the objective conditions of India today. One program is for the defence of the capitalist system and the status quo, the defence of the interests of those in power. The other program is for undermining the capitalist system, upsetting the status quo, and bringing the toiling masses to power. There can be no third program within the present conditions.

The parties of the status quo claim to have as many different programs as there are parties. The truth is different. It is objectively verifiable that all these apparently different programs are in fact the one program of enabling Indian capitalism to flourish and develop into a major imperialist power, of defending the system of exploitation and plunder of our people.

The parties of the status quo use their programs as a weapon to divide the polity. The workers, peasants, women, youth, dalits, tribals, people of oppressed nationalities, the religious minorities and all other oppressed people are divided and disoriented on the basis of these programs.

The program that the CGPI places before the broad masses of Indian people is aimed at forging their political unity against the existing system. The aim is that the working masses unite in action to fight against the anti-social offensive of the ruling class with a clear perspective and vision of the future. The aim is to end the state of disunity and paralysis of the movement of the toiling masses. Our Party is using and will use this program as a

weapon to forge the revolutionary united front of the toilers. We call upon communists and all others concerned about the fate and future of the toiling and oppressed masses to do the same.

## A Great Opportunity

The crisis of India's economic and political system is acute. The ruling class, its political parties and the political system stand in complete disrepute. The working masses are demanding an alternative to this system. A great opportunity exists for developing the revolutionary united front of the working class and all the oppressed, around the program for the renewal of India that the party has placed before the working masses.

The liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation drive of the Indian ruling class, submission to the demands of the WTO, the cutbacks on food security and government spending on higher education and public health, the cutbacks in investments on science and technology, the rising prices and job cuts, all these have opened up a huge arena for uniting the people around a common program. School and university teachers, college students, doctors, nurses and karmacharis of government hospitals, workers in private and public enterprises, rail and road transport workers, post and telegraph workers, workers in the telecom sector, workers in the banking and insurance sector, workers in the electricity boards and working people at large have been increasingly resisting the onslaught of the ruling class.

Peasants in large parts of the country are up in arms against the attacks on their livelihood. State investment has been declining in agricultural infrastructure, including



irrigation works and rural electrification. The peasants are squeezed by the rising cost of seeds, fertilisers and other inputs. They are sinking into growing indebtedness to moneylenders, with government lending agencies cutting back on loans to the peasantry. The small and middle peasants are being forced to go in for cash crops with all the uncertainties of the market driven economy, and many are being ruined. On the other side, the big monopolies are being allowed entry into agriculture, agro-business and pisciculture on an unprecedented scale, destroying the natural environment as well as destroying the livelihood of millions of small farmers and fisherfolk.

In sum, the economic credo of the ruling class that only what is good for the bourgeoisie is good for the country, that the workers and peasants have only the duty to slave and no right to livelihood, is opening the eyes of vast masses of working people who were under the illusion of the *mai-baap sarkar*—of a state and a government above classes which would allegedly take care of the interests of all. A wide front has opened up to rally the people against the liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation offensive and the attacks on livelihood.

In the political arena, the party system of governance has become totally discredited. It is becoming increasingly clear that all the parliamentary parties have the single program of defending the rule of the bourgeoisie. It is becoming clear to many that the existing parliamentary democracy and the political process are mechanisms to deprive the working masses of political power to shape their own destiny. There is a huge space to develop the alternative to the party system of governance, an alternative in which power will vest, in fact, with the toiling masses.

A broad field has also opened up to unite the toiling and

oppressed people around a modern definition of rights. India's nations, nationalities and tribal peoples are forcefully asserting their sovereignty through mass as well as armed struggles. Such movements are taking place in the entire north-east and in the north-west, in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and many other regions of the country. The existing political and economic system denies the nations, nationalities and tribes their sovereignty. It denies people the right to food, clothing and shelter, to education and health services. It denies women their rights. It deprives children of their very childhood. It kills the girl child even as it is born. The right of peasants and tribal people over their common grazing lands and forest lands is denied. Religious and national minorities continue to be persecuted and made victims of organised violence. Diversion and disruption as well as state terrorism are being used to crush the struggle of people for their rights. In such a situation, the space exists to unite all the victims of state terrorism, all those deprived of rights in the battle against state terrorism for a new India in which the interests of individuals and collectives will be in harmony with the general interests of society.

In sum, the Indian people are yearning for a thoroughgoing economic and political renewal of society. The immediate program put forth by the Party is aimed at uniting all the Indian people around one common vision and plan of action.

## **There *is* an Alternative!**

### **Boldly Build the Revolutionary United Front!**

The parties of the ruling class claim that there is no alternative to the capitalist system. The Communist Ghadar Party of India declares that there *is* an alternative to the capitalist system and that is the socialist system.

The parties of the bourgeoisie claim that there is no alternative to the party system of governance, in which one or the other party of the bourgeoisie rules on its behalf, while the workers and peasants are kept out of power. The Communist Ghadar Party of India declares that there *is* an alternative to the party system of governance and that is the system where people govern themselves and become masters of their own destiny.

The parties of the ruling class claim that there is no alternative to the course they are pursuing. The Communist Ghadar Party of India boldly declares that for the bourgeoisie there may be no alternative to this course, but for the working class and peasantry there is certainly an alternative! The program presented by the Communist Ghadar Party of India is the alternative in the immediate sense, just as socialism is the alternative to the capitalist system in the strategic sense.

Communists and all progressive people! Workers, peasants, women, youth and all the oppressed of all nationalities!

The times are demanding that we challenge the claims of the ruling class and their parties that there is no alternative to the present system and the present course being pursued. We have before us a plan of action to reorganise the economic and political life of our country in order that our concerns, our present and future, are taken care of.

Organise around this program wherever you work, whether in factories or fields, mines or the ports, universities or schools, hospitals or any other work place. Organise around this program wherever you live, whether in chawls or slums, on footpaths or in residential colonies. Discuss the program and elaborate your own views on the program. Demand that all those who are communists, all those who are for the

## **Challenge Facing Indian Communists**

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emancipation of the toiling masses, deliberate seriously on the program so that all the people of India can take up one single program which is their own. Discuss this program in every collective you belong to—whether it be a political party, a trade union, a women’s organisation, a youth or student organisation, or any other collective. Discuss how this program should be implemented. Let us create a situation wherein the crores of toiling people begin to realise that there is an alternative and get galvanised into action to implement that alternative.

This program is not the program of the Communist Ghadar Party of India alone. It belongs to all Indian communists. It belongs to India’s workers, peasants, women, youth and all the deprived and disadvantaged. The challenge before us is to ensure that India’s working masses discuss this program, make their own contributions to the program, take it up as their own, and unleash their creative genius in implementing it, in order to open the path to progress for our people.

**Boldly take up this challenge!**

**Boldly build the revolutionary united front around the program for the renewal of India!**

## Tasks of the Party

### Comrades,

The Second Congress of our Party is taking place at a definite time within the period of the retreat of revolution. It is taking place at a time when imperialism and the reactionary bourgeoisie are trying to make new arrangements to escalate the anti-social offensive against the livelihood and rights of the working class and peoples. It is taking place at a definite moment in the Indian communist movement, when communists are grappling with the question of how the disunity among communists can be ended and how the vanguard party can play its role in the struggle of the working class and people to open the path for the progress of India.

The First Congress had put on the agenda those tasks that were necessitated at a time when the Berlin Wall had been smashed and the bipolar division of the world was coming to an end internationally; and in India, the big bourgeoisie was initiating a shift in its policies. In a stepwise manner we have implemented our decisions and provided modern definitions to all the cardinal questions of the Indian communist movement. These include the problem of the General Line, of Indian political theory, the problem of the program of the Indian communists, the problem of uniting the vanguard force and the problem of uniting the working

class and people. In a period of unprecedented attacks on communism and all communists, our Party, adhering loyally to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, has not only defended but expanded the space for the flourishing of revolutionary communism on Indian soil, guided by the directives of the First Congress to build the political unity of the people and develop the theory of Indian liberation.

The implementation of the decisions of the First Congress has given rise to a new situation in the communist movement and the movement of the people. New tasks have arisen because of the work that we have carried out. We have assembled here at the Second Congress, the highest forum of the Party, to make those decisions that would enable the Party to address the new tasks that present themselves.

Starting from the period of the Second Consultative Conference in 1993, through the period of the Third Consultative Conference in December 1995 and the Extended Plenum of the Central Committee in January 1998, the entire Party has carried out extensive discussion on the General Line and Political Program of the working class and communist movement. The Second Congress will adopt the General Line and Program, thereby opening up a new phase in our work to restore communist unity and build political unity for the all-round renewal of Indian society. This is the phase where we have to organise so that the working class of India adopts this revolutionary program as its own and fights for the realisation of this program. Taking this program to the class and the peoples is a new phase in the work of the Party because it marks the start of open contest between two visions for the future of India—the imperialist vision of the bourgeoisie and the vision of the working class which wants to empower the people to create a humane society and end the

enslavement of the past and present. It is this struggle of the working class that must succeed in order to avert the disasters that the bourgeoisie has in store for the future.

The vanguard party of the class has the responsibility to provide leadership in this historic contest. Our Party is confident that Indian Marxist-Leninists will rise to the occasion, reject the pressure to conciliate with the bourgeoisie and its vision, and lead the class for the realisation of its revolutionary program.

The program for the all-round renewal of Indian society has arisen in the conditions of the retreat of revolution, when the world bourgeoisie has launched an unprecedented anti-social offensive, wishing to reverse all the gains people have made through their struggles and sacrifices. The offensive of Anglo-American imperialism to conquer Asia, as a prelude to conquer the entire world, has charged the Indian working class, as a contingent of the international proletariat, with the responsibility to foil the plan of the bourgeoisie and remove India and South Asia from its geopolitical calculations.

Far from succumbing to the pressure of imperialism and its agencies to negate the national rights and sovereignty of peoples, our Party has placed the issue of affirmation of sovereignty and national rights on the agenda in the program for renewal. The struggle for the implementation of this program will be the contribution of the Indian working class and the Indian communist movement to the struggle for emancipation of the international proletariat.

From its founding, the Party has recognised that the main threats to the advance of the communist movement in India and to the forging of the political unity of the working class and people have been the use of state terrorism

against the revolutionary and fighting forces, on the one hand, and the imposition of parliamentary democracy to disempower people, on the other. The struggle against both these obstacles is crucial to the realisation of the program that we are adopting here.

In the face of the credibility and legitimacy crises of the existing political and economic system and its inability to address the problems facing the people in the post Cold War period, the Indian and world bourgeoisie are openly resorting to the use of force against revolutionary and insurgent forces in an unprecedented manner. At this time, the Indian State has declared open war against those fighting for national rights in the north-east, Kashmir and other places, as well as against those fighting for economic and political rights in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, etc. In such conditions, the struggle against state terrorism and in defence of human rights and all other rights will succeed only if the resistance struggle is combined with the struggle to create such a society where rights are affirmed.

Our Party, from its founding, has been in the forefront of the struggle against state terrorism in all its forms—the killings and fake encounters, torture, custodial rape and murders, draconian laws, communal violence, caste based violence, attacks by private armies and goondas, bomb blasts and assassinations, etc. In the course of this work, our Party has defended all victims of state terror and persecution irrespective of their ideology or political affiliation. It has carried out decisive work to elaborate modern definitions, ideas and perspectives on rights. It has raised the demand for the recognition that all human beings have rights by virtue of being human as the central tenet of the struggle against injustice.



The decision of the First Congress of our Party to build the political unity of the people has been implemented in practice in the struggle against state terrorism and in defence of rights. The large amount of work the Party has carried out on the front of building the political unity of the people against state terrorism has given rise to new tasks. The greatest need for this struggle to go forward, is for the working class to establish its leadership of this struggle around its vision of the liberation of India, and against the vision and values associated with the “defence of national unity and territorial integrity”.

In order to remove the obstacles of parliamentary democracy, party dominated government and the relegation of communism to a mere policy objective, the ideological and polemical struggle of the Party at this time will first and foremost be directed against these roadblocks. The armed agrarian struggle ushered in at Naxalbari placed the smashing of the parliamentary path to socialism on the agenda. The developments since then have shown that for this to be achieved today, in the period of the retreat of revolution, it is necessary to elaborate the alternative to parliamentarism in the form of the theory and institutions of the new power of the working class and its allies, and to create the conditions for them to take power in their hands. The work our Party has done in elaborating the content and form of political power has reached a crucial stage.

The question of reconstituting the Indian Union demands attention on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Indian Constitution in 2000 AD. The Constitution of India fails to empower the people in spite of universal suffrage. The proposal of the ruling circles to review the Constitution by an expert committee must be contested on the basis of the principle that it is the people to whom this task belongs.

The actual form of political power where the sovereignty is vested in the people, the theoretical basis on which this power will be created and the realisation of the program to build the revolutionary front of workers, peasants and all the oppressed, are some of the immediate preoccupations. It is also an opportune time for the Party to begin discussion on the fundamental law for a new India.

With these considerations, organisational work is critical for the success of our plan. Transforming our words into deeds has been the hallmark of our Party from its founding and it is this feature of the Party that we must strengthen as we adopt the program here for the next phase. The work is more complex than ever before, more challenging than ever before, but the most important thing to recognise is that this is the most necessary work at this time. The tasks that this Congress sets will equip the entire Party and the Indian communist movement to prepare for the coming storms. The retreat of revolution is bound to turn into a period of flow, sooner rather than later. The open contest with the bourgeoisie and its vision will create the subjective conditions for the working class to bury capitalism and build socialism, as the ebb of revolution turns into flow.

The work of the Party has always been on the basis of a conscious plan, never leaving anything to chance. It will be so in the future as well. We have always followed the policy of collective decision making and individual responsibility as the guiding principle at all levels of the Party. Whether we speak of the work of the Central Committee, the regional committees or of any organisation of the Party, the common consciousness of the Party at each level arises from the collective decisions that we make. The work of the Party at each level emerges from the collective decisions and the consequent common

consciousness. Our Party has never accepted the pressure to base any action on spontaneity or on the basis of personal understanding. This quality of the Party is essential for the communists to provide the necessary consciousness and organisation to the movement of the class and the people. In step with the program we are undertaking, we have to pay first-rate attention to the training of communists in leading the class struggle.

The basic organisations of the Party, which are the organs of class struggle in the midst of the class, are where communists are trained and tempered. There is no such thing as communist training outside the party organisations, nor does our Party accept the notion of individual leaders and followers.

The experience of the Party in preparing for the Second Congress, especially since the Extended Plenum of the CC held in January 1998, has revealed the critical importance of eliminating all subjectivism and spontaneity in our work, and of basing our entire work on collective decisions and individual responsibility. The Party as a whole will ensure that all the decisions of the Second Congress are implemented by strengthening the Party organisations at all levels, including the creation of appropriate mechanisms such as the Party school for the education of cadres.

The Party Paper—*People's Voice/Mazdoor Ekta Lehar*—will continue to be the scaffolding with the help of which the Party is built and the class is organised. The initial successes of producing the Party organ in the languages that workers can read, write and discuss, suggest that this work be developed further so that the organ assumes mass character and appears in as many Indian languages as possible. As the agitator, mobiliser and organiser of the class and as the weapon of ideological struggle of the Party

against all alien influences on the class, the significance of strengthening the organ can never be over-emphasised.

*People's Voice/Mazdoor Ekta Lehar* must continue to raise the level of political consciousness of the class and prepare the conditions for the class to wage its own conscious struggles. From its founding, our Party has been guided by the principle that understanding requires the conscious participation of the individual, an act of finding out. Based on this principle, the Party has called upon all its organisations to participate in strengthening the Party Paper as their preeminent tool for building the Party and developing communist work in the class that has been burdened with trade unionism, electoral politics and other forms of bourgeois politics.

The experience gained by the Party this year in implementing the decisions to build the basic organisations in the class and regularise the publication of the organ in the vernacular languages has not only proven the correctness of the decision of the Extended Plenum of the CC. It has also posed for us the problem of building groups in the class and other progressive forces for writing and dissemination of the Party paper. This front of work is going to be crucial for the implementation of the program adopted by this Congress.

Besides the Party organ, publications concerning the work on other fronts—mass movements of workers, peasants, women, youth and other oppressed, and the movement for enlightenment—must be developed. Attention will have to be paid to develop appropriate Party and non-party publications besides the central organ of the Party in different languages, as the organising work of the Party expands into different geographical areas. Expansion of the work to new locales where Party work is just

beginning, is going to be an important feature of building the Party in the coming period, so that the Party fulfils the requirement of leading the entire people for the renewal of India in a practical manner.

The Indian communist movement has placed the question of the restoration of unity of Indian communists as the most urgent of all tasks. It has become necessary for our Party to solve the problem of the form so that the new content can be realised. In this sense, our struggle for the restoration of unity of Indian communists has entered a new phase. The phase of struggle for the acceptance of communist unity as a general principle has come to an end, giving rise to the new phase when the concrete forms in which communist unity will be realised have to be taken up for solution.

Basing ourselves on the tested policies of unity in action, and action with analysis, we have acquired very rich experience in building the Party and building the fighting organisations of the people. This also is the policy with which we are going to approach the form in which the Marxist-Leninists of India will provide the necessary consciousness and organisation to the working class movement and the movement of the peoples of India for their emancipation. We seek unity not as an end in itself but as the necessary condition for implementation of the program to lift society out of the crisis.

Indian hands and minds brought about *pehli jhalak* as they humanised nature and gave rise to civilisation. They gave rise to *dusri jhalak* as they created the central state to deploy the collective resources of society and established the principle that providing *sukh* and *raksha* to the people was the *dharma* of the State. *Tisri jhalak* will be the beginning of history and the end of prehistory. It will be

ushered in by all-round renewal of the thought material, institutions and human relations. Settling of scores with the old philosophic conscience will provide the basis for the creation of history on a conscious basis. There is no force that can stop this march of our civilisation.

Let the Second Congress of the Party go down in the history of India as the congress where Indian communists militating in the ranks of CGPI gave themselves the program for the all-round renewal of India, not as a policy objective but as a plan which embodies the aspirations of the workers, peasants, oppressed nationalities and tribal peoples, women, youth and intelligentsia, who have been fighting against injustice and oppression since the dawn of class society. Let the long *sandhi* that has been the fate of Indian society—a condition that has condemned the majority of Indians to a life of poverty, ignorance and hardship—be ended! Let the sparks of *tisri jhalak* illuminate a new India where human beings occupy the centre stage!

Long live the Second Congress of CGPI!

Workers of all countries, Unite!

Inquilab Zindabad!

## Resolutions

*The Second Congress of the CGPI took its decisions in the form of moving and passing a number of resolutions. There were 11 major resolutions moved from the Presidium and many more resolutions moved from the floor. They are presented below, grouped by subject matter. For example, following the major Resolution No. 4 that was moved from the Presidium against the Anti-Social Offensive, there were many related resolutions moved from the floor, which are numbered 4a, 4b and so on.*

### **1. Resolution on the Report of the Central Committee**

Having heard and discussed the Report of the Central Committee elected by the First Congress, entitled Preparing for the Coming Storms—Challenge Facing Indian Communists,

the Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

#### **Resolves that**

this Report is consistent with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and with contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought

and with the General Line and decisions of the Party, and

### **Decides**

to adopt this Report as presented.

## **2. Resolution on Communist Unity**

Having summed up the experience of the Party since its First Congress on the front of restoration of unity of Indian communists, including

(i) the experience of building the Party as an instrument of class struggle in the midst of the class and

(ii) the experience of various initiatives involving communists outside the CGPI,

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

### **Concludes**

that one phase of this work—the phase of agitating for the acceptance of the need for unity of the Indian communist movement—has been successfully accomplished as

(i) the working class has shown its readiness to create its united vanguard party, and

(ii) all communists have accepted in principle the restoration of unity of Indian communists as the need of the movement, and

### **Resolves**

that the Central Committee should take steps to deal with the problems posed in the new phase of this work, including



(i) ideological struggle,

(ii) theoretical work,

(iii) building basic organisations in the class and

(iv) creating appropriate forms and mechanisms for all communists to come together to provide leadership to the class, and

**pave the way** for conditions to be created for uniting all Indian communists in one vanguard party.

### 3. Resolution on the Program of the Party

#### Whereas

(i) The Third Consultative Conference of the Communist Ghadar Party of India identified that one of the obstacles to the victory of the Indian Communist Movement was that communism on Indian soil had been reduced to a policy objective in the spirit of European social-democracy, depriving the working class of its own program, and called for the solution of this problem through all-sided work;

(ii) The Third Consultative Conference decided to involve the entire Party and the country in discussing the proposals for democratic renewal as the program emerging out of the movement of the Indian people for vesting sovereignty in themselves, taking control of the surplus wealth and using it to provide *sukh* (prosperity) and *raksha* (protection) for all; and

(iii) The conditions of tension and war between India and its neighbours are against the aspirations of people for

peace and progress, expressed through their struggle against all big power domination and blackmail;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

### Resolves that

(i) The program for democratic renewal as presented and discussed here stands adopted as the Program of the Party;

(ii) The work necessary for the working class of India to adopt this program as its own program is crucial to open the path for the progress of Indian society and to implement the program;

(iii) This program be released under the title: ***Hum hain iske malik, hum hain hindostan: mazdoor, kisan, aurat aur jawan*** (It is we, the workers, peasants, women and youth who constitute India and we are her masters).

## 4. Resolution against the Anti-Social Offensive

### Whereas

the livelihood and rights of the workers, peasants, urban and rural poor and petty-bourgeoisie are all coming under vicious attacks as a result of the drive of the big bourgeoisie towards globalisation of capital and production through liberalisation and privatisation;

### Whereas

this bourgeois offensive has the aim of subordinating the claims of the working class, peasantry, women, youth and

peoples of all nations, nationalities and tribes within the Indian Union to the claims of a small ruling minority of monopolists and financial oligarchs to reap the maximum rate of profit;

### **Whereas**

such reforms to expand the space for capitalism to grow, in this era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, do not open the door to the progress of society, but rather serve to preserve the existing system of exploitation and plunder and leads to a quantitative and qualitative increase in poverty at one pole and concentration of wealth at the other;

### **Whereas**

the very notion of a market oriented economy is alien to Indian thought and was at the base of the colonial conquest and enslavement of India in the past, while the notion of free market reform is based on 19<sup>th</sup> century conceptions that have become outdated;

### **Whereas**

the state and government of India are the main instruments of administering the anti-social program and economic restructuring measures against the people; and

### **Whereas**

the anti-social offensive and economic restructuring are part of the international trend and the consequences of these are graphically expressed in the current financial crisis gripping the Russian Federation, Japan, Brazil, Thailand and other countries of Asia;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

### Resolves that

(i) An immediate concrete task of the Party is to lead the working class to be the standard bearer of the struggle against the anti-social offensive, globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation;

(ii) The struggle against the anti-social offensive has to be waged on the basis of affirming the principles that all persons have rights, that they are born to society and the State and government must be organised to ensure the welfare of each and all; and

(iii) The Party and the working class movement should provide all necessary assistance to all workers, peasants and other working people in the cities and the villages, including agricultural workers, migrant workers, contract workers, women, youth and students, retirees and the elderly, tribal peoples, the handicapped and others who are fighting against the existing inhuman conditions and for a pro-social program.

### 4a. Unorganised and Contract Labour

**Whereas** crores of unorganised and contract labourers in our country, including those in industry and agriculture, in brick kiln, salt making, loading and unloading activities, are victims of super exploitation and acute oppression, denied minimum wages and other rights of labour;

**Whereas** all the parliamentary parties, while paying lip sympathy to the plight of these workers do nothing tangible to change these conditions once they come to power; and

**Whereas** the practice of hiring contract workers is prevalent also in the case of government owned companies and is spreading to increasing number of sectors in the economy;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** strongly this state of affairs;

**Demands** that the practice of contract labour be put to an end immediately; and

**Demands** that the State should ensure that all those who sell their labour power to make a living enjoy all the rights of labour, including the right to receive minimum wages and the right to form the unions of their choice.

## **4b. Repeal of the New Farm Policy**

**Whereas** as a result of the new agricultural policy, cultivation of food crops has given way to cultivation of cash crops in many parts of India, leading to the absence of food security to small peasants and to the loss of their small land holdings;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** this anti-peasant policy of the bourgeoisie and

**Calls** upon the workers and peasants all over the country to jointly raise the demand for its repeal.

## 4c. Price Rise and the Public Distribution System

**Whereas** the prices of food and other articles of mass consumption have risen very steeply, including the administered prices of essential commodities sold through fair price shops in the towns and villages;

**Whereas** the central and state governments are also raising the passenger bus fares, electricity charges, water supply charges, property tax and rail fares affecting the lives of the poor people and the middle strata; and

**Whereas** the existing Public Distribution System (PDS) does not assure adequate quantity and quality of essential consumption articles at affordable prices to the people;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** severely the increase in prices, the poor quality and under weightment of essential commodities sold through fair price shops, the irregularities in the distribution of ration cards resulting in harassment and non issue of such cards to lakhs of people; and

**Demands** that all essential commodities required by the people must be made available in adequate quantity and acceptable quality through the PDS.

## 4d. Education Policy

**Whereas** providing education to the people has become or is becoming a private business in many parts of the country as a result of the central and state governments washing their hands of this responsibility; and

**Whereas** private agencies are as a consequence seeking to reap huge profits from education and poor students are running the risk of having to discontinue their education;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** this anti-people education policy and

**Resolves** to mobilise the affected students and their parents to launch a struggle against this policy.

#### 4e. Textile Workers in Tamil Nadu

**Whereas** lakhs of workers are engaged in the textile industry in Tamil Nadu, in the mill sector, the handloom and power loom sectors;

**Whereas** the policy of liberalisation and privatisation has caused these workers untold sufferings and hardship including loss of employment and indebtedness; and

**Whereas** the market oriented policy has resulted in this state of affairs destroying the livelihood of workers in the textile industry, not only in Tamil Nadu;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the anti-worker onslaught of the bourgeois governments at the state and centre; and

**Calls** upon the workers to rally in large numbers to protest against these policies.

#### 4f. Rubber Workers in Tamil Nadu

**Whereas** the price of raw rubber has crashed as a result of globalisation and liberalisation of trade policy, affecting the small rubber growers and the thousand of workers engaged in this activity in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu; and

**Whereas** this has also affected employment opportunities in respect of construction, loading and unloading, plantation, trade, brick kiln, coir making and other activities;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** these developments caused by the free market economy; and

**Calls** upon the working class and all the oppressed to extend their support to the struggle of the rubber plantation workers and other workers in Kanyakumari district against this free market policy.

#### 4g. Electricity Connections in Tamil Nadu

**Whereas** the Government of Tamil Nadu, by refusing to provide electricity connections to the dwellings of poor people, has caused untold hardships to them;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the Tamil Nadu government for its refusal to carry out its duty in this regard; and

**Resolves** to mobilise the affected people to launch a struggle for their right to receive electric supply.



## 4h. Mill Workers of Kanpur

**Whereas** liberalisation and globalisation of the economy have caused great harm to the workers of the country, including the lakhs of factory workers and toiling people of Kanpur;

**Whereas** the mill workers of Kanpur are among the chief victims and the temporary and contract workers are among the most vulnerable; and

**Whereas** nearly 540 workers of VIC Kanpur have been waging a continuous struggle for the last 2 years under the banner of the Mill Mazdoor Union, despite the oppression of the police and other government functionaries;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the attacks on the workers of Kanpur by the bourgeoisie and the government; and

**Calls** on all the workers of India to support and assist this just struggle of the workers of Kanpur.

## 4i. Privatisation of Electric Supply in Haryana

**Whereas** the Government of Haryana has initiated the privatisation of electricity generation and distribution at the instance of the big bourgeoisie and the multinational companies, and as a result, electricity rates which had already doubled in the last 2 years are set to increase further;

**Whereas** this policy of handing over public assets to private monopolies will add to the hardships of all

consumers, especially the farmers, and to the thousands of employees of the state electricity board whose jobs are under threat;

**Whereas** the employees of the state electricity board have launched a struggle both in the public interest and in their own interest; and

**Whereas** the Haryana government is using repressive laws such as ESMA to crush the struggle of the electricity board workers by brute force;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the policy of privatisation of electricity supply;

**Demands** that the cases filed against 2200 employees under ESMA be immediately withdrawn and the fighting leaders of the workers who had been dismissed from their jobs be reinstated; and

**Calls** on all the workers and peasants of Haryana to support and assist the struggle of the employees of the electricity department.

### 4j. Closure of Modern Food Industries

**Whereas** Modern Food Industries Limited (MFIL), a central public sector undertaking, is the largest bread making undertaking in Asia, set up in 1968 with the aim of supplying nutritious food to the deprived people of India at affordable rates;

**Whereas** there are now several units of MFIL in many towns manufacturing energy foods, fruit pulp, etc.;

**Whereas** despite this company having always run at a profit ever since it was set up, the Disinvestment Commission set up by the Government of India is reported to have recommended the complete privatisation of this public sector undertaking;

**Whereas** the Bureau of Industrial and Financial Restructuring (BIFR) has recommended substantial financial assistance from the Central Government to several private companies; and

**Whereas** the decision to privatise MFIL will benefit only some private interests that want to acquire the land at a low cost, while it will result in nearly 5000 workers losing their jobs;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the proposed privatisation of Modern Food Industries; and

**Calls** upon the working class and people of India to support the cause of the Modern Food workers and oppose the privatisation policy of the Central Government.

#### **4k. Employees of Punjab State Ministerial Services**

**Whereas** 1,40,000 employees of Punjab State Ministerial Services have been on pen down strike since September 15, 1998;

**Whereas** the Akali-BJP government is using the police and the entire state machinery to crush ruthlessly this action of the employees; and

**Whereas** this agitation of the employees is against wage cuts and for time scales and other demands that are fully justified;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Supports** this agitation wholeheartedly; and

**Condemns** the repressive action of the Government of Punjab against its employees.

## **4l. Garment Workers in Mumbai**

**Whereas** in the city of Mumbai alone, there are over 5 lakh garment workers without minimum wages nor any benefits such as annual leave, provident fund, ensured health care or permanency of job, in spite of government subsidies and high profit rates earned by the capitalists; and

**Whereas** the owners use goondas and police to terrorise the workers and prevent them from establishing their unions;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Supports** the efforts of the garment workers of Mumbai to unionise; and

**Calls** upon all garment workers to unite under one banner in defence of their rights.

## **4m. The “Swadeshi” Slogan in Pune**

**Whereas** the recession in India and the restructuring policies have led and are leading to the closure of many automobile ancillaries and other manufacturing units in Pune; and

**Whereas** as a response to these conditions, the capitalists and some trade unionists are promoting the slogan of “swadeshi” and calling on the workers to boycott foreign goods;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Considers** that a bold initiative is required to expose the diversionary “swadeshi” slogan that is aimed at lining up the workers behind the bourgeoisie; and

**Resolves** that only persistent struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie, both Indian and international, can advance the cause of the workers.

## 5. Resolution on Party Building

### Whereas

(i) The historic betrayal by revisionism has rendered the Indian working class as a reserve of the bourgeoisie by turning it into a vote bank, devoid of communist aims;

(ii) Organising the advanced workers to build the single vanguard party of the class is crucial to bring communist consciousness and organisation to the class; and

(iii) *Mazdoor Ekta Lehar/People’s Voice* is the scaffolding for building the party in the class and for raising the level of politics of the class;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998

### Resolves

That the following measures must be implemented, and

directs the appropriate organisations of the Party to do so:

(i) **Building** basic organisations of the Party as organs of class struggle in work places for implementing the program of the Party;

(ii) **Creating** conditions for a Party School as aid to communist education;

(iii) **Strengthening** the content and distribution of *Mazdoor Ekta Lehar/People's Voice* on the basis of establishing groups of writers and distributors in the class to address the real concerns and aspirations of the working people and to build the Party and its links with all the social forces for revolution; and

(iv) **Publishing** the organ on a regular and timely manner in languages spoken by the people and building the readership of the organ and the profile of the Party.

## **6. Resolution on the Political Crisis**

### **Whereas**

(i) The political crisis in India and the accompanying disequilibrium in the camp of the bourgeoisie is deepening the inter-capitalist contradictions as the BJP-led government is forging new arrangements among the ruling circles through massive privilege distribution;

(ii) The bourgeoisie is facing unprecedented crises of legitimacy and credibility as it is resorting to self-contradictory policies, exemplified in the fiasco with respect to the use of Article 356 of the Constitution of India in UP and Bihar;

(iii) A section of the parliamentary communists and the erstwhile social-democrats are assisting the bourgeoisie and the state to raise the spectre of “two extremes” to promote the “third front” or middle path as the moderate alternative to democratic renewal and fascism;

(iv) The alliance of left, center and right political formations in India are united to impose the dictate of the bourgeoisie that there is no alternative to the political system dominated by parties and assisted by state terrorism and the economic system characterised by broad daylight robbery of wealth produced by the workers, peasants and the middle strata through the intervention of the state;

(v) The war preparations, sale and purchase of large quantities of armaments for modernizing the security apparatus of the country and the building of a blue water navy and a nuclear arsenal are being done to transform India into an imperialist power in the style of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century empire builders of Europe; and

(vi) Measures are being taken to streamline the Constitution of India on the basis of “expert panel recommendations” so as to facilitate “stability” at home and contention for big power status abroad;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998

### **Resolves that**

(i) The program of the Party be taken to the class as the alternative program and the people be rallied around it, to openly contest the bourgeoisie over the way forward for India;

(ii) The war preparations, nuclearisation, and promotion of war hysteria against the fraternal neighboring peoples be opposed;

(iii) The political exposures be stepped up to deepen the crisis of legitimacy and credibility of the system, including the inherent problem to stabilize anachronistic institutions such as party dominated government, individual civil rights without the right of collectives, supremacy of executive power over legislative power, rule by decree and privilege distribution;

(iv) The working class and people be organised to build their political unity on the basis of a common action program against the single "extreme" rule of capital in alliance with the remnants of feudalism and colonialism, and reject the pressure to divide the polity on the basis of ideological considerations such as secular/communal outlook, *videshi/swadeshi* outlook, religious outlook and differences or political party affiliations;

(v) The Constitution needs to be reviewed by an elected Constituent Assembly on the basis of nonpartisan election through universal suffrage;

(vi) The electoral laws need to be reformed to limit the power of party leaders in candidate selection, to enable every citizen to realise in practice the right to elect and be elected irrespective of his or her wealth and affiliation to major and minor parties. and

(vii) The struggle for a pro-social program needs to become an integral part of the resistance struggles against the consequences of privatisation and liberalisation.



## 7. Resolution Against State Terrorism

### Whereas

(i) The sanction and use of violence and terror by successive governments against the progressive, communist and other fighting forces have been an integral part of the Indian state and its parliamentary system;

(ii) Forms such as police and army firing, encounter killing, custodial death, torture in prison, atrocities through goonda raj and private armies of landlords, state-organised communal massacres, massacres of dalits and tribals, bombings and assassinations, passage of draconian laws and their enforcement are expressions of state terrorism;

(iii) Ideological and political justification of state terrorism has been legislated in the form of “defending the national unity and territorial integrity of India”;

(iv) Black laws and other forms of state terrorism have been legally upheld in the courts as being consistent with the Constitution and have been defended by all parliamentary parties;

(v) State terrorism has been one of the main obstacles for the advance of the communist movement and for the working class to set its own aims and agenda in a peaceful and non-threatening political atmosphere without the fear of such attempts being criminalised and labeled as being against “national unity and territorial integrity”; and

(vi) The working class has been kept sidelined from the struggle against state terrorism and the movement for rights;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998

### **Resolves that**

(i) The work to build political unity be stepped up with special emphasis on mobilizing the working class to oppose all manifestations of state terrorism, and defend all victims of terrorism;

(ii) The working class and people must be mobilised to demand the repeal of all black laws and release of all prisoners being detained under those laws, to demand the withdrawal of the army and paramilitary forces to their barracks, demand investigation, open trial and appropriate punishment of all those found guilty of crimes against people, demand that victims of all such violence be assisted for rehabilitation and that no one must be persecuted for ideological and political reasons;

(iii) The Party will take measures to defeat the disinformation campaign which is meant to delegitimise, criminalise and marginalise the genuine struggles of people for rights; and

(iv) The Party will take measures to ensure that any attack on any section of the people is opposed by the entire people led by the working class.

### **7a. On the Assassination of Working Class Leaders**

**Whereas** Comrade Shanker Guha Niyogi, leader of Chattisgarh Mukti Morcha, was brutally murdered by the capitalists of Chattisgarh area on September 28, 1991, and despite the conviction of 5 of the 6 accused to life imprisonment and the 6th to death sentence by the

Sessions Court, all of them were acquitted by the High Court on grounds of lack of evidence; and

**Whereas** Dr. Datta Samant, leader of Kamgar Aghadi, was murdered by the capitalists as he was leaving his own house on the morning of January 16, 1997, and even more than a year and a half after his assassination the main perpetrators of the dastardly crime have not been caught;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** such dastardly acts against trade union leaders; and

**Demands** that the guilty be immediately caught, tried and punished.

## **7b. State Terrorism in the North-East**

**Whereas** the open and naked form of terrorism of the Indian State can be seen in the north-east region, where the people live in constant fear of brutality by the state forces, where they are tied hand and foot by many black laws such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958 under which any person can be killed on mere suspicion; and

**Whereas** the Indian state is trying to justify its infamous acts of terrorism by claiming that these are needed to maintain law and order and to contain "terrorism" and "secessionism;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** strongly these acts of state terrorism in the north-east;

**Demands** an immediate end to the policy of state terrorism, repeal of all black laws and the restoration of human rights in the region.

### 7c. State Terrorism in Tamil Nadu

**Whereas** the recent enactment of legislation on terrorism by the Government of Tamil Nadu, called Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), has resulted in increased violation of the rights of the people and let loose state repression against them;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** this legislative action;

**Demands** its immediate repeal; and

**Resolves** to launch a struggle for the restoration of human rights in Tamil Nadu.

### 7d. Communal Violence in Mumbai

**Whereas** one of the worst communal pogroms was organised against the Muslim minority community in Mumbai, Surat and elsewhere in December 1992 and January 1993 after the destruction of the Babri Masjid, in which thousands of innocent people were slaughtered; and

**Whereas** this was organised by the Indian state and the political parties of the big bourgeoisie—the Congress, BJP and Shiv Sena;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** strongly such organised communal violence against any section of the people; and

**Demands** that the guilty individuals be immediately caught and punished and the political parties responsible for such crimes be immediately suspended from politics.

## **7e. Struggle for Rights in the Worli area of Mumbai**

**Whereas** the working people in the chawls of Mumbai live in very difficult conditions, in buildings that are in a permanent state of disrepair, where cleanliness is not maintained nor is there adequate drinking water supply, and in addition, goondas and anti-social elements harass and physically attack women and young girls;

**Whereas** these anti-social elements are, by and large, linked to the political parties of the rich, as evidenced in the case of the attack on a woman residing in Worli chawls who tried to get the case registered but was refused by the police because the attacker was linked to a major parliamentary party;

**Whereas** when the woman went to the local leaders of the major political parties seeking justice, not only did they refuse help but they themselves levelled allegations against her;

**Whereas** when the residents of Worli called a meeting in September 1998 and invited all the local leaders and officials, none of them attended; and

**Whereas** thousands of angry residents of Worli have been staging mass demonstrations against the state since that time;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Salutes** the fighting people of Worli who have taken to the streets in defence of their rights; and

**Calls** upon all the working and oppressed people to support such struggles and build the revolutionary united front to uproot the existing order which denies them even their most basic rights.

## **8. Resolution Against Imperialism**

### **Whereas**

(i) The aggression of US imperialism against the peoples and countries of the world, expressed in its latest missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan, its continuing military actions and interference in the Balkans, its military alliances with Japan, with countries of the Middle East and recently with Bangladesh, its use of NPT and CTBT as instruments of blackmail against the countries and peoples fighting against the “might is right” doctrine, pose a grave threat to the future of peace and progress of the entire world;

(ii) The strivings of the big powers of the Security Council and emerging powers like Germany, Japan, Brazil etc., including India, to re-divide the post Cold War world on the basis of “multipolarity” in opposition to the “unipolarity” advocated by the US, are reminiscent of the Cold War days when the working class and people were called upon to abandon their own aims and line up behind the aims of the superpowers and their blocks;

(iii) The Charter of Paris has become the basis of denying the right of countries and peoples to have their own economic and political systems, values and theories and

the instruments of economic sanctions and blockade, political blackmail, military strikes, "terrorist" and "rogue state" labels are used to strangle the resolve of countries and peoples to defend their sovereignty and independence; and

(iv) The slogan of globalisation is being used to trample the sovereign rights of the people through WTO;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

**Condemns** the US imperialist aggressive actions on other peoples and its interference in the affairs of other countries, and calls for the withdrawal of all US troops stationed in foreign soil;

**Condemns** all the acts of big powers outside their territories meant to expand their "spheres of influence" and divide the world by political, economic and military means;

**Supports** the struggles of the peoples inside the countries of the imperialist powers for expansion and renewal of democracy and rights, supports their strivings to renew their own countries and societies for the affirmation of all rights and stands for fraternal cooperation with all the peoples on the basis of equality and for mutual benefit; and

**Resolves** to lead the struggle of the Indian working class on the basis of defending the sovereign right of every people to have their own economic and political system and their own culture, outlook, philosophies and theories of statecraft.

## 9. Resolution in Support of the Transfer of Residual Power to the States

### Whereas

(i) The peoples in many parts of India are waging struggles demanding to have residual powers transferred from the hands of the Central government to the states, as expressed in the demands for new states of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Bodoland, among others; and

(ii) The response of the government has been to use legalism to postpone the resolution of these problems, sowing divisions, mistrust and frustration among the people and in many instances, resorting to the use of force against the people in the name of maintaining law and order;

the Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

**Calls** on the Indian Parliament and the respective state legislatures to immediately enact legislation to create the states for which legislation process has already been initiated;

**Calls** for transfer of residual powers to all the states, old or new;

**Calls** for the official recognition of the national rights of all the nations, nationalities and tribals of India, to equal status for their languages and cultures and for making available resources so that these languages can be taught and developed through cultural forms; and



**Calls** for enacting legislation to limit the absolute power of the Parliament in the creation of states in the future, by sharing this right with the people.

## **10. Resolution in Support of People of Indian Origin Living Abroad**

The Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998, sends its greetings to the people of Indian origin living abroad for their patriotic work in support of the democratic struggles of the Indian people, their work in opposition to violation of rights in India and wishes them success in their own struggles for the affirmation of their national rights and against marginalisation and racist attacks in countries where they work and live. It expresses its appreciation of the contribution they are making to the renewal and modernisation of Indian thought material in the course of their struggle to defend their identity and culture against all notions spread to defend the "white man's burden". It appeals to them to build support for the struggles of the Indian people to oppose state terrorism, renew democracy to empower the people and end the colonial legacy. It considers the struggles of people of Indian origin abroad, and in particular the struggles of the youth born and brought up abroad, to end the marginalisation of India, South Asia and South Asians from world affairs, as an integral component of the struggles of the Indian people to affirm their sovereign right.

## **11. Resolution on Miscellaneous Issues**

The Second Congress of the CGPI, convened in the first week of October, 1998,

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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**Extends** its greetings to the peoples of Cuba and the state and government of Cuba, for their heroic struggle in defense of their sovereignty in the face of the US led economic blockade and the all-sided pressure to adopt the Charter of Paris;

**Extends** its greetings to the fighting peoples of all continents who are opposing the global anti-social offensive, capitalist offensive in their own countries, the occupation of their lands, division of their countries and nations, against racism and fascism, for peace and for the renewal of their constitutions and political processes to empower the people;

**Conveys** its revolutionary greetings to all the Communist and Workers' Parties in all continents that are heroically leading the struggle of the working class and people, to prepare the subjective conditions for revolution in the period of the retreat of revolution on the world scale, by applying Marxism-Leninism and contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought in the concrete conditions of their own countries and the world, in the face of the most savage anti-communist offensive of world capital and the unprecedented pressure on the communist and revolutionary forces to adopt class-conciliatory social-democratic politics;

**Resolves** that the members of the party are assets of the Indian revolution and the Party will make all possible arrangements to assist them in conditions of personal hardship, on the basis of collective effort;

**Hails** the work of the people's organisations and democratic forces to organise around the program to empower the people, on the basis of equal rights and duties and defence of minority rights on a modern basis;

**Salutes** the fighting Indian women and their organisations through which they have placed the problems of women as problems of society and the problems of society as problems of women, and calls on women and their organisations to elaborate their rights, arising from their position as producers and reproducers of society, and take up initiatives consistent with the program of democratic renewal, that is the program of *Hum hain iske malik; Hum hain Hindostan; Mazdoor, Kisan, Aurat aur Jawan*;

**Resolves** to assist the youth of India to fight for their rights, emanating from the fact that they are the future of society, to elaborate their vision for the kind of society that they must create and to unite around the program for the democratic renewal of India;

**Salutes** the intelligentsia, scientific and technical personnel, writers, artists and cultural workers for their work to place all the achievements of humanity in the service of the people, to spread enlightenment and oppose militarisation of science, arts, and culture of India;

**Calls** for the promotion of friendship and fraternity between the peoples of India, Pakistan and other countries of South Asia;

**Congratulates** those who are working to build close relations among the peoples of South Asia through cultural cooperation and other means and in opposition to all divisive trends and provocative positions; and

**Calls** for the democratisation of the United Nations, through reforms to subordinate the Security Council to the General Assembly, stripping the veto powers of permanent members and expanding the membership of the Security Council to provide for the participation of all peoples of the world in

the executive and legislative roles on a democratic basis.

## 11a. Reservation for Women

**Whereas** in the nineties, women in large numbers have been in the forefront of the struggle against the economic liberalisation drive and the increasing communalisation and criminalisation of the political process, as exposed by the events since 1992;

**Whereas** the fighting women have been raising the demand for their political empowerment; and

**Whereas** the Indian state and the big capitalist media have promoted the illusion that women can find the solution to these problems within the existing political system and political process, by establishing 33% per cent reservation of seats for women in the parliament and other legislative bodies;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** these attempts to create illusions about the existing system and divert the women's movement; and

**Calls** on the fighting women to reject the lie that they can be empowered within this system by granting 33% reservation in legislative bodies and to take up the program for the democratic renewal of India.

## 11b. Peaceful Relations in South Asia

**Whereas** the relations between India and countries of South Asia are characterised by imperialist war-mongering and mutual suspicion;

**Whereas** the war-mongering, arms race and hostile acts of the ruling classes and their parties are creating a dangerous and highly insecure atmosphere for the peoples of this region;

**Whereas** the imperialist ambitions of the Indian bourgeoisie are being expressed in their striving to convert South Asia into an Indian “sphere of influence”;

**Whereas** the atmosphere of disillusion and distrust among ruling circles in South Asia creates possibilities for US imperialism to intervene in the region; and

**Whereas** the working class and peoples are united in their struggle for peace and for liberation from exploitation and oppression in all the countries of South Asia;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Resolves** to fight for the renewal of international relations on a modern democratic and anti-imperialist basis, beginning with South Asia.

## 11c. Science and Technology

**Whereas** scientific and technological progress is an important requirement of modern society;

**Whereas** scientific ideas and technological developments are by their very nature social products and if properly harnessed, they serve the general societal interests; and

**Whereas** currently in India, on the one hand, the pursuit of science and technology has been made a privilege reserved for a minuscule minority and on the other hand, the entire scientific and technological establishment is

being placed in the service of the imperialist ambitions and war-mongering aims of the big bourgeoisie, as evidenced by the recent Pokhran nuclear blast;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Condemns** the use and mobilisation of the Indian scientific community to serve the chauvinistic, imperialistic and militaristic aims of the big bourgeoisie;

**Asserts** the urgent need to change the direction of Indian scientific and technological development so that it fulfills the needs and aspirations of the masses of Indian people; and

**Resolves** to help and support all the scientists who are fighting against the current dangerous course being pursued by the Indian big bourgeoisie.

## **11d. On the Youth**

**Whereas** the youth of our country are dissatisfied with the present and are faced with hopelessness regarding the future;

**Whereas** the constantly increasing costs of education, the shrinking possibilities of employment and the blood sucking competitive system have entrapped young boys and girls to such an extent that they have no time for creative thinking; and

**Whereas** the ideology of individualism and selfishness is being fostered among the youth so as to compel each one to look after his or her individual interests alone;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Resolves** that in order to lift Indian society out of the crisis, it is necessary to organise the youth and inspire them to take up the program for the democratic renewal of India as their own program and thereby contribute to setting the agenda for society.

## 11e. Movement for People's Empowerment

**Whereas** the lack of political power in the hands of the vast majority of people in the existing system of parliamentary democracy is increasingly getting exposed;

**Whereas** in recent years, the so-called "national", "main" and "recognised" parties have brought themselves and the whole political process into total disrepute, by their naked dog-fights and pursuit of narrow vested interests;

**Whereas** the initiatives taken by our Party along with other democratic forces to develop the movement for people's empowerment constitute a very significant contribution towards making a break with this system that excludes the majority of people from political power; and

**Whereas** a large number of youth, social and political activists, factory workers, trade unionists, academicians, scientists, women, nurses, doctors, small-scale industrialists and entrepreneurs and some of their respective organisations have come forward to build the movement for people's empowerment;

the Second Congress of the CGPI

**Resolves** that the Party should take the necessary theoretical and practical organisational measures to further consolidate the movement for people's empowerment and

## **Challenge Facing Indian Communists**

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to ensure that a popular front of workers, peasants, women and youth of all nationalities of India emerges on the political scene to challenge the status quo in the year 2000, the beginning of the new millennium and the second half century of the Indian Republic.



## Messages

### Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (ML)

Dear Comrades,

It is difficult to find words to express our joy on hearing the news that you will be holding your Second Congress. On this most important of occasions our Central Committee and entire Party and all the many friends of CGPI in Britain send to the leadership and to all the delegates and observers their warmest greetings, sincere congratulations and heartfelt best wishes for the success of the Congress.

At a time of retreat of revolution, when the neo-liberal policies of the financial oligarchies and the anti-social offensive against the people are causing widespread devastation in India as well as throughout the world, when there is an unprecedented assault against communism and everything progressive and an intense liquidationist pressure on all the communist parties, the significance of holding such an event as your Congress surely cannot be underestimated. To be soberly summing up and consolidating the advances made in the programme which you have set yourselves of the restoration of the unity of Indian communists, in the course of building the revolutionary political unity of the working class and the broad masses of the people around a single programme of democratic renewal, to lift society out of the crisis, and, most importantly, to be militantly setting the tasks for the next

stage, seems to us no small thing. Your Congress will without doubt present a vision for all the progressive forces, for the working class and the broad masses of the people, which will open the path for the progress of the society, for the overthrow of capitalism and the building of socialism through revolution. We are very aware that this is the first Congress which you are holding without the invaluable guidance and assistance of our beloved comrade Hardial Bains, the late national leader of CPC(ML), the sorrow at whose passing has not diminished with time.

And yet the successful holding of this Congress, as did the success of the 7th Congress of CPC(ML) earlier this year, show that our parties have not only followed Comrade Bains' last instruction to us to "March On!", but have made important advances. The spirit of our dear comrade lives on. His great legacy, in addition to his published works, is surely the path he opened, the initiative he released, the methods of work he devised, most importantly, the collectives he built and assisted in building, both in Canada and in our own countries. And it must be said too that the proletarian internationalism in which Comrade Bains and our parties have trained us, the close cooperation between our parties sharing a common origin, the joint work, the frank exchanges of experience and opinion, will live on also, and will assume as great if not greater importance in the future as in the past. Once again, we send our warmest fraternal greetings to your Second Congress, and wish you all success in its proceedings and in the implementation of its important decisions.

Hail the Second Congress of CGPI!  
Long Live the Unity between our Two Parties!  
Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!

Chris Coleman  
On behalf of Central Committee RCPB(ML).

## Messages

### Communist Party of Canada (ML)

Dearest Comrades,

It is my greatest honour to send you the revolutionary greetings of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) and all its members and supporters and progressive forces in Canada on the occasion of your Second Congress. We are overjoyed that the CGPI is coming to its Second Congress with a balance sheet of important accomplishments. Not only does this make your own Party proud but also all communists and progressive forces in India, and abroad as well.

The boldness with which the CGPI has faced the all-round deepening of the crisis of the Indian union, especially in the economic and political spheres is a matter of pride. This crisis has led the reactionary ruling circles in India to resort even more to crime and violence against the toiling and oppressed masses. Their promotion of national chauvinism with the slogan of "national unity and territorial integrity", the communalisation of the Indian polity and the use of communal and fascist violence are crimes against humanity. But in the face of these developments, CGPI carries out vigorous work against state terrorism, communalism and communal violence and the other kinds of crimes committed against the peoples of India. Your work fully exposes the extent to which the Indian system is bankrupt and needs profound renewal by bringing about fundamental changes.

While the bourgeoisie sees no way out of the situation and resorts to crime and violence, the CGPI has firmly led the people to see that there is no way out of the situation short of revolution. We also hail the vigorous work of the CGPI on the front of laying down the general line for this period which is characterised by broad retrogression and counter-revolution. In this regard, CGPI has clearly pointed out that it is the social-democratic reconciliation of the class struggle which is the main obstruction to the development of the communist and workers' movement in India. The CGPI has steered the movement clear of the diversions to dealing with the real problems of Indian revolution, especially the wrecking activities of the bourgeoisie which seeks to split the political unity of the people on the basis of ideological differences. CGPI has militantly opposed all attempts of social-democracy to rescue capitalism. The propaganda that liberalisation, privatisation, radical reform and the elimination of communism will rescue capitalism has achieved nothing. Once illusion-making about the "trickle-down" benefits of the anti-social offensive could no longer be sustained, the illusion was created that the "left" was going to save the bourgeoisie and the attempt was made to embroil the people into a struggle between "right" and "left." This "left" in India cried bitter tears that the parliamentary system was discredited. It pledged to do its level best to make it credible. The "left" even took over the Home Ministry which is in charge of all the police forces in India and the intelligence agencies. In this way they sought to provide the discredited system with stability.

In the light of this offensive, the work of the CGPI has been a rock in the shifting sands. The CGPI never succumbed to the so-called anti-communal diversion created by the bourgeoisie and its apologists which blames the people for being the trouble-makers and blames the resistance of the toilers and oppressed masses of India and the peoples

fighting for national rights for the oppression of the state and state-terrorism. By persisting in building the Revolutionary United Front of the workers and peasants of India, and working to empower the people, CGPI is sure to unite all the communists of India so that they play their leading role and the people of India can fulfil their dream of liberation.

On this occasion, permit us to applaud the work which the CGPI has carried out to provide the Indian masses with the modern definitions which are required in order to open society's path to progress. It was quite clear even in 1947 that any system which does not take into consideration the sovereignty of the people as the fundamental requirement of the times will sooner or later come into disrepute. The Indian system, touted by the bourgeoisie and international reaction as the world's largest democracy, fell into disrepute from the moment of its birth. It has never resolved a single matter of an economic, political, cultural or other character related to the well-being of the workers, peasants and other toiling masses, or of concern to the nations, nationalities and tribal peoples. Nor can such matters be sorted out through the Lok Sabha as presently constituted. The CGPI has initiated all-sided work to show that the system from its very beginning was anachronistic, unsuited to not only the Indian conditions but unrepresentative anywhere in the world.

Today, it is clearer than ever before that only those whose class interests are served by such a system have a stake in its continuity, while the workers, peasants, progressive intelligentsia, nations, nationalities and tribal peoples require the unity of Indian communists to unite them politically to break with the past and renew the Indian polity so that it serves them.

We are certain that the work which CGPI sets at its

Second Congress will be the guarantee that the anti-communist offensive of the bourgeoisie, facilitated by social-democracy, will not succeed in disorienting the Indian masses. Far from it, on the basis of the general line established by the CGPI for this period of retrogression, a firm line of march has been provided for the Indian polity. The new coherence provided by this line of march is the guarantee that the CGPI will not only restore the unity of Indian communists but establish the unity in action of all those who are fighting for their rights. The deep desire of the Indian people to find a way out of the crisis which favours them, not the reactionary bourgeoisie and world imperialism, is sure to achieve victory.

All glory to the work of the CGPI, to the death-defying courage and conviction of its members and supporters and of the Indian people who are facing the greatest of difficulties in terms of living conditions and the increase by leaps and bounds of all the ills which are the fellow-travellers of grinding poverty and the capitalist system which also maintains the remnants of feudalism in order for itself to hang on.

Dearest Comrades,

On this occasion of your Second Congress, together we share the grief of not having Comrade Bains amongst us in person. We pay the deepest tribute to him on this occasion, to his farsighted leadership, his commitment to the cause of the peoples of Canada, India and the entire world for liberation. Comrade Bains dedicated his entire life's work to the liberation of the peoples of India, the people who gave him life and whose struggles for liberation moulded him into the outstanding leader and Marxist-Leninist communist he proved to be. Comrade Bains not only provided us with the political vision required to turn the successes achieved to date into lasting victory. He

provided us with the kind of guidance which is required to turn words into deeds, to make all the sacrifices which the peoples have made throughout the twentieth century the guarantee of victory. In this regard, Comrade Bains reiterated time and time again that the crucial aspect of this work is to acquire an outlook based on Indian philosophy and to elaborate the theory of Indian liberation. The biggest pressure is exerted on the front of depriving the people of their own theory on the basis of which they can achieve victory. Without revolutionary theory, Comrade Lenin pointed out, there can be no revolutionary movement. The work on Indian philosophy to elaborate Indian theory of liberation which Comrade Bains spearheaded and his work to elaborate contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought as the guide to our thinking and action to which he made an immortal contribution have been and remain the most crucial work which the CGPI has taken up. In this way, Comrade Bains taught us how to realise under today's conditions the call of the martyrs of the Indian people, many of whom are inseparable from the struggles waged in our own land of Canada for freedom and liberation.

On this occasion, permit us to repeat to you what Comrade Bains said in talking to comrades from India in 1995. "History is not made by words or ordinary deeds. It is made when you set a project and heroic deeds, the heroic exploits of your comrades, not cheap motives for oneself." He would have hailed the broad vision which CGPI is espousing at its Second Congress. He would have pointed out that this is what is required to make epoch-making decisions. Comrade Bains pointed out: "A people who possess a political vision can never be subdued. For a people to be subjugated and their resistance destroyed, it is not weapons or repression that can achieve the results desired by their enemies. Only the destruction of their

political vision is lethal to them. For a people to acquire a political vision is their greatest weapon. Once the political vision is destroyed, then no amount of courage and heroism or sacrifice can protect the people.”

This keen insight prompted Comrade Bains to lead us to pay utmost attention to providing the polity with the political vision it requires to march firmly into the future. This is also what distinguishes CGPI as it comes to its Second Congress with a balance sheet of achievements, just as it distinguishes all communists from those who parade as communists or “left wing” but conciliate with the program of the bourgeoisie, complain from the sidelines but cannot provide the people with a line of march, or they cooperate with the bourgeoisie in the name of providing stability and prosperity for the people. The CGPI has shown utmost fidelity to providing the people with the political vision they require, that new coherence, on the basis of which the unity of the people is forged so that they can achieve the desired results. It is because the CGPI provides them with this vision and organises them to realise it that all over India the people love the CGPI. What an honour!

Dear Comrades,

You are holding your Congress at a time world imperialism is stepping up its intrigues against the peoples of the world. In particular, U.S. imperialism and other big powers are intensifying their rivalry to dominate Europe and use Europe as a spring board to dominate Asia. They are colluding and contending over India, while the Indian big bourgeoisie also has its plans to establish itself as the dominant power in the region. In this regard also, the work of CGPI against the attempts of the reactionary Indian bourgeoisie to establish itself as the dominant power in the region and use its big power status to divide the peoples of



South Asia is extremely important. These attempts are evident not only in the warmongering propaganda and activities with Pakistan, but its attempts to crush the national liberations struggle of the Kashmiri people, the people of Sri Lanka and put down the struggles of the Indian nations and tribal peoples. It is the struggle for national liberation which CGPI is leading which is the guarantee of peace on the Indian sub-continent.

On the occasion of your Second Congress we want to express our appreciation for the work of the CGPI on this front as well. Comrade Bains pointed out: "The quest for peace is not only the greatest need of the people, but also their finest emotion. Nonetheless, it cannot be achieved by wishing it into being and by hoping that it can last forever. Nor can it be said that war is a precondition for peace or that peace can only be achieved through war. The precondition for peace is the liberation of the peoples, who must determine their own affairs. It is in their interest to have lasting peace.

"Numerically it can be said without any trepidation that the vast majority of the peoples want to have lasting peace. The task of the new forces today is to turn things around in order to have people constituting themselves as the decisive factor and not geo-politics or anything else promoted by those who are operating under the signboard of the highest ideals of freedom and peace."

Comrades, on behalf of CPC(M-L), I pledge to you on this occasion that we will step up our work for the achievement of the same aims in Canada. We pledge to do our duty to the people of South Asian origin in Canada by providing them with the political vision they require to turn things around for themselves in Canada as well. As an integral part of the Canadian people, the people of South Asian origin

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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resident in Canada stand second to none in ensuring the success of any work. They are taking a bold stand in defence of the rights of all, so as to ensure that everyone is equal in the polity on the basis of recognizing their equal rights and duties, defending the equality of their languages and cultures and social mores, especially those of the national minorities. In this way, the workers, youth and all others of South Asian origin are working to end the state-organised racist attacks against them, their marginalisation and ghettoization and the state interference in affairs which are a matter of conscience such as religion. The entire Canadian people are outraged by attempts to isolate religious and other minorities by calling them subversives, terrorists, extremists and in this way justifying the attacks against them and against the people as a whole.

Comrades, we wish you the greatest success in the implementation of the important decisions you are taking at your Second Congress. We are certain that just as you planted your first red flag, the CGPI itself, so too you will plant your second red flag and restore the unity of the Indian communists so as to lead the struggle of the Indian masses to victory.

Hail the Second Congress of the CGPI! Long live the fighting unity and friendship between our two parties!

Glory to Marxism-Leninism!  
Inquilab Zindabad!

With profound communist greetings,

Sandra Smith  
First Secretary  
Central Committee  
Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)

## Messages

### Communist Party of Ireland (ML)

Dear Comrades,

Revolutionary greetings on behalf of the working class and people of Ireland to the Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India! Your Second Congress is being held at a most important time for the peoples of the Indian subcontinent and for the working class and peoples of the world. Set against the background of this period of retreat of revolution of this decade, a number of developments recently demonstrate that change is in the air and that the ebb of revolution will one day not too far off turn into upsurge. Contradictions are sharpening on the front of geo-politics internationally. The nuclear tests of the governments of India and Pakistan are one such recent example. The US imperialists are interfering everywhere to try to impose their unipolar world, while other imperialist forces are fighting to impose a multipolar world. The development of increasing instability in the world economy, with crises rapidly spreading from one former "tiger economy" to another, underlies the mounting regional tensions and the emergence of many potential flashpoints for conflict.

At such times, the need for the working class to come forward to champion and unite the forces of progress, enlightenment and peace against those of reaction, fascism and war becomes the more urgent. Your Second

## Challenge Facing Indian Communists

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Congress is a great contribution to advancing the cause of the working class in India, but also to helping unite the working class on the international scale.

Comrades, on this occasion please accept our congratulations for the advances which the CGPI has been making over the last year and more. The work which you have been doing to advance the mass Party press and to help promote enlightenment through encouraging other publications has been impressive and is an encouraging example also to our Party.

The work which your Party has been doing to promote the revolutionary front of the oppressed masses of the working people of India has been advancing. The work to encourage progressive forces to unite in struggle for a change in the political system, for an end to the diversionary and divisive politics of the outdated multi-party system and for the empowerment of the people also shows clearly that although we have been living through a difficult period for the communist movement the potential is there to be brought out through hard work, persistence and tactics to suit the time. This is historic preparation for the change in the period which is bound to come, when revolution comes forward onto the agenda once again.

Our two Parties, along with parties in a number of countries, share a historic link through the path-breaking work of the Internationalists in the 1960s and since then with a common inspiration in the personality and profound revolutionary contribution of Comrade Hardial Bains. This is a link which we will always treasure and which we can build on in the future. Your advances over this last year adds to that of other parties, especially that of the Party led by Comrade Bains since its foundation in 1970, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist). These

advances provide vivid testimony to the continued, ever-living and ever-renewable vitality of the inspiration of Comrade Hardial Bains, since his tragic premature death in August 1997 last year. We know how deeply you comrades miss him also as a proud son of India, who never for one moment in his life abroad ever forgot the present travails and the great potential for the future of the land of his birth and the country where Comrade Hardial received his formation as a communist activist and leader.

Comrades, today more than ever all the countries need their vigorous, active and imaginative communist parties. We are deeply conscious of this need in our case in Ireland, where there has been a historic turn with the emergence of today's peace process since the Good Friday Agreement. After over a quarter of century of heroic struggle against British colonial rule in the north of Ireland, the peace process marks a considerable advance in the situation. But it still remains the case that the working class must come to the fore under its own leadership in order to bring the Irish revolution to its eventual culmination. Please accept our best wishes to you for the success of the Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India. This is of great significance to strengthening your Party at this time and it is an inspiration to the rest of the parties, especially ours, to raise our own efforts and come to a par with the demands of the time and the need to prepare the conditions for revolution.

Hail the Second Congress of the Communist Ghadar Party of India!

Long live the unity of the workers and oppressed peoples of India and Ireland!

## **Challenge Facing Indian Communists**

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Long live proletarian internationalism!

Glory to Marxism-Leninism!

Signed

Rod Eley,

General Secretary,

Central Committee,

Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist)

## Messages

### Indian Workers Association (Great Britain)

Congratulations!

On this great occasion of your Party Congress, I, on behalf of Indian Workers' Association (G.B) extend this message of solidarity and goodwill. In the life of any party a congress is a great occasion for the Party to get together, assess its past work and plan for the future to scale new heights for the masses of their motherland. We are sure that the Party will adjust itself to face the new challenges in its struggle to emancipate masses of their beloved countrymen. No doubt the road is long and treacherous but we have the correct and the most powerful ideology of Marxism and Leninism to guide and help us. It is also the guarantee of our victory. No doubt you know it and you are fully determined to stick to the last.

We wish you every success!  
Long live the Revolution.  
Long live the Communist Ghadar Party of India.  
Long live Marxism and Leninism.  
Victory to the People of India.

Yours Comradely  
A.S. Bains (National Secretary)  
September 21, 1998.

## **About Communist Ghadar Party of India**

Founded on December 25, 1980, the Communist Ghadar Party of India (CGPI) is an organised detachment of communists who have devoted their lives to the liberation of India and to the emancipation of labour on the world scale.

The doors of the CGPI are open to all those who wish to make revolution the mission of their lives—who agree to implement the program, work in one of the Party organisations and pay monthly dues.

The CGPI is committed to the restoration of unity of all Indian communists.

The CGPI works to unite all communists, irrespective of party affiliations, in the course of providing leadership to the class struggle and preparing the subjective conditions for ending all exploitation of persons by persons, for the victory of revolution and communism on Indian soil.

The CGPI opposes all forms of conciliation with social-democracy and the idea of a “middle road” between capitalism and socialism.

The CGPI opposes all illusion mongering about the State of



the Indian Union, which is neither democratic nor secular but the bulwark of the colonial legacy, an instrument of capitalist-feudal exploitation and imperialist plunder.

The CGPI opposes those who justify state terrorism in the name of defending “national unity and territorial integrity”.

The CGPI does not seek political power for itself. It is organised around the aim of securing power in the hands of the working class and all the oppressed.

The entire membership sets the line and tasks of the Party, at the Congress, which is the highest body. The Congress elects the Central Committee to implement the line and carry out the tasks set, until the next Congress is convened.

The foundation of the CGPI lies in its basic organisations in the factories, work places, mohallas, chawls, villages and college campuses—the basic organs of class struggle.

Party organisations provide leadership at all levels. The party’s work is carried out on the basis of the principle of collective decision making and individual responsibility.

The CGPI is committed to the development of Indian revolutionary theory, a theory emerging out of the conditions of India and suited to the development of communism here. It invites all communists and enlightened minds to contribute to this work of theory, by basing themselves on the rich Indian thought material and summing up the experience of the working class movement, starting from the present.

The work of CGPI is based on the theoretical thinking of Marxism-Leninism and guided by contemporary Marxist-

Leninist thought. Contemporary Marxist-Leninist thought is the summation, taken in general form, of the experience of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the conditions of socialist revolution and socialist construction, to the struggle against modern revisionism and capitalist restoration, against fascism, militarism, imperialism and medievalism. It is not the final form of Marxism-Leninism under the present conditions but its continuation and enrichment.

The CGPI calls on all communists and progressive forces, all those who are opposed to the *status quo* and desire deep going transformations, to take up the immediate program for the reorientation of the economy, empowerment of the people and the democratic renewal of India.

Come all who are concerned about the fate of our people, our ancient civilisation! Let us raise the banner of liberation, of deep going transformations! Let us build the revolutionary united front around this fighting program!

Revolution is our right and duty. To fight for the democratic renewal of India is the immediate task. Let us unitedly take up this task so that the crisis can be ended and the door opened for the progress of society!



## **Communist Ghadar Party of India**

*Not an electoral machine but an instrument for the empowerment of the working class and all the oppressed*

### **Other Publications**

#### **What kind of Party?**

Document adopted at the Second National Consultative Conference of the CGPI, held on December 29-30, 1993.

#### **Whither India?**

Report released for discussion by the Third National Consultative Conference of the CGPI, held on December 23-24, 1995.

#### **Breaking the Barriers to Unity**

Document released for discussion by the Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee of the CGPI, convened on January 24-25, 1998.

#### **Mazdoor Ekta Lehar**

The fortnightly organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Ghadar Party of India in Hindi.

#### **People's Voice**

The organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Ghadar Party of India in English.

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