



RED SALUTE COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

"...Lying in wait, on the one hand, are the separatist elements and Jan Sangh like forces clamouring for the religious state. They are biding time for the opportune moment to come their way. Once people's attraction toward the leftist movement, which is still there, will be undermined, these forces will raise their head. Whereas, the CPI(M) leaders holding the reins do not simply realize this situation. It is almost like the Congress that they are deceiving the people with high rhetorics and sweet words of trickery throwing aside the ideals of communism, its ideological content." — Shibdas Ghosh

*Proletarian
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Organ of
Socialist Unity Centre of India
Founder Editor-in-Chief:
Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

On Working Style of Revolutionary Workers

On 2nd June, 1974, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader, teacher and guide, made a discussion on the working style of revolutionary workers at the Futnani Hall in Calcutta at the extended West Bengal State Committee meeting. Excerpts of this discussion were published in Ganadabi, the organ of the West Bengal State Committee on August 4, 1982. This valuable discussion of Comrade Ghosh will guide leaders and cadres in the present situation in building up their revolutionary characters and in necessary organisational preparations to build up mass movement against world imperialism and Indian capitalism.

Comrades,

This extended meeting of the West Bengal State Committee has been convened mainly to discuss the question of eradicating the major weaknesses noticeable today at almost all levels of the party organisation. These weaknesses are manifest at a time which is crucial in the history of the struggle to build up the party. If we understand correctly the political significance of the hostile attitude of the forces opposing us, their attitude to corner us, and we don't get perplexed by the difficulties arising therefrom, then there cannot be any reason to think that the present situation is very adverse to us. There are stiff obstacles and difficulties, but there is also the growing prestige of the party, the growing interest in the mass mind about our political line, about the future prospect of our party and the scope for its expansion. If we can correctly understand all this, we can easily see that this is an excellent time for our growth and development as never before in the history of the party. I mean, if we can properly utilise the opportunities of the situation then compared to the entire past the present situation is relatively the most favourable for us. A favourable time does not, however, mean that opposition is lesser now. It means that if the party workers can attain the strength, ability, political consciousness and maturity to politically face the attacks and the odds at all levels and if they can properly develop the party bodies and committees of the mass organisations, then the present time is surely excellent for our growth and development. Because, the people want to listen to us and they are having a soft feeling for us. Not only among the common people, direct and indirect impact of the politics of the SUCI is felt in various ways even among the rank and file of the different political parties despite the rabid opposition to our party. This is confirmed by various symptoms.

At such a time, therefore, the rank and file of our party should be more closely knit. Individual initiative of each and every worker, heightening of political consciousness, ability to take political initiative and to step up political activity and the style and method of collective functioning as a whole — all these are to be improved to meet the need of the hour. This is the main task now. Keeping in view the question of augmenting the momentum of our work, I wish to dwell upon the tasks to be accomplished at all levels. All of you, particularly the leading comrades, should pay attention to this. Every party worker should try to increase his political initiative and heighten his level of political consciousness so that his individual political and organisational initiative can be developed further in discharging various tasks and responsibilities in political movements and everyday life. This means, not to wait for instructions from the leaders every moment on what is to be done. The attitude should be that each of us

shall use his or her brain to implement in the best way an instruction when it comes ; even when no instruction comes, each one of us shall plan and do his or her work accordingly. This means, if a question crops up, comrades should themselves try to provide the answer, and they do not have to rush to the leaders every time for it. They may commit mistakes in trying to do so, but then they will learn from these, or someone would help by pointing out the mistakes. Each one shall have to prepare oneself in this way. The present practice of not judging oneself a question first but of rushing to the leaders to know from them what should be the reply, or else getting perplexed whenever a critical question arises — these are symptoms of lack of consciousness of the workers and indicate that we have not been able to train up the cadres adequately. Secondly, the practice of working collectively which is there in our party, needs to be improved further in style so that individual initiative of every comrade increases. We need to improve our style of work with the aim of gaining in momentum of our work, keeping in view the tasks ahead and the method to be followed to develop further both individual initiative and collective body functioning. I do not know how much the other leaders feel about it, but I do feel very strongly. As I see it, we are lagging much behind the necessity. We are still a small force for the vast country that is India. In this situation, a historical responsibility rests upon us, whether we wanted it or not. We may either disown this responsibility and shirk it, thereby proving ourselves impotent before history, or else we are to accept the challenge manly, as revolutionaries, and take up the responsibility that has fallen upon us. But it will not suffice to merely think or contemplate that we shall do this or that. Doing anything more effectively means that it should be taken up as a movement which includes preliminary ground work, necessary preparation and all-out initiative which should flow at all levels of the organisation. Individually, each one of us would have to ask himself : 'Whether I am adequately equipping myself politically, whether I am able to put forth my views on any question, put them in whatsoever manner without prior consultation with anyone, whether I can offer suggestions during deliberations in any party body, whether I can put my opinion not just for opinion's sake but for helping and improving the work itself ; or do I attend a meeting merely to listen to the leaders and ask them what I have to do ? Each party worker should examine himself like this and struggle to uplift himself accordingly.

How to uplift oneself ? The method is to always engage oneself in political discussions with the people, the party comrades and other friends, to acquire the ability to link up even discussion on a minor point with our politics. Be it a discussion on a minor issue, on literature, or a humour, on a

matter of taste, on cinema or about a joke — we should make it a point to get into the discussion and co-relate it with our politics so that the discussion becomes purposive — not bluntly or mechanically but in a manner which becomes really lively. Each comrade has to earnestly prepare himself to acquire this ability. It will not do to say, 'Oh, that is a mere story, because even in a story, a culture is reflected. Whether we are conscious of it or not, a culture influences people even through a story. Even a humour reflects a cultural standard which cannot be ignored. So, a gossip or jest also should not be viewed lightly. Whatever issue may crop up, whatever gossip or hilarity — we shall have to at once link it up with the basic line and political thinking of the party. What does this basic line ask us to do ? It enjoins upon us to rouse the urge of anti-capitalist socialist revolution among the people, to arouse hatred among the masses against capitalism and against all that are associated with it on the basis of correct evaluation. I don't mean blind hatred because that fails to serve the purpose. The task is to rouse hatred on the basis of correct evaluation against those features which have become historically exhausted and harmful. We have to prepare ourselves in a way so as to rouse hatred against all that is exhausted and injurious today, basing ourselves on correct evaluation, in order to shatter to pieces and defeat completely, with the sharp edge of logic and scientific reasoning, any attraction for or illusion about them that may be nurtured, openly or surreptitiously under any garb.

This linking of any issue with our main line of anti-capitalist revolution and expounding that line in this way and freeing the people from the influence of the pseudo-revolutionary forces whose image creates confusion and hence stands in the way of anti-capitalist revolution — these are the tasks. The main blow would have to be directed against these forces in the spheres wherever they are exerting some influence. Even where it may be superficially seen that there is apparently nothing wrong with a particular stand of theirs or a particular movement that they are conducting, there also it would have to be shown, by linking it up with the main political line, how through such stand they are creating a false image to their advantage whereas their base political line is wrong, and what made them take this particular course. Their course of action and slogans may apparently look like the same as ours at a given time, but the fundamental difference between our position and theirs would have to be explained to the people. Our basic aim is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and, along with it, to root out the remnants of feudalism that are there. A particular slogan and a particular programme may coincide, but our aims are different. Through constant discussions, the party workers will have to acquire the fundamental tenets of the base political understanding and the mental make-up of anti-capitalist revolution for overthrowing the bourgeoisie from political power. Just emotional speeches against oppression in a popular style won't do. Because the people themselves understand oppression in a general way, feel the pangs of hunger and desire struggle against oppression. But the man who wants to fight against capitalism, may reflect on another issue at the very next moment an attitude conducive to the perpetuation of capitalism. So what are needed are

Give Anti-Capitalist Orientation to Whole Ideological-Cultural-Mental Sphere

the mental preparedness for an all-out struggle to overthrow capitalism, the effort required to give an anti-capitalist orientation to the whole ideological-cultural-mental sphere and to develop ourselves adequately for the purpose so that we can conduct each discussion and dialogue effectively.

To develop ourselves like this, we have to work among the people round the clock. This does not mean that we shall not use time to eat and do the daily chores or engage in friendly gossips, or that those in love shall not meet together sometimes. These will remain but should not overshadow our minds. That these will be there off and on is realistic, to think otherwise would be utopian ; but these should not become the main concern. The things that should preoccupy us and haunt our mind constantly — when we are alone, or even as we may be, say, taking bath, sitting or lying to relax — are our political and organisational problems. There are so many perplexing issues, so many contradictory viewpoints and distortions. So, whatever be the surroundings, our sole concern shall be : how to tackle these. Those who want to fight the Congress have a certain type of illusion about the CPI and the CPI(M) ; the CPI(M) which calls the CPI revisionist is itself practising revisionism of another type ; and the Naxalites who brand the CPI(M) revisionist are themselves creating confusion of another type through petty-bourgeois adventurism. In this way, those who fight a particular confusion may have many a confusion hidden in them, one confusion mixing up with another. A revolutionary party studies this intermingling of confusions stage by stage, the revolutionary workers study these through constant practice of correct politics and devise ways and means to free the masses from these confusions. How do they do this ? They do this through discussing any topic or question that arises among the masses or amongst themselves, linking it up with the base political line of the party. The attitude of the revolutionary worker should be : 'However much may one seek to disturb the discussion, I would participate in the talk and get him involved in the main political discussion by overcoming his mental resistance in such a witty and lively manner that he would not be able to withdraw even if he perceives it and often he would not at all be able to perceive how he has become diverted unknowingly to discussion of a different type : The man wanted to crack a joke, but participating in it, I started a dialogue that brought him unknowingly into a serious discussion.' One has to prepare oneself so that one is continuously guided by this political purposiveness, and political objective. Solitary contemplation cannot achieve this. To earn this capacity, each worker has to develop mass contacts constantly in a planned way, adopt definite programmes of work for this purpose and pursue politics in the midst of the people in various ways. And to carry our politics to the masses, we have to organise movements on the legitimate demands of the people.

While doing these, we have to simultaneously fight the politics of others. Not in a general way the politics of others, but in particular the pseudo-revolutionary politics that creates illusion by acting as the compromising force between labour and capital. Its true character is to be exposed. A revolutionary party has to assess who constitute

this force. It may be that the force which is the main danger on the national plane, is insignificant in a particular state in a particular sphere. Even then, this force which is the main danger on the national plane, would have to be fought in that particular state, as otherwise, it might develop into the main danger in that state tomorrow. We have to fight it in advance before it gains a foothold. There may be another force which is not yet the main danger on the national plane, but has become so here in West Bengal through creating a pseudo-revolutionary image — I would first of all fight it in this particular case although I should not belittle the importance of fighting that force which is already the main danger nationally. Because, if the force that is now the main danger in this state loses ground, then the force that is the main danger nationally would take its place here tomorrow unless we have fought and defeated it meanwhile. If that force is politically equipped and if we fail in our task to fight it out, it would surely fill in the vacuum here.

So, raising the level of consciousness of party workers and increasing their political initiative in all spheres are very important. For some time past, I have been urging time and again to place the question of increasing political initiative at the foremost and raise the individual and political initiative of each worker. I even emphasized that let it be risky, let there be some mistakes, but still try to organize mass movement and lead it on your own — only do not forget to conduct the movement in accordance with the party ideology, the base political line of anti-capitalist revolution of the party as far as you understand these. Even if you make some mistakes, the sky would not fall down, and the leaders too must not take a harsh stand and put down the initiative. What the leaders should do in that event is to sympathetically point out the mistake and rectify it. But the initiative should not be discouraged with harsh criticism. "Why has he undertaken this without consultation" — such things must not be said. Encourage the initiative of those comrades, allow them to work with their own brain, let them work ; of course, not in an anarchic way. On the one hand, let them improve their understanding of the main political line of the party and master it. On the other, they should be given the opportunity to organize people's struggles on the party line, as per their understanding in whatever way they desire. If they commit a mistake then that is to be corrected, but never say : "Why have you done this without discussing ?" This is what I wish to emphasize before the executives. Because, what is lacking is appropriately trained political cadres. We are lagging very much in this. We have to try to remove the confusions that arise in the cross-current of politics in the society in its present condition — the questions that arise among the pseudo-revolutionaries, the confusions among those known as progressives, the confusions prevailing in the rank and file of other parties. It is not right to think that all those affected are acting as agents consciously or for money. To think like that would be oversimplifying the issue. Because, many of them are running after those forces as they have no correct understanding of politics. We have to try to dispel the confusion plaguing them, we have to dispel the confusion among the masses at large. This painstaking task of removing confusion

and explaining the correct politics can be accomplished only by trained and dedicated cadres who possess initiative, have the ability to provide leadership and who can explain clearly the politics of the party and stick to the main political line without messing up. We need such cadres. I observe in the case of many of our good comrades that they can be made excited and diverted from one point to another by the opponents during deliberations. They can be entangled in discussion and shifted away from the main point. Being unalert during the deliberations or debates, in their zeal to show off their knowledge, they get easily diverted from what they wanted to say. This is happening because they are not politically matured enough. They are not conscious of the purpose of discussion. Those who are mature and efficient cannot be shifted from the main point howsoever much may one try. Rather, even as the others may try to misdirect the discussion, they take guard against it and bring back the discussion on the right track. If the others try to slip out of the main issue, they know how to hold them fast, as a good fisherman does with his catch. Can the fish escape from an expert fisherman ? If these people elude you, that shows you are not expert, you are immature. If one is mature, that is experienced, no one can slip out of his grip even by trying. It is easy to say this but not so easy to achieve. For that, the cadres need to be trained up. Can this be achieved by holding stereotype, academic classes ? Of course not. Academic classes, general classes on the theories of Marxism are necessary. Unless these are studied and grasped and unless the experiences of practice are combined with the theoretical knowledge, one cannot sharpen one's understanding. Here, too, we find many old, experienced comrades who have learnt many things from experience but do not consider it essential to study classical Marxism and get acquainted with its discourses and expressions. They think, since they have understood the basic line, there is no necessity of further study. No, this attitude is not correct.

Such studies, such knowledge are absolutely necessary because these are essential to sharpen and make versatile one's thinking, working and capacity for work, to equip one all-round, to make one fit for working at all levels, to develop oneself in all directions. We should utilise whatever opportunity we get. On the one hand, we should study, conduct discussions and have friendly exchange of views and debates to gain better clarity of understanding. On the other, we should provide leadership to the mass movements even if we cannot do this to perfection and offer creative suggestions to solve the problems thrown up by the movements. In this way shall we enhance our ability. Constant common association, discussion and activity — such should be our mode of life. Please remember that any discussion should be purposive. In whatever way it may start, it should ultimately be made political. Nothing can be learnt without practice. So, the cadres are to be trained up in this way and should be given the opportunity to learn this. It is, therefore, very important to develop personal initiative. As there is the necessity of personal effort for this, so also it should be tried to be achieved through improving committee functioning and style of work of the leadership. By improvement of committee functioning I mean that

Style of Presenting Truth very Important

the cadres should be given greater scope of discussion at the meetings. What they say may be annoying, fruitless or repetitive, but still opportunity should be given to see that they can work out a line through debate. A maximum of patience is needed, we should strive with the maximum patience to get the collective bodies function properly. If we feel that they are indulging in useless talk, irritating others or wasting time unnecessarily then these are to be controlled but the debate should not be stopped in order to exercise control. When a decision has to be taken because a lot of discussion has been there already, no more time can be allowed and any further delay would hamper the work — we should intervene in such cases but our style should be such that the spirit of discussion does not get dampened. That they are racking their brains, debating and discussing, trying to analyse, trying to formulate something — these trends should not be discouraged in a bid to exercise control. But again, we should be alert about the tendencies that appear in their inclination for discussion. Debating just for the sake of debating, showing off, mere dragging on the discussion to no purpose — these are the tendencies from which they are to be freed. They should realize that discussions are for coming to a correct conclusion, for taking a point to precision, for stating it clearly. It is one thing to present the basic point concisely, to state it with as much clarity as possible. It is quite another to prolong the discussion through purposeless talks and counter-talks and do away with whatever clarity that might be already there, thus making the point even more obscure. We should provide guidance to remove this harmful tendency but guiding does not mean to snuff out the enthusiasm for discussion, for making arguments and counter-arguments. Just as this harmful tendency is to be pointed out to them, so also their enthusiasm for discussion is to be kept up. This is a difficult task, and the leaders will have to learn how to do this. We criticize and rebuke them creating a situation where their desire and eagerness to speak out gets reduced and they hesitate to talk — it should never be like this. Rather, we should guide them in such a way that their urge to participate in dialogues further increases in future. It is only to be pointed out to them so that they can understand how and where the tendency of unnecessary altercation and too much talking lies in their manner of discussion. The cadres are to be helped thus to the utmost. In this, the collective working style should be radically changed.

In the preceding session I observed painfully that the impression that our workers are good, which is conveyed when others say — “Your workers are most conscious and the most disciplined and your party is a well-trained revolutionary party” — is begetting complacency among the comrades. I have cautioned about it earlier and like to repeat it now. We ourselves must understand where lie our weaknesses. There is a Bengali saying that “a wild cat is a tiger in a ‘forest’ of castor oil plants.” It is no use our being a ‘tiger’ like that. May be the other parties are good for nothing ; may be they are dishonest, undisciplined and they indulge in misdeeds whereas we are not so. What of it ? The others can achieve nothing but we can make some sacrifice ; the others do not understand anything but we have acquired some political phrases — how do these help ? Can we

successfully execute the revolutionary programme through these ? That is why I was saying that it is of no use being a tiger in a castor oil plant ‘forest’.” “Our cadres are very good, very honest” — I get irritated hearing this time and again. Because, the ‘credit’ for this falls on me. Just as a leader of another party has remarked to one of our comrades, “Don’t say like that. No question, that man really is turning out some cadres”, whereas I am flabbergasted at the quality of cadres that we turn out ! I find, whatever the others may say in praise, our cadres are not up to the mark. Listening to what the cadres say, I get disgusted these days. Often I cannot make out head or tail of what they say. Even the leading comrades, in clarifying a point, further jumble it up. Perhaps a point was clear to some extent, but while trying to clarify it further they muddle it up. We should speak with precision to clarify the issue, to dispel the confusion and to throw light. We should place the point precisely and sharply so that it may attract the people and penetrate their minds. But we speak a lot displaying our profound knowledge, missing the essential thing that we wanted to convey. We have even some parasite intellectual comrades who speak a lot of unnecessary things in the gatherings, who just show off their knowledge and talk about everything of world politics but lose sight of the main purpose. I am getting restless hearing all this. There are some veteran comrades who do not know how to speak effectively, how to put forward a point, how to place the point after listening to the arguments of others. They have not learnt these.

Another aspect agitates me much. In the present situation, the task is to uphold and project our correct politics by exposing the wrong and opportunist politics of others and to dispel the confusion of the masses. Are the organs of our party correctly directed to this purpose ? I do not think this is being done decisively. Why ? The reason is that political initiative is lacking here, too. Propaganda is a great art. Unless one is a mature revolutionary and unless revolutionary purposiveness is constantly urging the mind, one cannot be a good propagandist, because he does not understand what is to be said, when and how. We shall not distort the truth ; but the style of presenting the truth is very important. The revolutionaries should not say everything everywhere, at any time, without any purpose. When saying a particular thing would hamper dissemination of the basic politics, the basic truth — we do not say it at that time. Should necessity arise, we say it on a different occasion. If somebody specifically enquires about it then we do talk about it, but in a particular manner and at a particular time. Since our aim is to clearly explain a subject, we should bring into the discussion only those points which will help to throw light upon and will further elucidate and clearly express the subject to enhance the understanding of others. Unless we clearly bear this in mind, then the exposition of the basic issue that we desired gets jumbled up due to the tendency of bringing in various facts and points disjointedly. To do like this means not to understand the very essence of revolutionary politics. This problem is there even at the leadership level. It is no use discussing here only about the ordinary comrades. The leaders have a definite purpose when they discuss, a political style in presenting a report. Those who really mean revolution should know what to say when and how in order to make it more effective, more helpful to

carry forward the main political struggle and enable us to dispel the confusion in the mass mind about the opposing forces in order to gain confidence of the people. We must not speak in a way that does not help this struggle. Unpurposive placing of some facts and points which would become so much rubbish in the path of establishing the truth and which would have to be cleaned up by us in order to advance, will not do. Such unpurposive way of presenting reports and writing articles are serious problems. Interest about our party is growing among the people. Once a special drive was launched to increase the circulation of *Ganadabi* (Bengali organ of the SUCI) which went up to 27,000. Now it has dropped to 15,000 and even so, these are not sold out readily nor do the sale proceeds come in promptly. The executives have this to say : “The newsprint price has gone up, sale proceeds of the party organ are not coming in regularly. So, how do we manage ? If we continue like this, the press will have to be closed down.” Since the price of newsprint is high and the comrades are not depositing the money in time and so the press will have to be closed down, what can be done about it ; if the price for 7,000 copies comes in tomorrow, we shall print only 7,000 copies ; if the sales proceeds dwindle further, then we shall print 6,000 copies and subsequently 3,000 copies and so on ! Should this be the attitude of the executives ? They are not viewing the matter politically : Why has the circulation come down from 27,000 to 15,000 and why the sales proceeds for even these 15,000 copies do not come in regularly ? When the condition is such that interest about the party is growing among the people, why should not sale of the organ go up ? How to increase the sales and what are to be done to ensure regular inflow of sale proceeds — these should be the concern of the executives if they think politically. Instead, they are indulging in official, bureaucratic way of thinking. This bureaucratic style of work should immediately be done away with. We do not need bureaucratic leadership, we need political leadership. If routine work is disturbed somewhat in order to improve this political leadership, let it be so although it is better not to disturb the routine work. Otherwise, the executives will say : “This way, there will be no system left.” We shall try our best to preserve the working system, but if I am to choose between keeping the system intact and strengthening of the political leadership, I would say that let us have political leadership and let the ‘system’ go to hell if need be. But the hallmark of efficiency is when you can keep political leadership constantly operative without disturbing the working system.

A major task of the political leadership is to make a correct assessment of the situation. The goodwill for our party has gone up, mass support has grown and the number of party workers has increased. Then why has the sale of our organ fallen ? Why should our decision be determined only by whether the sale proceeds are being deposited or not ? It is we who have to make correct reading of the reports, to show the party workers where they are in error, where they are failing, where they are becoming victims to stereotype thinking and why they cannot combine one work with another. It is the leaders who have to look into all these. When they are engaged in a campaign, and are asked to do fund collection or conduct a movement or do various other work, the party

Bureaucratic Style and Stereotyped Thinking Must be Shunned

workers do not know how the sale of party literature can be increased along with the expanding scope of work. They think that the programme of selling literature is quite separate from the programme they are presently busy with. They think that the present programme should be over first, then they would take food and rest and after that set out to sell the party organ. As if these two are separate programmes ! This way, the sale of organ stops whenever a different programme comes up. But the organ should be the constant companion of a revolutionary. Wherever he goes, the organ goes with him. The attitude of every comrade should be : 'Wherever I go and whatever movement I am engaged in, I carry the party organ with me and sell it'. So, the leadership, too, has to view the sale of organ politically. A local unit argues : 'We cannot take any more copies than this, we cannot sell more than this'. The leadership asks as to how many copies the unit can take. The unit replies : 'Only these many'. The leadership says : 'No, you should take more copies.' The unit replies : 'We cannot take any more'. The leadership accepts this and says : 'Well, since you cannot take any more copies, let it be so'. If they come tomorrow and say they would take a lesser number and afterwards want to reduce the number even more, the leadership would accept the same ! Is this political leadership ? Political leadership implies a correct assessment of the situation. It is to be examined whether what a unit says correctly reflects the situation. If the condition really is such that the sale of the organ may fall to an extent, if it is found that the reading of the situation by the unit is correct and is in agreement with that of the leadership, then it is a different matter. But where the two readings do not concur, we have to probe deep and in detail. The leadership should immediately find out why the unit is thinking like this and why copies of the organ taken by units remain unsold. The leadership is not to work according to the suggestion of an unit without critically examining it. Otherwise, centralism carries no meaning, leadership carries no meaning. What is going on at present ? Average democracy, that is, to go by what the units suggests — almost this is what goes on now. The concept of listening to the units and taking their suggestions in order to improve the leadership have been reduced to trailing behind the units. This cannot go on. The stereotype ideas of the units, their limitations and shortcomings are to be probed in detail. The leadership needs to acquire the ability to do this at all levels. This practice is to be pursued as a cult at all levels — the state, district and local. Wherever there are shortcomings, these should be criticized, not with a view to blaming but to help others. In the face of such criticism, one should not speak out just to defend one's position anyhow. Because one has failed to fulfil a task, one should not level countercharges against others for that. It is unethical for a revolutionary to do this. This does not only transgress discipline, but raises a basic question here. One may not criticize others just because one is in difficulty. Just because one has been charged with something, he should not level a counter charge right then, even if its content be correct. It should be done some other time when it would come impersonally. To put forward a countercharge as an argument of defence because

one has been criticized, is unethical for a revolutionary. These are very important points for the development of a good revolutionary cadre.

Raise the slogan that "Our working must be improved." Each and every comrade must be vigilant about whether his working style is getting improved or not, whether our collective working style is getting improved or not — improved in the sense that it is generating momentum and emotion in us. The working style is to be improved with an eye on stepping up the activity of all of us, increasing our capacity for work and political initiative, heightening our political consciousness, increasing our mass contact and sale of party literature. Party publications should be our constant companions so that after a discussion with somebody we can immediately provide him the particular publication that we deem to be the most sensible ; and we do not have to request another comrade afterwards, "Please go to so and so's house and give him a copy of our such and such publication." Because, such practice causes much harm. Firstly, the comrade whom you request may forget about it afterwards. Again, if you make another comrade note that a particular publication would have to be reached to so and so person, he may take down the note but entrust another with the responsibility who in turn may pass the responsibility to yet another comrade. Thus, stage by stage, the soup gets stale, the paper does not reach to where intended. These are all bad things. Those who move with sling bags can easily carry party literature. What is the harm in moving like this ? Those who work in frontal organizations and units and mix with the public all the time should all carry sling bags. These bags should contain booklets, copies of party organs, documents, receipt books — more or less all that may be required. When it is necessary to give a copy of *Sanskritik Abakshay O Bekar Samasyar Samadhan Kon Pathe* (Cultural Degeneration and Unemployment Problem — Whither lies Solution)* to someone, we can take out a copy of this booklet from the bag and give it to the person. If the question of Indo-Soviet Treaty crops up during a discussion, we can take out the old issue of the organ containing what we had said about this treaty during the Bangladesh liberation war and hand it over. But the problem is that comrades do not always keep track of what is being published in which issue, because they do not read them up. More than half of the comrades do not read their own publications. Even those who are known as serious workers and actively work among the masses, often do not study these literatures thoroughly, nor do they discuss among themselves about what they have read. So, how will they know as to which valuable article came out in which issue of which organ ? Therefore, the leaders have to keep an eye on whether comrades regularly read the party literature, whether they read thoroughly and discuss what they read. It is not enough to inform the units through routine circulars about this. Whenever the leaders chat with the comrades or talk to them they should check up all these from time to time. "Have you read this issue of the organ,

* Refers to a booklet of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh containing his address to a youth gathering organised by the AIDYO.

have you understood that article, have you sold the current issue of the organ, is your sale increasing, are you depositing your sale proceeds regularly" — all these should be checked amidst other various talks and discussions about movements. This is a continuous process. The leaders should attempt these amidst all work. When there is a trade union strike, an important programme of the student-youth front, even when our workers are being attacked — even then these enquiries are to be made in between all activities. These points are to be checked while holding all the various discussions with the comrades. Such is what I call correct political behaviour of a leader, correct political mode of existence of a leader. Without this, the working style of leaders would become one of routine bureaucratic type — just coming to office and going back, issuing circulars, instructing this or that comrade, calling meetings, giving notes to this or that comrade, reading some letters and replying to some. Are these political work ? Even a clerk can do as much. No, such is not the proper functioning of a leader. Leaders do have to attend to such technical works, these are all necessary evils. These have to be done because these are unavoidable. But a lot of time is wasted thereby, too. It would have been better if more time were available to politically equip the comrades.

Is there only one method of politically equipping the party workers ? Do meetings and individual talks constitute the only method ? No, this can be achieved even through seemingly idle chats, but of course one has to know how to chatter or gossip in such a way that even without uttering anything about politics, comrades can be moulded and their mental make-up transformed only through mixing with them and through jests. This capacity does not come automatically, it is to be learnt. What is the main precondition for achieving this ? It is that revolution has mingled in my blood. Everything else is secondary to revolution, being impurities and hence they do not have the power to disturb my revolutionary consciousness and initiative. Even if they gather strength and try to raise head, the revolutionary force within one obstructs and prevents it. The leaders and workers should try to build themselves up this way. Our slogans now should be : Cope with the situation, prepare yourselves to improve the style of work, develop your political consciousness and initiative, read our organs and literature regularly, increase the circulation of our organs, go to the people, organize mass struggles and develop the organisation. These are the main tasks now.

If we can get rid of the basic weaknesses from which we are suffering, weaknesses due to which we cannot fully make use of our strength, then we can utilise the present situation. As it is, considering the vastness of our country, we do not have the requisite resources, we are lagging far behind. And it will be difficult to attain that kind of strength for quite some time to come. But viewed from another angle, the developments that are going on, the way in which the people's militant spirit is being revealed, the way in which the increasing interest about the party is growing — in such a situation, our advancement will be considerably accelerated if our workers elevate their political consciousness and working style to properly utilise our limited strength and resources, master the art

Comrades should be moulded and their mental make up transformed to be True Revolutionaries

of conducting debates and discussions and increase the circulation of our organs. It has to be explained to the people so that they understand that capitalism is the enemy and it is to be overthrown. The rural and industrial proletariat along with the semi-proletariat will overthrow it, and the victory in this struggle depends on successfully isolating the pseudo-Marxists from the masses. It is to be ensured that the comrades understand correctly the politics of the party and the situation, and they can educate the people accordingly by throwing light upon these. If one merely delivers a speech against capitalism, and dwells upon the role of the proletariat in the revolution, or just lists out the misdeeds of the Congress — does it become a complete political speech? No, it is to be shown why it is necessary to overthrow capitalism by relating the issue with all the problems. It will have to be explained properly why the working class will lead this proletarian revolution, who will be its allies and how they will have to conduct the battle. When will the working class become victorious? Only when it will advance along the correct revolutionary path, being free from illusion about the pseudo-revolutionaries. Only when the revolutionary party will be able to expose the pseudo-revolutionaries and defeat them even while working with them in a united struggle. So long as they are not exposed and isolated from the masses and illusion about them persists, they will have to be drawn into united battle. And so long as they are the major force in the united battle, they constitute the chief obstacle before the revolutionary movement. To grasp these basics is real political understanding, placing these convincingly and lucidly in a speech makes it a real political speech.

All leaders and workers shall have to elevate their standard to an adequate level without losing time so that their daily work, writings, discussions and speeches reflects the correct political conception and class consciousness. Only then can we increase our momentum manifold by consolidating whatever strength we have. Perhaps we can make possible what seems impossible now; that is, we can make it possible to attain the leading role effectively by properly utilising the growing interest about our party among the masses and their growing pro-struggle attitude, we can attain the ability of handling, guiding and influencing the situation not only theoretically but effectively. Only then can an effective revolutionary movement be built up in India where the objective revolutionary situation exists already. For this, we have to fight the mechanical pursuit of established practice and the tendency to offer excuses in work. Of course, we have to give a patient hearing when there is a genuine difficulty. But when a lame excuse is offered on the ground of imagined difficulty we should be able to detect it. Just as we should pay heed to a genuine point, we should have to fight against sham excuse which crop up in the guise of genuine ones to create confusion and hamper the initiative of work. Political discussion is to be encouraged, but not unpurposeful political discussion. Political discussions that follow from the party's base political line should be encouraged but not just any empirical or scholastic discussion that is not purposeful.

Preservation of records is an important function of the editorial board. The State

Committee has to look after this. The Committee should see to it that not only the organs are published regularly but that the standard of writing is also continually improved. For this, the editorial board must take it up as a serious task and conduct constant study, analysis, discussions, writing and collection of material by studying other journals and making notes therefrom. Those who are engaged in this should improve their style of writing. The practice should not be merely to go through the other papers and magazines and then put them aside. This should not be the method of study of the editorial board which seeks to keep the party leadership informed by providing it with various information and data. Their style of reading needs to be improved. They should keep paper and pencil handy, and at once note down with dates any information or point that they think may be useful as reference, may be not right now but at some other time. And they should carefully preserve these materials so that the party can utilise these when needed. But the members of our editorial board do not study in this manner, nor do the comrades. And so they remain unequipped. Just a crammed up article or political analysis will not do. Some material data and information are needed to be provided in these, too. But what happens is that the required material is not readily available at the moment and is to be searched out, and so the article gets delayed. Or else, one tells from memory that he had seen a paper at a particular place, but it cannot be traced there. This shows that here, too, the style of work should be improved.

I discussed at some length yesterday that the recent railway strike* has strikingly underlined the fact that the question of directing the democratic movement in the country on the correct course is intimately linked up with strengthening the SUCI. No party worker should have any doubt about this. Our enemies are paying close attention to any possibility of increase in our strength, they are alert against it and putting up various obstacles. I reminded you about this at the delegates session of the KKMFC Conference in Bankura. But many of our comrades are not alert about this. We have to equip comrades adequately so that they can properly utilise the present situation. For that, the points I am discussing here are to be driven home to comrades through discussions. The leaders should make it a habit to discuss important political points with the comrades so that it helps to remove their confusion, clarifies their thinking and heightens their enthusiasm. The important points the leaders know, should be conveyed to the workers, not only in the study classes but also through informal talks, in the form of chats and gossips and even through whispering campaign. This is necessary, but the leaders often neglect this. The reality is that the degree of vigilance maintained over us by the government intelligence, the central and state governments, the police and administration, is not exercised over the other opposition parties. There is a difference in character between hostility towards the other opposition parties and that towards us. Whosoever conducts mass movements or deals with the administration can easily differentiate between the

* The historic all-India railway general strike in May, 1974.

two if he has a political outlook. The other parties engage in clashes and bloodshed, but even so the attitude and approach towards them that operate at the top level, among the topmost bourgeois circles, is totally different from those adopted for us. In the latter case, a class hostility is reflected. Somewhere an officer may be a bit left-minded and get attracted by our politics, by the conduct of our cadres, and he may have a sympathetic approach towards us as an isolated instance. But it will be seen that he is transferred away promptly. The central government observes that the SUCI is still a small force, but they have taken this lesson from history that even if a revolutionary party is small in size today it should not be ignored. The party that had no leader of repute to speak of and no propaganda resources, one which was sought to be pooh-poohed, ridiculed and obstructed at every step, has today gained weight in the estimation of the masses and an attraction has grown for it and its leadership — a truth which they can no longer deny. Propagation of its principles and politics could not be blocked despite a near complete blackout in the media. This party is reaching out to the masses even without media publicity.

So, they are thinking that since the SUCI has come to its present stature starting from almost nothing, it could no longer be neglected. It is to be ensured that this party does not expand further. The attitude of ruling bourgeoisie and government is to nip the SUCI in the bud. They consider that this is the real force dangerous to capitalism — not the CPI (M), nor even the Naxalites. They feel that they can handle these latter two in their own way but they cannot figure out SUCI's politics and tactics. The SUCI cannot be branded extremist, because it still participates in democratic movements. The bourgeoisie can understand the other parties on view in the democratic movements, despite the fiery rhetorics and clashes they indulge in — they are 'democrats' as per their liking whom they can deal with; but they cannot quite make out the SUCI; those of the SUCI — their way of speaking, working style and life style are different — the mode and conduct of the SUCI leaders and workers are different. The bourgeoisie thinks like this. That is why they desire: Either you come over to our side, become leaders like those of the other parties, acquire houses and properties like them, engage in speech mongering like them, no harm if the speeches are against the government or capitalists — but be what we want you to be; or else, you cannot be trusted — you are of a type alien to us. This is why the enemy is very alert about us, the very attitude of the police towards us is quite different. I made this point quite clear in my Bankura speech. The hostility between the Congress and the CPI(M) is different in character. In the election-battle in West Bengal, it is the CPI(M) that is the main enemy of Congress. The industrial circle is backing up one or the other of these two from time to time, there is tussle between them in the organizational field. All this is true. But still, you will see that they view the SUCI quite differently from the way they view each other. The Congress knows that the SUCI is not yet a major factor in election politics, but still it considers the SUCI the main enemy because the SUCI, as the revolutionary party, is their main enemy. The administration adopts a very stiff attitude towards

Release a Tide of Movement to Sweep Aside Wrong Thinking and Ideas

us, but not so in case of the others. Again, the way in which the CPI(M) is trying to confuse the people under the label of Marxism — the SUCI is a big hindrance to that. That is why the CPI(M) views the SUCI with such malice. They find that although the SUCI is a small force, they cannot handle it to suit them in the joint movement. The SUCI does not give up its principle, its ideology in the lure of gaining seats in election or securing berths in the ministry ; public interest about the SUCI is growing despite so much slander by them, the curiosity about the SUCI is on the rise among the honest workers and supporters of their party too. So, the CPI(M) wants to corner the SUCI anyhow. Here the CPI (M) has a unity of purpose with the Congress and the other parties. Whatever may be the competition or struggle among them over votes, they are ganging up against the SUCI, somewhere openly and somewhere clandestinely, wherever this party achieves some growth. There are other small parties but they too have dialogues on with the capitalists, they can approach them. But this party has no dialogues with the capitalists, it does not approach them. This party depends on box collection on the streets for funds, depends on contributions from the peasants, the workers, the common men. This party never approaches the capitalists for funds. It is in this symptom that the capitalists sense danger. Had they found that a party approaches them but talks about revolution as well and asks for money from them for this "revolution", they would have understood that party well. In such case, they perceive : "Yes, they come to us for revolution and we donate for that revolution, if they can organize the revolution with

our funds, let them do it." If this happens, they feel assured. But the SUCI is a party of different character. The capitalists view us like this : "They do not want to open any special dialogue with us ; in the interest of struggle, of negotiations, they do have dialogues with us, but they have no dialogue with us other than these." That is why the SUCI is dangerous in their eyes. People from the privileged higher strata of society are there in all the other parties, big or small, but there are no social high-ups within the folds of the SUCI. The total sphere of its activities is among the workers, poor peasants, agricultural workers, the lower middle class and the middle class intelligentsia, among the sons and daughters of families from these strata. So, the character and conduct of this party is menacing to the capitalists. They desire to have parties of a different type in their "democratic" set-up. For these reasons, they are very alert about us although we are not yet a big force. But many of our workers are themselves not alert about this alertness of our enemies. They do not understand the significance of this, their responsibility and their historical role. That is why I emphasize that these are our basic weaknesses. To take up a programme for eradicating these is the objective of this extended PC meeting. I have placed my observations before you in this broader house. You have listened to the same. After this, the PC or the executives will sit to decide upon the necessary steps. All district committees, local committees and frontal bodies should change their style of work forthwith ; everyone should use his brain and try to improve the style of work, to improve the democratic and political functioning of the party

bodies ; each one should be educated to augment his political consciousness and initiative ; and it should be explained to each one as to where and how he is lacking ; whenever we meet the party workers, we should enquire, among other things, of whether they are making contacts and mingling with the people to the best of their ability and carrying our politics to the people, whether they are taking initiative to form mass organizations, not of one but various types in order to organize whomsoever that can be organised, wherever and in whatever way — be it a club or a library, a sports body or gymnasium, a literary-drama-music circle, a coaching class or night school, whether they are doing these on own initiative to gather the people together or whether they sit tight awaiting circulars, wait for the contacts to be established for them by others, and waste time in idle thoughts about whether they will succeed or not. The attitude should be to step up initiative and keep on working even if there are mistakes, to learn from the mistakes in order to advance further, but not to waste time, cheek resting on hand, lamenting "Oh, why I have made a mistake !" These are to be explained and brought home to the comrades. It is to be explained that they have to win over the people through the power of reasoning, polite and civilized manners and conduct, the force and quality of their character. Workers are to be educated thus. And for this, it is necessary to have thorough and widespread discussions on these at different organisational levels, a tide of movement to sweep aside wrong thinking and ideas, wrong and inadequate method and style of work.

I conclude here today.

UTUC-LS On Withdrawal of Postal Employees' Strike

On 8th July Comrade Tapas Dutta, General Secretary, UTUC-LS had issued a statement extending full support to the strike by postal employees. Comrade Dutta issued the following statement on 17th July after the withdrawal of the strike :

"It is really a rude shock for the entire working class movement of the country that 6 lakh postal employees' indefinite strike, full of potentialities and pregnant with enormous possibilities to win an inspiring victory over their 10-point charter, has been called off, all on a sudden unconditionally without any agreement as directed by the BJP-led government only with some verbal assurances of Union Communication Minister, which, we note with grave concern, does

not even include the central issue of the strikers i.e. recognition of 3 lakh E.D. employees as Govt. Department employees in pursuance of the Apex Court judgement and Talwar Committee recommendations. In fact there is no convincing reason to justify unconditional withdrawal particularly when the 6 lakh employees with increasing support of the working people, were steadily advancing ahead with courage and firm determination to win the struggle defying all odds and threats. We, however, congratulate the struggling employees and urge them not to submit to despair and sense of defeatism but to proceed ahead taking appropriate lesson derived on the basis of serious introspection and critical appraisal of the situation."

rich community send their wards to learn English in private institutions. It is quite impossible for the poor to send their children into such institutions. As a result, two types of citizens are being created in the present system of education. This should not continue. It was the tone of the convention. At the same time all were of the view that medium of instruction must be mother tongue and that due attention should be given over the development of mother tongue so that students may acquire the knowledge of various subjects in their mother tongue.

Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, General Secretary of AIMSS was the main speaker. Comrade Satyawan conducted the discussion. Those who spoke in the convention were Khazan Singh Rathee, Principal, Amar Public School, Gurgaon ; Kishan Lal Narwal, retired Headmaster, Rampet Govt. Primary School, Chandi ; Prof. Rajender Chaudhury, MD University, Rohtak ; Dharam Singh Ahlawat, Arts and Craft teacher ; Zile Singh, Principal ; Medhavarat Shastri, retired Sanskrit teacher ; Raghubir Singh Hooda, retired teacher in English ; Ishwar Singh Saini, Headmaster ; Ajit Singh, senior secondary school teacher ; Jainarain Singh, Advocate, Gurgaon ; Comrade Ved Pal Dangi, President, DYO, Rohtak and Comrade Omprakash, President, AIDS, Haryana.

The convention felt the necessity of carrying the message of the discussions to the vast masses as well to the intellectuals so that the conspiracy of the ruling class is exposed and defeated.

Demonstration and Dharnas in Haryana against Budget of Central BJP Govt.

SUCI is the only party in Haryana which organised demonstrations and dharnas against anti-people Budget of the BJP Govt. at the Centre. A campaign was released from June 11 to 20 at Rohtak, Sonapat, Rewari, Narnaul, Hissar and Gurgaon.

At all the places, memorandum addressed to the President of India were submitted to Deputy Commissioners.

Language Convention in Haryana

Rohtak, 12-7-98 : A Convention on 'necessity of teaching of English language from the Class I in Primary schools' was organised by SUCI at Rohtak in Haryana. A large section of teachers, students and parents participated in it. The speakers expressed their deep concern over the deprivation of government school students from learning of English at the early stage whereas the

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Letter to Left and democratic parties

[The Central Committee of SUCI has made an appeal to the left and democratic parties to build up united democratic movement throughout the country in the context of politico-economic situation prevailing now.

The letter of the Central Committee was sent to CPI (M), CPI, RSP, Forward Bloc, CPI (M-L) Liberation, CPI (M-L) Janashakti, CPI (M-L) New Democracy, Marxist Forward Bloc, Bolshevik Party, Workers' Party and others on 15.7.98. Following is the text of the letter.]

Dear Comrade,

You know how, by exploiting the discontent of the people against the anti-people policies and corrupt practices of the Congress(I) and other Governments and with the backing of the ruling class and the media as well as through manipulation and manoeuvre the rabid communal and arch fascist BJP, along with its allies, has formed the government at the Centre. And as expected, being saddled in power, it has not only been continuing the same anti-people policies like globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation etc., initiated by the Congress(I) but has also unleashed more atrocious attack on all spheres of people's life—economic, political, educational and cultural.

Its anti-people Railway and Central Budgets, by triggering unprecedented inflation and price rise, will no doubt add to the miseries of the toiling millions.

Its nuclear policy will escalate mad arms race and war tension in the sub-continent and develop national jingoism in the country while its secret patronage to the desperate attempts of the VHP and other members of the Sangh Parivar to construct the Ram Temple at the disputed site of Ayodhya will create further communal tension dividing people and vitiating the minimum democratic atmosphere, still prevailing in the country.

No doubt, that the BJP Government is pursuing all these policies with the diabolical design to serve the interest of the Indian monopoly houses and foreign multinationals on the one hand and to shrewdly cover up its failures and divert people's attention from the burning problems of growing recession, unemployment, inflation, price-rise, destitution and near subhuman condition of life.

Hope, you will agree with us that in this situation only a powerful united democratic mass movement, led by the combined effort of the Left and Democratic parties and forces on the basis of a common minimum agreed programme, can safeguard the unity and interest of the people and contain the menacing growth of this most reactionary force ideologically, politically and organisationally. And for this a sitting of all the Left and Democratic parties at the earliest is of urgent need.

If you find yourself in agreement with our proposal, please inform us, at your earliest, of a convenient date when we can meet and work out its details. If you consent, we can undertake the responsibility to arrange it in Calcutta.

With revolutionary greetings,

Comradely yours,

Sd/- NIHAR MUKHERJEE
General Secretary, S U C I

Movement against Price hike in West Bengal

When prices of all essential commodities soar day by day and become out of reach to the millions, and when the ministers of the Central as well as the State governments shamefully keep mum against the unlawful activities of the hoarders, blackmarketeers and dishonest dealers, it is only the SUCI which alone makes mass movement against price hike. In Calcutta on 16th and 17th July the party organised protest movements and brought wrath of the police. The state and the city police which seems so shamelessly callous to check the rising number of thefts, dacoities and anti-social activities for which life and property of the people are at stake in the state, appeared to be very much equipped in mercilessly pouncing the peaceful demonstrators including the woman. On 16th SUCI workers gathered in thousands in front of the Writers' Buildings, the State Government's secretariat, to demonstrate. The common people spontaneously came forward and joined hands with demonstrators. Even a section of the staff of Writers' Buildings participated in the demonstration. As the number of demonstrators were swelling with the passage of time the police seemed to be bewildered and started indiscriminate lathicharge on them. But the members of the CPI(M) controlled Co-ordination Committee of the Secretariat were found throwing stones. Many demonstrators including common people were injured, some of them severely. Police arrested ten people from the spot. They were not released on that day and produced in the court on the day that followed.

On 17th a peaceful road blockade was made at an important crossing of Bowbazar, where also police severely beat the demonstrators. The police not only caned the women demonstrators but also misbehaved with some of them while arresting.

In other districts like Midnapore, 24 Parganas (North) mass civil disobedience programme, local bundh, meetings were organised, where large number of people took part and the ruling party and the police let loose atrocity on the demonstrators.



In memory of Sido-Kanho on Santhal Rebellion Day at Rangamatia in Singhbhum, the Doomuria branch of Sido-Kanho Disha Samiti is observing "Hulmaha" (Rebellion Day i.e. on 30th June, 1855). Sri Kamal Manna, the chief guest is speaking while Comrade Sitaram Tudu is seated beside him at the function on 30.6.98

Quotation on page 1 is a free translation from the Bengali booklet — 'Yukta Front Rajniti O Partyr Kajkarmar Kayakti Dik' (1969)



Police brutally lathicharging the SUCI activists protesting price rise of essential commodities at Bowbazar crossing in Calcutta on 17.7.98

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE